

SENDCAA HEAD START BIRTH TO FIVE
COVID-19 PROGRAM RESPONSE PLAN
FOR 2020-2021

PROCEDURES TO PROTECT STAFF IN THE WORKPLACE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	
<p><i>This is a working document that will change as needed.</i></p> <p><i>SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will make closure decisions at a program level. We will seek input from the Policy Council and the Board of Directors.</i></p>	
Staff Arrival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will self-screen upon arrival each day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agassiz-Staff Office ○ Central-Leah’s Office ○ Early-Staff Bathroom ○ Lisbon- Outside of SE door ○ South-Table by the Front Door ○ Wahpeton- Staff Office ○ West-Staff Office • Self-screening will require the staff to wash or sanitize their hands, take temperature, and fill out the COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire each day.
Masks: Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All program staff are required to wear masks in common areas and classrooms. Common areas include: bathrooms, hallways, work rooms, offices, etc. • When stationed at a work space and socially distanced, staff are able to work without a mask. • Masks, face shields, and mask brackets are available upon request.
Masks: Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are highly recommended to wear masks in the Head Start Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This includes: in the hallways, classrooms, bathrooms unless we can guarantee that they will be 6 feet from everyone else. Adults should model for the students. • Children at the Agassiz site are required to wear masks, per the policy of Fargo Public Schools. • While in the classroom, exceptions to the mask recommendation include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Breakfast, lunch, snack</i> ○ <i>Outdoor Play (West & Agassiz sites are required to be masked during this time)</i> ○ <i>Rest time, when social distancing is possible</i> ○ <i>Mask breaks are allowed when social distancing can occur</i> • Children are to be masked on the playground and in gym at the Agassiz & West sites.
Gloves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves will be used by staff when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In direct contact with bodily fluids, ○ During temperature checks, will need to be changed if a staff member touches child ○ Diapering, wiping a nose ○ Disinfecting surfaces ○ If a child becomes sick and you must be within 6 ft of that child • Follow universal precautions, including when changing gloves (between tasks) and how to remove gloves • Gloves will not be worn continuously throughout the day

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will properly dispose of or wash PPE using the CDC recommended method (see attachment)
Clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smocks are available for staff to wear upon request. • Staff will be encouraged to keep an extra set of clothing on site. This is in case they need to go into another classroom.
Staff Training & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SENDCAA Head Start COVID-19 Program Response Plan will be available for staff to view on the SENDCAA website. • At Pre-Service, staff received the Response Plan and staff reviewed plan on their own and signed off on a training form stating they have read and understand plan. • Any additional communication and training will be communicated to staff. • This plan will be posted in the workplace. • This plan is fluid and changes are made as deemed necessary. If changes are made, staff will be notified in a timely manner. • If the Response Plan has been updated, it will be emailed to all staff highlighting the changes and posted on the website.
Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If staff have access to fresh air, they are encouraged to open windows to promote airflow. <i>Please remember to close & lock window at end of the day.</i> • Teachers are encouraged to bring children outside as much as daily schedule allows (<i>this includes going for walks, reading outside, playground play, etc.</i>)
Cleaning & Disinfecting	<p>Our program will follow all cleaning and disinfecting guidelines from the Center of Disease Control (CDC) and Caring for our Children (CFOC). The CFOC provides national standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of educational facilities for children. Throughout this time we will implement the National Health and Safety Performance Standards for routine scheduled cleaning at the site. This document for cleaning is attached.</p> <p>Staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. • If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use soap and water prior to disinfection. • Follow the Building & Classroom Daily Checklists, as usual. • There are gallon jugs with a hand sprayer to clean playground/outdoor equipment off after a classroom uses it. We need to allow a few minutes of drying time before the next classroom utilizes the recently cleaned equipment. The same precautions need to be taken in Gross Motor Rooms and therapy rooms, items need to be cleaned after each classroom uses space. • If temperatures are below freezing, the playground equipment is not required to be sanitized.

Staff should follow all guidelines from the CDC to protect themselves and others. SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five is reminding staff to practice the following steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Review guidelines below.

