



Parent Handbook  
COVID-19 Addendum  
2022 School Year

**PHEAA EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

PHEAA Building

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**PHEAA EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

**Parent Handbook**

**COVID-19 Edition**

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# Introduction

Dear Parents,

As we continue working our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to make sure we are all on the same page. While I know this can be a fearful time since none of us have ever experienced this before, the teachers and administration at PHEAA Early Learning Center are committed to providing a quality program that is safe, educational, child-friendly, and fun!

While many things will seem different with new procedures in place for safety of all, this will still be an environment that fosters fun and learning. It is our goal to draw out and inspire the best in our students as we provide them with opportunities to create, explore, and learn.

This handbook will lay out the changes as we enter the next phase from this COVID-19 pandemic. This situation is unprecedented and is constantly evolving, so all changes included in this handbook will remain as the “new normal” until further notice. We will make sure that all changes are realistic and feasible for staff and children by following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines as well as those put forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Please be sure to read through and please note that this addendum is subject to change as needed.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the policies and procedures that are outlined in this Parent Handbook. They are in place to ensure that PHEAA Early Learning Center is a safe and enjoyable place for your family.

Missy Milstead

Center Director

PHEAA Early Learning Center

## A. Enrolling Your Child

Before enrolling any new child for the first time, parents or guardians must schedule an appointment with the Director(s) for a virtual or after-hours tour, and the child(ren) can accompany the parents in a virtual online interview. We believe this provides both the parent and the Director the opportunity to clearly convey their expectations of PHEAA Early Learning Center and go through our enrollment process one-on-one. Upon the decision to enroll your child, parents or guardians will be provided with an application, tuition and financial agreement, all health and emergency forms, as well as a copy of our handbook. All forms can be filled out electronically and sent through email or mailed in.

PHEAA Early Learning Center will offer full-time and part-time care for children 6 weeks through Preschool. Part-time care is typically not an option for infants but will be allowed during COVID.

Infant part-time care will be on the condition that the infant's family would move to full-time care if another family requests a full-time space. If the family of an infant receiving part-time care does not wish to move to full-time care, the child would transition from part-time care to the wait list.

## B. Nondiscrimination Policy

Admissions to PHEAA Early Learning Center shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, age, or gender.

## C. Extra Hygiene Measures and Procedures

1. Handwashing: As soon as students or staff arrive to the classroom, they will wash their hands properly. Hands will also be washed throughout the day and more frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be used for our older classes when soap and water is not available. Sanitizing stations are located throughout our facility.
2. Sanitizing/Disinfecting: All hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day, before and after use as well as at the end of each day. Any toys that go into a child's mouth will be put into the disinfecting process by washing with soap and water, spraying with disinfectant, and air dried. All surfaces and toys will be sprayed prior to leaving the room for the day. All sensory bins, soft toys, pillows, and dress-up clothes will be put away during this phase of opening.
3. Mask wearing: Each enrolled student over the age of 2 will arrive at the Center wearing a mask and will bring two clean cloth or disposable masks with them daily. Any person(s) entering the facility will wear a mask which shall be worn prior to entering the lobby of the childcare center.

[CDC recommends universal indoor masking](#) in ECE programs for ages 2 years and older and other strategies to prevent spread of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. This includes masking during outdoor play.

**When teachers, staff, and children wear a mask, they protect others as well as themselves.**

**Children over the age of two and staff will wear masks at all times, except when eating, napping, or when they are able to socially distance outdoors.** When children are not wearing masks, masks will be stored separately with their family group and returned to the child as soon as possible after eating or napping. When eating or napping, and not wearing masks, children will be spaced 6 feet apart, or as close to 6 feet apart as possible.

If a mask becomes soiled, it will be placed in a sealed bag with the child's name on it for laundering. Masks will be sent home daily for laundering. There will be limited masks available in the Center if a child does not have a clean mask available.

All children and adults must wear masks when entering and departing the Center. **Masks should fit appropriately for children (for example: children should be wearing a child-sized mask). It is important to practice PROPER mask wearing both inside the childcare center and at home.**

Staff will wear masks at all times, except for eating, while in the center.

