



**RUCD**  
HEAD START

**COVID-19 PLAN**  
Requirements for Staff

Updated March 2, 2022

## WHY ARE WE UPDATING OUR PLAN?

Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) define minimum requirements for all Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Periodically the HSPPS are revised to strengthen and improve the quality of services and to reflect best practices and the latest research.

On February 28, 2022, RUCD received an update from the Office of Head Start based on new recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### Key Points

1. The recommendations include three levels of COVID-19: low, medium, or high. Prevention measures may increase or decrease to match community transmission rates.
2. Because this information differs from the mandate put in place in November, OHS paused monitoring for compliance with the mask requirement for all Head Start and EHS programs.

## MASKING



**As of March 2, 2022, RUCD is happy to announce we are giving employees the choice to mask based on their county's level and the guidance from the CDC.**

- If OHS decides to move forward with appealing the mask mandate injunction our state is involved in, circumstances may change.
- Wearing face masks helps stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Read more about face masks in Head Start Programs at

Wearing face masks helps stop the spread of COVID-19. Read more about Face Masks in Head Start Programs at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/physical-health/article/face-masks-head-start-programs>.

**Our goal is effective communication as we continue to journey through this year together.**

**Head Start will continue to provide masks for children enrolled in either the home-based or center-based option.**

- Families are welcome to purchase a mask of their choice and send it with their child to school.
- Disposable masks will continue to be available for adults at all sites.

**Are we requiring families and children receiving home-based services to wear masks in their homes?**

RUCD strives to be respectful of family values in the home environment while at the same time supporting staff wellness. Employees will wear a mask during a home visit if requested by a parent/guardian.

**Expectations for pick-up and drop-off:**

Masks will no longer be required when entering the building or during pick-up. Disposable masks will still be available at all sites for parents who choose to mask. Entryways and exits will continue to be designated to minimize contact.

**Are virtual services being offered?**

When a classroom is closed for three or more consecutive days due to illness, a virtual option will be offered as a temporary alternative. Meals may be delivered or picked up at the center.



### **Volunteers**

Parents who volunteer at the center or during group socializations are expected to follow RUCD’s Sick Policy. When transmission levels are high, the number of volunteers will be limited.



It is imperative that Head Start staff abide by the Standards of Conduct outlined in Personnel policies, 45 CFR § 1302.90; namely, that staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers implement positive strategies to support children’s well-being and do not use harsh disciplinary practices that could endanger the health or safety of children.

*We hope to be successful in protecting the health of families and staff, while providing educational and comprehensive services to support children’s school readiness goals.*

## VACCINATIONS

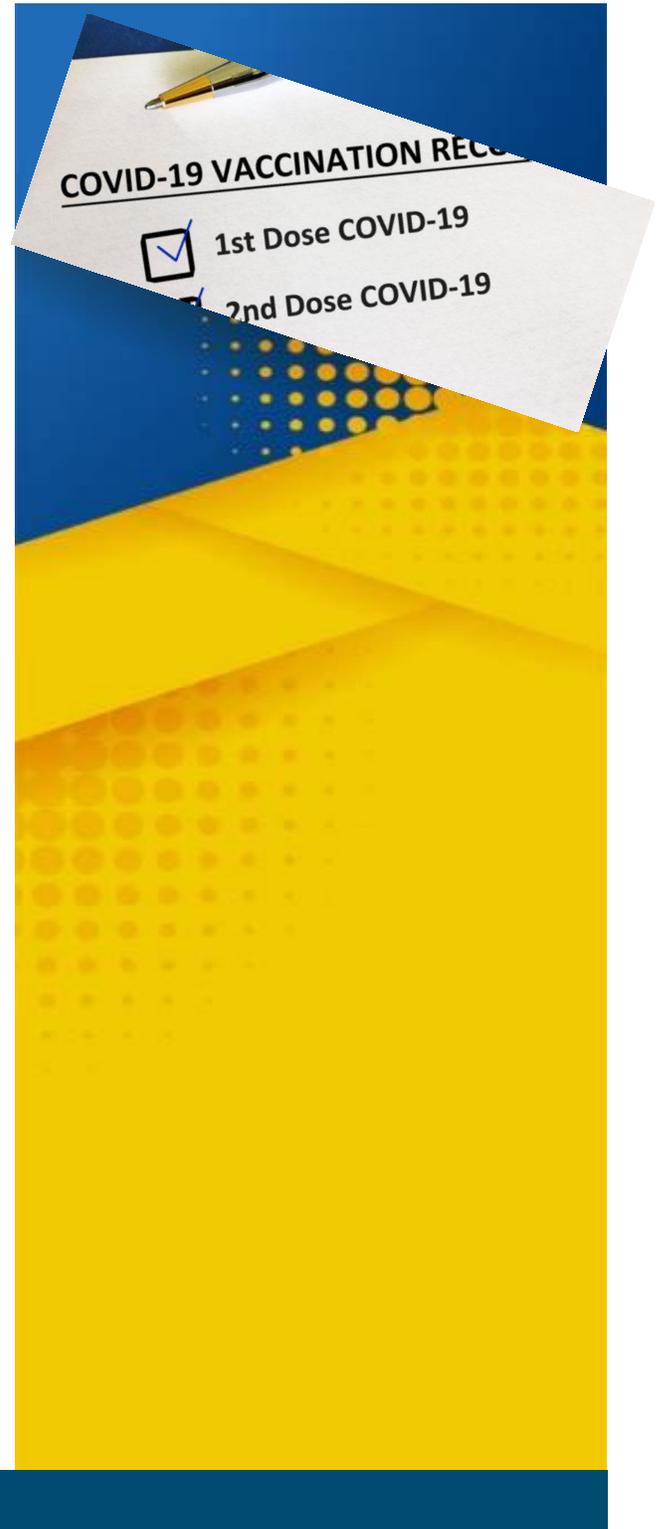
**Vaccination for COVID-19 is now a requirement for all Head Start staff.**