Wash your hands often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands upon arrival to work and before leaving at the end of the day. • Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. • It's especially important to wash: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Before eating or preparing food ○ Before touching your face ○ After using the restroom ○ After leaving a public place ○ After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing ○ After handling your cloth face covering ○ After changing a diaper ○ After caring for someone sick ○ After touching animals or pets ○ Before and after disinfecting toys and surfaces • If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This applies to staff only. Children are to only wash their hands with soap and water. • Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
Practice social distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are asked to always keep physical distancing in mind. • Students should try to stay at least 3-feet apart, although we recognize the challenges of this expectation. • Maintain 6-feet distance when masks cannot be worn, such as when eating, as much as possible. • Maintain 6-feet between adults (teachers and staff), and between adults and students, at all times in the classroom/building, as much as possible. • Maintain 6-feet during times when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, sports, exercise, as much as possible. • Attend meetings virtually, if given the opportunity.
Cover coughs & sneezes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. • Throw used tissues in the trash. • Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
Monitor your daily health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. • If you feel sick, please stay home. If you get tested for COVID-19, let your supervisor know immediately.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet. • Take your temperature if symptoms develop. • Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen. • Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
<p align="center">SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will follow the COVID-19 SCHOOL EXCLUSION GUIDANCE from the ND Dept of Health.</p> <p>SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will send home or deny entry if ANY of the following symptoms are present: Fever (100.4 or higher) OR loss of taste and/or smell OR two or more of the following symptoms: fatigue, headache, muscle/body aches, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain. This is in addition to general infectious disease exclusion guidance. Parents of children who are ill should contact their child's health care provider.</p> <p align="center">Students and staff who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past three months do not need to quarantine if identified as a close contact within 3 months of a positive test.</p> <p align="center">If both the case and their close contacts were wearing a mask at all times during exposure, then the close contacts would not need to quarantine.</p> <p align="center">It is recommended that you quarantine for 14 days from your last exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. You may be released from quarantine AFTER DAY 10 if you remain symptom free. You may be released from quarantine AFTER DAY 7 if you remain symptom free and test negative for COVID-19 (PCR OR Antigen). Note: The test must occur on Day 5 or later.</p> <p><i>Vaccinated individuals can be exempted from quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are fully vaccinated (i.e > 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or > 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine).</i> • <i>Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series.</i> • <i>Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure</i> 	
<p>When a child becomes sick at school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child becomes ill during the day, it is important to keep the child in the classroom to contain the germs and prevent contaminating other areas. Staff are to provide an area in the classroom where the child can be comfortable and supervised. Staff are to try to keep the child at least 6 feet from the other children until the child's parent/guardian arrives. A portable divider could be used to create a more confined area if the child is coughing. (Taken from Dept of Health Modified Operating Practices)
<p>When an employee tests for COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are sick, please stay home. • If you get tested for COVID-19, please let your supervisor know immediately. • Follow the direction given by the ND Department of Health or by your health care provider.