4. **Social distancing:** Each class is considered a "family." Each "family" will socially distance from other "families" to ensure safety. Classes will not intermix and will be with the same teachers as much as possible. Staff will take their breaks outside of classrooms while keeping socially distant to the best of their abilities.
5. **Staff/Operations:**
  - a. Staff **will not** work in close proximity (less than 6 feet apart) to other staff without masks or social distancing.
  - b. Breaks/Floaters will be recorded by the Director on a daily staffing schedule, and any changes will be noted.

## D. Inclusion Policy

To the greatest extent possible, children with disabilities will be included in the full range of activities and services normally provided to children at our center by making necessary modifications to meet the child's special needs.

## E. Fee and Payment Policy

PHEAA Early Learning Center enforces the following policies and procedures for tuition payments:

1. Part-time and full-time tuition is paid electronically bi-weekly, or monthly, via ACH (automatic debit) through Tuition Express. Payments must be made by the 25th of the preceding month, or the Friday before if paying bi-weekly. Checks will only be accepted for initial payments.
2. A \$10.00 per day late fee will be charged when a payment is declined.
3. There will be a \$1.00 per minute charge per child for every minute elapsed after your scheduled pick-up time.
4. All tuition is due regardless of sickness, behavioral/disciplinary removal, vacations, weather-related closings, holidays and COVID-related closings (As outlined below).
5. Tuition responsibilities during pandemic-related closures will be assessed in the following manner:
  - a. In the event of long-term (11+ days) emergency-related closing mandated by the state/local government/DHS/CDC, like a pandemic, families will be asked to consider paying a non-refundable “holding fee” of 50% of (bi-weekly OR monthly) tuition to hold their spot for when the center reopens. This fee ensures staff continue to receive employee benefits.

**Note: families who choose NOT to pay the holding fee will be considered “disenrolled” and reenrollment procedures will apply for their return, such as enrollment application fees. TodayCare cannot guarantee that forfeited spots will be available for your child, but previous enrollees to the center will be placed on the priority waitlist and will have the right of first refusal if a spot becomes available.**

- b. Full-center closures for a short-term period of 1-10 business days: tuition must be paid in full.
  - c. If a classroom within the center, or individual enrolled child/family, is required to self-isolate/quarantine due to a pandemic-related exposure or positive Covid-19 test result: tuition must be paid in full.
6. If you need to terminate your child’s enrollment, a month’s notice must be given to the Center Director in writing via email or letter; otherwise, you will continue to be charged your monthly tuition. No reimbursement of tuition will be granted.
7. To ensure your child’s continued enrollment, parents must pay the annual enrollment fee of \$100 on the anniversary date of their child’s enrollment. If your child was disenrolled during the pandemic, the \$100 fee must be paid to re-enroll your child.
8. TodayCare is contractually able to increase tuition annually. The terms of the contract dictate that an increase of 4.5% can occur annually.

## F. Admission/Exclusion due to symptoms of illness

The guidance below is based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Pennsylvania Department of Health (DoH). Due to the continually evolving nature of the pandemic, consult the following helpful links for the most up-to-date guidance:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

DoH: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

### **If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)**

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

- Stay home for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

***If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.***

### **If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)**

**If you:**

Have been boosted/Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months/Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.

***If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.***

**If you:**

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted/Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted/Are unvaccinated

- Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days.
- Test on day 5 if possible.

***If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home***

All Pennsylvania Child Care Centers must report any reportable diseases, including COVID-19 to the Department of Health within 24 hours, so it is imperative that any positive cases are reported immediately to the Center Director.

With the addition of COVID-19 to the list of reportable communicable diseases, childcare providers must adhere to the certification regulations under child and adult health found in 55 Pa. Code Chapters § 3270, § 3280, and § 3290.

*55 Pa. Code § 3270.137, § 3280.137, and § 3290.137, relating to child health, states: “an operator who observes an enrolled child with symptoms of a communicable disease or infection that can be transmitted directly or indirectly and which may threaten the health of children in care shall exclude the child from attendance until the operator receives notification from a physician or a CRNP that the child is no longer considered a threat to the health of others.”*

*55 Pa. Code §3270.153, §3280.153, and §3290.153, relating to adult health, states: “A facility person with symptoms of a communicable disease or infection that can be transmitted directly or indirectly and which may threaten the health of children in care shall be excluded from attendance until the facility operator receives notification from a physician or CRNP that the person is no longer considered a threat to the health of others.”*

Any child or facility person reporting positive test results or showing symptoms of COVID-19 cannot be in attendance at the childcare facility. Upon return, the individual must provide a written note or a negative test result signed and verified by a physician or nurse practitioner (CRNP) clearing them to return to the child care facility. A home test or any other negative test results that have not been reviewed, signed and verified by a physician or CRNP will not be acceptable for a child or a facility person to return to the childcare facility. Certification staff will review child and facility person files to ensure compliance with the regulations.