Employees hired before December 3, 2021 are required to receive COVID-19 vaccinations as a condition of employment, unless a reasonable accommodation is approved due to a disability or religious objection.

New employees will need to either be fully vaccinated or have an approved exemption prior to hire.

**Do parents need to be vaccinated to enter the center or participate in an in-person parent engagement event?**

No, RUCD implemented a vaccine policy for all employees in December 2021. The requirement for volunteers applies to professionals providing direct services to children and families and volunteers temporarily replacing a paid staff member. RUCD is currently working on an implementation plan for volunteers in the event the mandate is upheld. Please do not visit a Head Start site if you or anyone in your household is sick or starts to feel symptoms of being sick within the last 24 hours.



## CLEANING



To ensure classrooms are cleaned and disinfected periodically throughout the day, staff will:

- Clean and then disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (e.g., phones, personal electronic devices, remote controls, tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, cabinet handles, outdoor materials, and furniture).
- Launder items more often until the risk of COVID-19 has decreased. This includes washable plush toys and blankets. Launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely, if possible. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items, but wash your hands after handling the dirty laundry.
- Sanitize the entire classroom each day after the children leave.
  - UV lights, large spray sanitizers, and other sanitizing methods will be available for large area sanitation.

## HYGIENE

To support proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staff will:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and help children wash hands, especially:
  - ✓ After touching other people
  - ✓ After touching surfaces outside of the home/classroom or items brought into the home/classroom;
  - ✓ After going to the bathroom or changing diapers;
  - ✓ After blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing;
  - ✓ After handling dirty laundry;
  - ✓ When they are visibly soiled; and,
  - ✓ Before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands.



If soap and water are not available, staff will use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

### STAFF SYMPTOM CHECK

**All staff will complete a daily self-monitoring and symptom check before reporting to work.**

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above, cough, trouble breathing, sore throat, sudden change in taste or smell, and muscle aches or pains.

When a staff member has symptoms:

1. Do not report to work.
2. Notify the center manager as soon as possible and before the start of your regular work day.
3. Contact the health department for testing; schedule an appointment.

Positive COVID-19 test results of a staff member or family member living in the same household must be reported to the health manager immediately. Be prepared to provide the following information.

- ✓ Who in the household tested positive?
- ✓ Where was the positive test taken?
- ✓ Has the health department been notified? If an over-the-counter test was taken, the health department must be notified. They will suggest a return to work date.
- ✓ What is the return date recommended by the health department?



### PARTICIPANT SYMPTOM CHECK

**Staff will ask parents/guardians the following questions at drop-off or before entering a participant's home:**

1. Has your child or anyone in your household had the following symptoms in the last 24 hours: temperature over 100.4°, new onset or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, sudden change in taste or smell, muscle aches or pains?
2. Has anyone in your home tested positive or been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?

If the answer is yes to one or both questions, the family will be unable to receive in-person services until they have quarantined for the recommended number of days and are symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours.



**Staff will immediately report all positive COVID-19 cases to the health manager.**

## QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

In the event the local health department has not given a specific recommendation, the health manager will follow CDC guidelines to inform staff and families of return to work/school timeframes.

Click [here](#) to view the COVID-19 PLAN – Parent Newsletter