Communication: Staff and Seesaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to times of uncertainty we ask that all staff have access to their work email on their personal devices at home. • All families will be enrolled on Seesaw for the program year. Seesaw will be utilized throughout the year to communicate regularly. • Seesaw will also be utilized for virtual learning and reach out during classroom, site, or program closures due to COVID-19.
Parent Notification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child/staff in a classroom has been exposed to COVID-19 SENDCAA Head Start will notify close contacts and provide guidance on next steps. • Each situation is unique and will be handled on a case by case basis all while following proper protocol. • If a positive case occurs at a site, program management will inform families via Seesaw, as soon as possible. Confidentiality will be kept in the highest regard.
Education Services: Classroom Structure, Daily Schedule, & Modifications to Existing Policies/Procedures	
Classroom ratios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day classrooms will have 12 children enrolled at the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year. Currently, in March of 2021, full day classrooms are considered fully enrolled at 14 children. • West Fargo part-day will have 9 children enrolled in each session, due to agreement with WF ECSE. Currently, in March of 2021, part day classrooms at West are considered fully enrolled at 10 children. • All other part-day classrooms will have 10 children enrolled in each session. Currently, in March of 2021, part day classrooms are considered fully enrolled at 11 children. • Due to double sessions, ratios are lower so a classroom staff can be cleaning as needed throughout the session. • Early Head Start ratio will stay at 8 children per classroom. • Teachers are expected to break up the enrolled children and keep them in smaller groups, as much as possible, throughout the day.
Pick up/drop off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to each site being different, staff will determine the best plan for pick up and drop off, options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Car pick up/drop off ○ Entry way pick up/drop off • Masks must be worn during pick up and drop off times. • All children will be screened and temped upon drop off regardless of the method used. • Central Site: Parents will not be allowed in classrooms, hallways, or any other areas of the building at this time. Pick up and drop off will be completed in the parking lot. Children will be screened in car. After passing screening, children will exit the car and be brought into the building by a Head Start staff. At the end of the day, parents will notify the Central site they are outside to pick up their child. The classroom will be notified and bring the child outside and hand the child off to the parent who is then responsible for walking the child to the car and buckling them in.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agassiz Site: Parents will bring their child to the bottom of the stairs at door #12 while social distancing. Staff will scan child’s temperature at the door. Parents & children will need to be wearing a mask. ● West Site: Parents will not be allowed in classrooms, hallways, and in any other areas of the building. Parents will be dropping off at Door 4. Staff will be screening children right inside the door and will be bringing children to their appropriate classroom. Doors will open exactly at the start time of the session. Markings on the floor will indicate where parents can stand. These markings will ensure social distancing between families until they are able to be screened. If the spots are full, parents are asked to wait further away from the building or in their car until the line clears up. Parents are encouraged to wear masks while dropping off and picking up. ● Early Site: Parents will not be allowed in classrooms, hallways, or any other areas of the building at this time. Pick up and drop off will be completed at the main door, where staff will screen children when they arrive at 8:30. After passing screening, children will be brought to their classroom. Markings will be placed out on the deck for parents to social distance from each other while waiting to drop off or pick up their child. At 3:30 parents will be able to pick up, where the teacher will meet their parents outside. If parents arrive before 3:30, they will call Early Head Start to let staff know that they are there to pick up their child. ● Wahpeton Site: Parent will bring child into the front entry to be screened by Family Support Staff. If child passes the screening they will come into the hallway to wash and prepare for breakfast. Staff will be positioned in the hallway so that parents go straight out of the building. All adults will be masked. ● South Site: Parents will form a line facing east and exiting by the frontage road or University for drop off/pick up. Parents will not be allowed in classrooms, hallways, or any other areas of the building at this time. Pick up and drop off will be completed in the parking lot. Children will be screened in car. After passing screening, children will exit the car and be brought into the building by a Head Start staff. At the end of the day, parents will notify the South site they are outside to pick up their child. The classroom will be notified and bring the child outside and hand the child off to the parent who is then responsible for walking the child to the car and buckling them in. ● Lisbon: Pick up and drop off will occur outside on the front sidewalk; children will be screened at that point also.
Home Visits/Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To ensure the safety of our staff, we are not requiring home visits at this time. Conferences will be expected to take place following the SENDCAA Procedures for COVID-19. We recommend that these conferences take place outdoors if weather permits. Conferences may be completed via Zoom if the family is unable to meet in-

	<p>person. Teachers should be completing conferences over Zoom rather than a phone call to the family. West’s conferences will take place via Zoom, due to WFPS regulations. If teachers meet in person, safety precautions must take place. Parents/guardians will have their temperature taken and answer the COVID-19 screening questions. Parents/guardians must also wear a mask when they enter our buildings and if they do not have one, staff will provide them one upon entering. Teachers should utilize their sneeze shields, sanitize their conference meeting area, and have hand sanitizer available for families.</p>
<p>Nap time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As much as possible, cots should be separated with at least 6 feet between them. If this is not feasible, cots should be positioned so children are alternating head/feet. • South, Central, Early Head Start sites will be laundering blankets weekly using hot water. • Wahpeton and Lisbon will send blankets home, due to not having access to washer & dryers on site. • Nap blankets will be stored in large zip lock labeled bags. • A map will be created to show the layout of where children rest daily, and updated with any changes that occur. • Cots/nap mats will be disinfected daily. • Cots/nap mats will be deep-cleaned should a COVID-19 case occur in your classroom.
<p>Family style meals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family style meals will be suspended indefinitely during the pandemic. • Teachers, teacher assistants, or kitchen staff will serve food. Staff will ensure hair is pulled back when dishing up/serving meals. • Follow all other Meal Service Policy guidelines.
<p>Tooth brushing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tooth brushing will be suspended indefinitely during the pandemic. • Families will be encouraged to support their child in regular tooth brushing at home. • Tooth brushes and tooth paste will be sent home to all of the families.
<p>Classroom guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize the number of toys available in the classroom. • Reduce clutter as much as possible. • No items from home should be brought in the classroom. • Provide more time outside as much as possible, while following Outdoor Play Procedure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Go for walks, read outdoors, play on playground, etc. ○ Teachers will fill up cups when providing water out on the playground. • No visitors will be allowed in the classroom during pandemic unless prior approval has been given. • Field trips may occur if supervisor gives approval, this will be done on a case by case basis.

