

# Passaic Family Head Start, Inc.

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## COVID-19 Mitigation Policy Effective August 18, 2025

Passaic Family Head Start is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and staff by following the most current COVID-19 recommendations from the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and federal Head Start guidance. All staff, children, and families are encouraged to stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations, including boosters.

According to the CDC, as of August 18, 2025, individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or any respiratory virus, such as fever, cough, or sore throat, should remain home and stay away from others. You are able to return to normal activity when both are true: (1) Your symptoms are improving overall, (2) you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication as mandated by the state of NJ, regardless of what the pedestrian says. The CDC no longer uses a fixed 5-day isolation rule; instead, the guidance is symptom-based.

After returning to normal activities, extra precaution must be followed for the next **five days**: (1) wear a mask when around others, (2) keep physical distance, wash hands frequently. If symptoms reappear, restart the process by staying at home until your symptoms have improved and you have been fever-free for 24 hours.

At PFHS, preventive practices remain a priority. Staff and children should wash their hands frequently, cover coughs and sneezes, and use hand sanitizer under supervision when appropriate. High-touch surfaces will continue to be cleaned daily, and classrooms will be ventilated whenever possible by using air purifiers.

Testing is encouraged for anyone experiencing symptoms or with known exposure. Routine screening testing is **not** required, but may be implemented temporarily in response to outbreaks or elevated community transmission levels. Families are encouraged to discuss COVID-19 vaccinations for their children with their healthcare provider. While the CDC currently recommends a shared decision-making approach, the AAP strongly advises vaccination for children 6–23 months and high-risk older children; Passaic Family Head Start supports informed choices based on family and provider guidance.

This policy will be reviewed regularly in partnership with our **Health Advisory Committee** and adjusted based on evolving local, state, and federal guidance. Families and staff will be updated promptly on any changes. By working together and remaining flexible, we aim to create a healthy environment that minimizes disruption to learning while prioritizing the well-being of our community.