*The citations for non-compliance with the regulations pertaining to children and facility persons with symptoms of disease will be issued under 55 Pa. Code § 3270.137; § 3280.137, § 3290.137, §3270.153, §3280.153, and §3290.153. Additional citations are included with this announcement as Appendix A-Communicable Diseases Certification Requirements: OCDEL Guidance Chart.*

**If you test positive for COVID-19 and never develop symptoms**, day 0 is the day of your positive viral test (based on the date you were tested) and day 1 is the first full day *after* your positive test. **If you develop symptoms after testing positive, your 5-day isolation period must start over.** Day 0 is your first day of symptoms. Day 1 is the first full day *after* your symptoms developed.

**What are the public health recommendations for close contacts who have ongoing exposure to COVID-19?**

People who are unvaccinated or not [fully vaccinated](#) and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should



- Get tested immediately when they are identified as a [close contact](#).
- Begin [quarantine](#) immediately and continue to quarantine throughout the isolation period of the person with COVID-19.
- Continue to quarantine for an additional 5 days starting the day *after* the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Get tested again 5-7 days after the end of isolation of the infected household member.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask when in contact with other people in the home until quarantine ends.
- [Isolate](#) immediately if they develop [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or test positive.

**People who are [fully vaccinated](#) and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should**

- Get tested 5-7 days after their *first* exposure. A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting 2 days before they develop symptoms, or 2 days before the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.
- Get tested again 5-7 days after the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the infected person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask indoors in public until 5 days after the infected person's isolation period ends or until the fully vaccinated close contact receives their final test result.
- [Isolate](#) immediately if they develop [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or test positive.

**Any staff member, family member, or child who has tested positive will be required to provide written documentation from their doctor to return to the Center once they have fulfilled the isolation requirement.**

**Metrics for Returning to the Center (regular illness):**

- Normal temperature for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.
- Prescribed medications, such as antibiotics, have been introduced to his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning.
- Children and staff will provide a doctor's note on letterhead to be permitted back to PHEAA Early Learning Center if barred due to illness. The doctor's note must confirm that the child or staff member can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.

Children or staff who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, pus/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our facility. **If you have any doubts about your child's health, please call us at 717-720-3701 to be sure they may attend.** If your child appears to be sick or has any of the above while at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification.

### **Metrics for Returning to the Center (COVID-19/pandemic illness):**

#### **For confirmed positive cases of COVID-19:**

- Can return 5 days from symptom onset AND
- 24 hours with no fever, and without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- Other COVID-19 symptoms are gone (except loss of taste and smell)

#### **For presumed exposure to cases of COVID-19:**

- Stay home for 5 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19 or provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test to the Center Director. The COVID-19 test must be taken on or after the 5th day of exposure.

### **Reporting COVID-19 Exposure:**

**We ask that all parents and staff let us know of any potential exposure immediately.**

- A potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes.
- The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic or received a positive COVID-19 test result.
- If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Dauphin County health departments, and parents with children enrolled at PELC.
- If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a household member OR close contact of a child or adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through our OCDEL contact according to their requirements as well as parents with children enrolled at PELC.

### **Daily Admission Screenings:**

As daily health checks are conducted (temperature and verbal questioning), if any staff and/or student exhibits a temperature and/or has any signs/symptoms of illness or has been around anyone with signs of illness, they will not be allowed to enter the Center.

Parents and staff will be encouraged to report illness within their household, children, and themselves during drop-off symptom screening to help inform decisions related to site closure. Absences among children and staff will be monitored according to CDC guidance.

If a staff member and/or child becomes ill at home, or any family member tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, they should not come to school and must notify school officials.

If staff or child becomes ill at school with symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath at school, they will be isolated and informed to go home or to healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are and follow CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick. Families of children will be notified immediately to pick up their child. They must remain at home until the COVID-19 test results are received.

