

# MANAGING ILLNESS IN SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES DURING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC

One of the most important things we can do to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community is to stay at home when we are unwell, even when we have the mildest of symptoms.

## What you need to know:

### 1. If a child is unwell, even with the mildest of symptoms, they must stay at home

- If a child becomes unwell during the day, they must be collected from school/early childhood education and care (ECEC) as soon as possible.

### 2. If a child has any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) outlined below, however mild, they should get tested and they must remain at home until they receive their results:

- fever
- chills or sweats
- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath
- runny nose
- loss of sense of smell or taste.

In certain circumstances headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea may also be considered symptoms.

For further advice:

- call the 24-hour coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline 1800 675 398
- call a general practitioner
- use the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) [online self-assessment tool](#).

Visit: [Where to get tested](#).

### 3. A child must stay at home until they are symptom free, even if their coronavirus (COVID-19) test is negative

If a person has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) they must isolate until they receive clearance from the Department of Health and Human Services. Read the [What to do if you've tested positive for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) factsheet](#) (PDF) for more information.

If a person is a close contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) the Department of Health and Human Services will get in contact to tell them they are a close contact of a person who is confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19). A close contact must quarantine at home. Read the [What to do if you have been in close contact with someone with coronavirus \(COVID-19\) factsheet \(Word\)](#) for more information.

For information on the minimum periods students and children need to stay at home for other conditions, refer to the [DHHS school exclusion table](#).

**This advice has been prepared by the Department of Education and Training, Safer Care Victoria and the Department of Health and Human Services**

#### **4. Children do NOT need a medical certificate before returning to school/ECEC**

Once symptoms have cleared, there is no requirement from the Department of Education and Training or DHHS for children/students to have a medical certificate before they return to school/ECEC.

*Thank you for your support in following these steps, together we can all stay safe.*