

TIP SHEET: CHILD CARE WHEN YOU ARE RETURNING TO WORK

If your employer is preparing a return-to-work plan, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic may create special challenges for parents until child care centers and home-based providers, summer programs and schools can also reopen at full occupancy. Below are some considerations and ideas for coordinating child care during this transitional period.

RETURNING TO A CHILD CARE PROVIDER

Child care centers that have remained open or are reopening during the pandemic are operating under new restrictions that may require adjustments. To comply with stricter sanitation guidelines, many centers must modify operating hours to thoroughly clean the facilities after children have gone home. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is also encouraging all child care providers to implement strict health screening measures for everyone who enters their buildings, as well as enforce sick policies more strictly. It is likely that provider ratios will be smaller to keep groups within gathering size guidelines.

Contact your child care provider to understand new policies and accommodations that may be needed at home and at work.

PLAN AND PREPARE

You can help your children prepare to return to child care as well as protect your entire family by practicing and promoting everyday healthy habits.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Develop a plan for alternative pickup and child care arrangements, in case the child care facility is required to dismiss early or temporarily close. Talk with your employer about sick leave and telework options if your child has any illness and you need to stay home.

RESOURCES FOR SECURING AT-HOME CHILD CARE

Multiple factors may contribute to a decision not to return your children to a child care provider. Or you may need to secure supervision for older children. When in-home care is needed, consider these options.

IN YOUR NETWORK

- Reach out to family members, stay-at-home parents or friends who may be available to assist you.
- Working an opposite shift of the secondary parent or other adults in the household (if applicable) can help cover child care needs.
- Coordinate with co-workers, if possible, to watch each other's child(ren) during alternative shifts.
- Ask your supervisor if they can assist in organizing creative care solutions. If you're a supervisor, be as flexible as possible to accommodate coordination being attempted by employees in accordance with your business practices.

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Check for resources from your school and/or child care center about temporary care providers, such as school staff and child care workers. These caregivers will be CPR and First Aid certified, a particularly good option for children with special needs that can be accommodated. Post to social media or online parenting groups to find additional child care options.
- Post to Nextdoor (www.nextdoor.com) to see if anyone in your surrounding neighborhood could care for your child(ren).
- Search for local grassroots child care co-ops and matching services that are quickly coming online to help address needs during this time.
- Contact your local United Way about local child care resources (www.unitedway.org/find-your-united-way).

IN-HOME CARE PROVIDER WEBSITES

Below are online posting boards that allow parents to place an advertisement for a caregiver or browse the resumes of nannies and babysitters who are looking for a child care position. Please note that there may be fees associated with these services and that parents are responsible for checking references. Some sites partner with background check agencies whose services are available for an additional fee:

- <http://www.gonannies.com>
- <http://www.care.com>
- <https://www.seekingsitters.com>
- <https://www.care4hire.com>
- <https://www.nannylane.com>
- <http://www.sittercity.com>
- <https://www.urbansitter.com>