



January 3rd, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Earlier in December, we released the COVID-19 plans for the Winter months, including the plans for early learning and childcare services. Many of you have written to me and the department about understandable concerns as it pertains to the one symptom exclusion and mask wearing for children ages 24 months and up. Your concerns were considered as decisions were made and reassessed.

Since the release of the Winter Plan for COVID-19, we are now seeing cases of the new variant Omicron. We are seeing a rise in cases and we must do all we can to protect our health care system.

The following notes changes that will be implemented based on the new variant and on your concerns.

MASK WEARING

- Wearing a mask is a proven measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19. That is why children ages 24 months and up must wear masks when in a childcare facility.
- **HOWEVER**, masks will not be required for children in outdoor settings if physical distancing can be maintained between groups.

SYMPTOMS

- If your child has a new or worsening symptom that develops, they will not be permitted to attend an early learning and childcare facility until they have a negative point-of-care rapid test (POCT).
- If a child or staff member has a constant and recurring symptom, for example a runny nose caused by seasonal allergies, they may continue to attend the early learning and childcare facility after they have received a negative POCT test.

CONTACT TRACING

- Public Health will no longer do contact tracing for positive COVID-19 cases.
- You will now be required to inform your early learning and childcare facility if your child has tested positive on a rapid test (POCT) or PCR.

ISOLATION PERIOD FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO TEST POSITIVE

- The new isolation requirements announced today are as such:
 - Ten (10) days for individuals who are not fully vaccinated or immunocompromised from the date of your positive test, and
 - Five (5) days for individuals who are fully vaccinated from the date of your positive test.

Minister/Ministre

Education and Early Childhood Development / Éducation et Développement de la petite enfance
P.O. Box/C.P. 6000 Fredericton New Brunswick/Nouveau-Brunswick E3B 5H1 Canada

- When your vaccinated child leaves their five (5) days of isolation, your child needs to avoid vulnerable individuals, vulnerable settings such as nursing homes, homeless shelters, health care facilities, and large gatherings for an additional five (5) days. Your vaccinated child can return to the early learning and childcare facility after the initial five (5) days.

RAPID TEST

- You can pick up your rapid test kits at a community distribution site. Go to the GNB website and click on “Rapid Point of Care Test” to find the one nearest you.

AT-HOME LEARNING

- Schools will not reopen on January 10 for face-to-face learning. Schools will move to at-home learning from January 11 to January 21.
- Your early learning and childcare facility has been asked to ensure that children have quiet time during the day for reading or other work that your child can do independently.

More than ever, we need to take care of ourselves, our families, and our communities. The situation is serious, and we all need to do our part.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dominic Cardy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dominic Cardy
Minister