### **Closing Procedures for the Center**

- The Center may be closed [for a minimum of 10 business days] if there is a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case or probable case who was present in the childcare program building within 48 hours prior to developing COVID-19 symptoms, and had close, prolonged contact, as defined by the CDC, with program staff and/or children.
- In some circumstances, it is possible that individual classrooms or families will be able to quarantine, and the Center can avoid a full closure.
- If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Dauphin County health departments as per their requirements, and parents with children enrolled at PELC.
- If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a household member OR close contact of a child or adult who has not been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Dauphin County health departments as per their requirements, and parents with children enrolled at PELC.
- The Center will be in consultation with the local Department of Health authorities following their advice and criterion on reopening the center or quarantined classrooms and allowing quarantined individuals back into the center.
- During the closure, the specific classroom/s or parts of the building will be detail cleaned and sanitized before staff and/or children return. This sanitization will occur 24-48 hours from the time of closure, to allow particles to settle for more effective cleaning.
- Children and staff affected by a childcare program closure due to a COVID-19 case or probable case should quarantine at home for a minimum of 5 days per CDC guidelines and monitor their health.
- Center closures during the pandemic may or may not affect tuition/enrollment responsibilities. See Section E.5 for TodayCare's tuition policies.

Dispensing Medication at the Center: Medications for maintenance will be administered throughout the day as required. The medication must be given to the Director/Front Desk in its original bottle, which contains the physician's directions. We ask that families schedule and administer medication at home when possible so that there is a minimum number of times a child must be administered medication at the center. The medication log must be signed by the parent at this time and will be kept on file. Children will be given their medication according to the prescription specifications only.

## G. Personal Belongings

While in this phase of operation, children may not bring in any personal belongings aside from what is approved. No toys or personal items from home will be permitted at this time. Bedding will be sent home on the last day of each week, and it is mandatory that bedding be laundered before returning the next week.

## H. Arrival and Departure Procedures

Our facility is operational from 7:00am – 5:30pm, Monday through Friday. Children can be dropped off from 7:00 am until 8:45 am.

### Drop-Off Procedures

All parents and children over the age of two MUST wear face covers prior to entering the lobby of the childcare center. Once you enter the lobby, please use the hand sanitizer station. Upon check-in via the ProCare Connect app, you will be asked a series of yes/no questions regarding symptoms and travel. Your child's teachers will take your child's temperature. If you would like to show the Center Director your proof of vaccination, you may skip taking your temperature.

Parents may drop off their child at the classroom doorway. To avoid additional potential exposures, parents are asked to remain at the classroom door for drop-offs and pick-ups and to not enter the classroom space.

*Parents should verbally acknowledge the classroom teacher(s) upon drop-off.*

### Pick-Up Procedures

Anyone entering the lobby to pick up their child must wear a face covering/mask.

## I. Visitors

Outside programming will be suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic (such as field trips, vision screening, school photos, etc.). Children who receive therapies or outside services may continue if the special teacher/therapist/outside resource passes screening procedures and follows established protocols consistent with the full-time caregivers/staff.

## J. Field Trips/Special Events

There will be no field trips or special events/gatherings at this time.

## K. Food

- A. Breakfast, lunch, and snack will be provided by parents, following CDC guidelines.
- B. Nursing mothers are permitted to come to the Center to breastfeed. Nursing mothers must wash hands upon arrival and wear a mask during the entirety of their time in the Center.

- C. Staff assisting children in preparing food in the center will be gloved and masked the entire time.

Food Allergy: We are an entirely nut-free facility. If your child has an allergy to any foods, please be sure that it has been indicated in your child's paperwork and put in writing. This should be given to the teacher AND director. All allergies will be posted in the classroom.

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## PHEAA Early Learning Center

### Parent or Guardian COVID-19 Handbook Receipt Form

Please thoroughly review the Parent Handbook COVID-19 Addendum which contains the policies and procedures for PHEAA Early Learning Center operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. After reading the handbook, please complete this form and return it to the director as soon as possible. This form will be kept in your child's file for the duration of the school year.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Missy Milstead

Center Director

PHEAA Early Learning Center

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print your name), the parent/guardian of  
\_\_\_\_\_ (print child's name), hereby acknowledge  
receipt of PHEAA Early Learning Center's Parent Handbook COVID-19 Addendum. I have read  
and agree to adhere to all the policies and regulations set forth in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_