



28 January 2022

## **COVID-19 Update**

### **What you need to know:**

- Notification of a positive case
- Notification of closing or reduced numbers
- Notification of re-opening
- Steps for managing a positive case
- Update on gap fee waiving
- Early childhood digital learning packs

Dear services and providers

To ensure that providers are not undertaking unnecessary administrative work, we would like to clarify the approach to notifying us when there is a positive case in your service in line with the regulations and requirements.

Below we have outlined the notification steps services must take when:

- There is a positive case in your service
- When your service has to close or reduce numbers
- When your service re-opens

## Notification of a positive case

If there is a positive case in your service:

- Notify us of the positive case (under Regulation 175(2)(c)) within 7 days, however it is recommended that you lodge the notification as soon as possible.
- You do not need to submit a separate notification for each positive case if detected **within 7 days** of lodging the original notification.
  - Keep a record of any additional cases detected within the 7 days and upload this as additional documentation to the original notification.
- Cases detected **after 7 days** of lodging the original notification should be notified via separate notifications to ensure the notification timeframe of Regulation 175(2)(c) is being met.

To lodge an incident notification in NQA ITS, follow the instructions in the [how to guide](#).

## Notification of closing or reduced numbers

If you are closing or reducing the number of children that the service can provide care for due to COVID or staff shortages, you need to notify us (Regulation 175(2)(b)).

The timeframe for notifying us in these circumstances is **within 24 hours** of the

incident.

See the [how to guide](#) for instructions on how to complete the notification.

## Notification of re-opening

If you know the date your service will re-open when you lodge the closure notification you may enter that date on the original notification.

If you are unsure of the re-open date please use this [how to guide](#) to notify us when you re-open.

If you don't notify us of your re-opening, your service will appear on the public register as closed.

This may have an impact on your future enrolments and also result in incorrect information being provided to the Commonwealth Government.

## Steps for managing a positive case

If you're notified of a positive case in your service, follow these steps:

- If you:
  - haven't lodged a notification for a positive case in the previous 7 days, lodge a notification in [NQA ITS](#).
  - have lodged a notification for a positive case in the previous 7 days, keep a record of all cases and upload this as additional documentation to the original notification in [NQA ITS](#).
- Determine infectious period of positive case (48 hours prior to positive COVID test or from the onset of symptoms, whichever is earlier).

- Determine staff, children and visitors who were in attendance with the case during their infectious period.
- Send all those in attendance (parents, staff, visitors) the [risk of COVID-19 letter \(DOCX, 40KB\)](#) and [factsheet \(PDF, 108KB\)](#) from NSW Health. While testing and isolation is no longer mandatory for exposures in ECE services, NSW Health has provided [testing and isolation recommendations](#) that should be considered by anyone exposed to COVID-19.
- Undertake a thorough clean of your service.

## Update on gap fee waiving

The Australian Government recently announced that until 30 June 2022, services can waive the gap fee and receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) if a child is unable to attend care for one of four reasons:

1. They, or a member of their immediate household, must isolate due to COVID-19.
2. The child is at a higher risk of severe disease from COVID-19.
3. The service, or a room at the service, is closed due to COVID-19.
  - Written advice from a state agency is not required for closures after 27 January 2022.
4. The state or territory has restricted access to child care in a region due to COVID-19.

For more information visit the [DESE website](#).

## Early childhood digital learning packs

[Early childhood digital learning packs 2022](#) are now available.

The packs provide easy-to-use timetabled activities for families to support continuity of learning for children who are unable to attend their usual early childhood service.

The activities all have a learning goal and link to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

They provide a range of opportunities for adults to engage with children in play and conversations that promote learning across all areas.

The Kangaroo and Emu pack are available now.

Two weeks' worth of timetabled learning activities will be published each fortnight throughout Term 1.

## **For more information**

Educators are encouraged to regularly check the [NSW Health website](#) and [NSW Government website](#) regarding up-to-date restrictions in NSW.

If you have any questions about your service operation you can contact the Information and Enquiries team on 1800 619 113 or by emailing [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au).

If you have a positive COVID case or have specific questions about your service's response to COVID-19, you can also email [ECEC.COVIDCASE@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ECEC.COVIDCASE@det.nsw.edu.au)



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Sent to all services and providers in NSW

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