



The CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) has issued the following directive, which Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) adopted as policy, effective September 21, 2020 and remain in effect until the mandate is modified by the Commissioner of OEC. This new requirement follows updated recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Children 3 years of age and older are required to wear masks in childcare programs.

Protocols:

1. All children 3 years of age or older are required to wear masks in preschool programs. They should arrive wearing a mask (with their name or initials on it) and will leave for the day wearing their mask.
2. CLC staff will work with children and families, using stories, visual reminders and allow children time to practice and adjust to wearing masks. Teachers will educate children on how to wear their mask (covering their mouth and nose), when to remove it, where to store it and other steps to keep their mask clean and sanitary.
3. Masks must cover the child's nose and mouth and wrap securely around the face without a one-way valve or vent. Face shields are not permitted as a substitute.
4. Children will not be required to wear a mask while eating, sleeping, or during outdoor play. Mask breaks will be provided by individual teachers, based on the needs of the children.
5. If a child refuses to wear a mask, teachers will remind the child to keep their mask on and the importance of wearing a mask. The teacher will continue to work with the child to become comfortable wearing a mask, starting with wearing the mask for short periods of time.
6. If a parent or guardian refuses to have their child participate in wearing a mask, they must provide medical documentation outlining why their child cannot wear a mask. If this documentation is not available, the child must wear a mask.
7. In support of developmental readiness, children who have just turned 3 years old may have up to two months to acclimate to wearing a face mask.
8. Parents will be required to provide a minimum of 3 face masks per child that will be labeled with the child's name and remain at the center.
9. Parents will be notified when their child is in need of additional masks.
10. All staff are required to wear a mask or face covering at all times while in the program
11. Masks must be worn by all adults and children ages 3 and over at drop off and pick up times, when making deliveries or while on CLC property for any reason.

Exceptions to Wearing a Face Mask:

- A child with a documented medical condition, special health care need, or developmental need (such as sensory integration) for whom wearing a face mask would be contrary to need disability or special education need for whom wearing a face mask would be contrary to their needs. Their health or safety is not required to wear a mask.
- A child with a document unless doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition. If a medical condition exists, documentation will be required from a licensed medical practitioner.