	<p>Choice time: A limited number of children will be allowed in each interest area at a time. Classroom staff will monitor the children’s movement while in the classroom.</p> <p>Water/Sand Tables will not be used during this time.</p> <p>Playdough: If these materials are used, each child will have a container with their name on it, and used during small group lesson.</p> <p>Art Materials: All art materials will be stored in individual containers and labeled with their name.</p> <p>Dramatic Play: Keep easy to clean/disinfect items available.</p> <p>Large group, circle time, and group read aloud: Keep groups of children separated, teachers can float between groups, complete weekly lesson plan as prearranged.</p> <p>Wait time/lines: Staff will limit lines and wait time as much as possible. This includes for bathroom use, handwashing, for transitions, and on way to and from playground.</p>
Family Services, Enrollment, Attendance	
Enrolled siblings	Siblings enrolled in the program will be placed in the same classroom when program are able to do so.
Attendance	The SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five program knows an important factor in school success is establishing a regular routine of attendance. This means attending each scheduled school day with on-time arrival and pick-up. Attendance will be strongly encouraged for healthy children. Any absences due to illness must follow the updated Illness policy.
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online applications are available for new applicants • See COVID Application Expectations document
Parent Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to drop off and pick up changes, and the effort to reduce people in the building; staff are encouraged to engage and support families from a distance. Phone calls, emails and Seesaw will all be acceptable forms of parent engagement. • If meeting with a family is necessary, COVID Application Expectations should be used.
Parent Committee and Goal Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be suspended for the duration of the pandemic. We will plan for virtual options throughout the year for these events.
Strategy to reach full enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Head Start was fully enrolled at the beginning of the 20-21 school year and needs no further action to reach full enrollment. • The Head Start program started the year with lower enrollment numbers due to North Dakota Childcare guidance suggesting unmasked groups limit 15 people per room. Full Day classrooms were enrolled at 12 students and Part Day classrooms were enrolled at 10 (9 at West due to ECSE flexible spot) also in part of request from facilities we are housed in. November- 244 of 361 funded enrollment slots (67.6 %) • In December the program switched to masking students. North Dakota Childcare guidance states masked programs may return to regular group sizes. The following Action Plan to increase funded enrollment by

