

CALVERT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

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Good morning,

We have been receiving calls from daycare providers on the new face mask requirements. We are hoping that this additional guidance will be helpful.

New mask guidelines created by MDH and MSDE state that face masks are required to be worn in daycare centers and in in-home day care settings by both staff members and children 5 years and older. Children aged 2 up to age 5 may also wear masks, if developmentally appropriate. Children under 2 years of age should NOT wear face masks. This does not change the recommendations for social distancing, frequent hand washing, disinfecting of high touch surfaces and screening for symptoms/COVID exposure.

Specific examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Face masks should not have attachments that may pose a choking hazard (e.g. buttons).
- Face masks should not be worn if they are a strangulation risk (e.g. during certain activities).
- Face masks should not be worn while napping.
- Face masks should not be worn while playing outdoors if social distancing can be maintained.
- Face masks should not be worn during activities that will make them wet (e.g. swimming) or during high intensity activities (e.g. running).
- Children should NOT be forced to wear a face covering if they are not able to do so safely.

Face masks should be removed by touching the straps only and hand washing should be done before and after removing a face mask. Face masks should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the child's name and date of use) when removed until the face covering needs to be put on again (i.e. around meal times). All masks should be labeled with the child's name, room number/teacher name and marked to show front/back of the face mask.

Face shields may be worn in addition to masks, but they are not an adequate substitute for a face mask. A parent or caregiver may supply a note from their medical provider if there is a true medical reason a mask cannot be worn.

Please see the full set of updated guidelines put forth by the MDH and the MSDE for further specifics and guidance around mask wearing and COVID related closures.

https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/3/covid_guidance_full_080420.pdf

Thank you for the care you provide and please feel free to continue to work with your licensing specialists as well as the health department for any specific questions that may arise.

Sincerely,

Michelle A. Folsom Elder, M.D.