	<p>has been created:</p> <p>January- Classrooms will each add 1 slot to be filled in January. Full Day priority in Fargo will be given to the students who are needing a transition from our Early Head Start program (6 of 13) Priority will also go to keeping sibling sets in the same classroom. The current EHS transition room (Center 26) will return to a 2-3 year old level room. Slots as of 2/1/21 12 total slot additions, 256 of 361 slots</p> <p>February- Classrooms will each add more slots as able to reach 14 in full day classes, 11 in part day classes (10 in West). This round will prioritize transitions from our Early Head Start program as well as high need children who are waiting on the wait list. Slots as of 3/4/21 10 total slot additions, 266 of 361 slots</p> <p>March- Classrooms will finish out the year 14 in full day classes, 11 in part day classes (10 in West). Slots expected for 4-1-21 2 total slot additions, 268 of 361 slots</p> <p>Plan will be reevaluated continuously and updated for the remainder of the school year.</p>
Health Services	
30 Day Deadlines	<p>Programs must consult with parents to determine whether each child has ongoing sources of continuous, accessible health care and insurance coverage. If programs cannot meet the 30 day requirement, they will not be penalized but are expected to make this determination as soon as possible. These determinations should be made even if programs are providing remote services. In instances where the child does not have such a source of coverage or care, the program must continue to assist the family in accessing a source of care that meets the standard.</p>
90 Day Deadlines	<p>Within 90 calendar days after the child first attends the program, we are required to support the parents in ensuring the children are up-to-date, both for their preventative as well as primary medical and oral health care, as soon as feasible for the 2020-2021 program year. Programs will not be penalized for determining this information after the 90 day timeline. Programs must complete this requirement as soon as possible and should document their efforts to meet these requirements.</p>
Mental Health & Disability Services	
Developmental Screening (Brigance and/or ASQ-3)	<p>Developmental screens will be completed within 45 days of entrance whenever possible. For children attending on-site, screening will be conducted as it has been in the past, using the Brigance at the preschool level, and the ASQ-3 at Early Head Start. For children enrolled in the virtual option, parents will be invited to bring their child on-site for a brief, scheduled screening. IF parents do not wish to do this, they will be asked to complete a parent report screening (ASQ-3) and return it as soon as possible. If the screen is not returned to the center within 45 days of entry,</p>

	the parents will be called to discuss any potential concerns they have regarding their child’s development. For all children, decisions regarding potential referrals will be made as a team, including parent, teacher, and coordinators, just as past years.
Social-Emotional Screening (ASQ:SE)	Teachers will complete the ASQ:SE within 45 days of entry for all children attending on-site. Parents will be asked to complete and return the ASQ:SE for all children, including children who attend on-site or virtual options. For children who are attending the virtual option and parents have not submitted the completed screen within 45 days of entry, the parents will be called to discuss any potential concerns they have regarding their child’s development. For all children, decisions regarding potential referrals will be made as a team, including parent, teacher, and coordinators, just as past years.
Closing Classrooms, Sites, or Program-Going Virtual	
Throughout the 2020-2021 program year, we may have to close a classroom, site, or our program for a recommended time period by the North Dakota Department of Health. During these times we will still expect our staff to work with our children and families virtually. We will utilize Seesaw and ChildPlus to connect with our families.	
Education	<p>If a classroom or site is shut down due to exposure to COVID-19 teachers will then move to teaching virtually during that time.</p> <p>Staff will be expected to have 3 days of virtual lessons prepared ahead of time, as these closures may happen suddenly, depending on when we receive COVID-19 test results. Please see the Guidance for Virtual Learning for more information, which will be discussed during Pre-Service.</p> <p>Virtual lesson plans should continue to follow the curriculum, ELOF, and school readiness goals.</p> <p>Virtual lesson plans should be engaging and impactful while continuing to help our children prepare for Kindergarten.</p>
Family Services and ERSEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a classroom or site is shut down due to exposure to COVID-19 staff will then move to engaging virtually with parents during that time. • Enrollment applications or other parent engagement appointments should be rescheduled or completed virtually. • Children’s attendance will be marked as present during distance learning days, with a note about participation being distance learning. No meals will be counted for them. • Goal-oriented work and crisis intervention work should continue with our families. Staff should continue to be reachable for this work via phone, email and/or Seesaw. • Staff will be expected to have at minimum weekly communication with each distance learning family. • In addition to weekly communication, staff will provide a parent education resource at least weekly for distance learning families
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any required screens would be sent home for parents to complete and return.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mental health coordinator would call to discuss screening results that indicated follow up might be needed. • Referrals to community resources would be made as needed or requested. • Parents can call the mental health coordinator to discuss concerns, regardless of screening results.
<p>Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a classroom or site is shut down due to exposure to COVID-19 staff will then move to a virtual option to stay connected with the families • Staff will continue to follow up/assist the families in completing, and scheduling appointments to complete requirements • Staff will utilize child plus, seesaw, email and phone calls to stay connected with the families • Thorough documentation will be maintained in child plus • Staff will continue to utilize, and update their case management forms regularly • Staff will share with the families weekly education in various health/nutrition topics
<p>Pregnant Moms and Newborn Visits</p>	<p>Enrollment and Health Services will be provided virtually.</p>