



New York City Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene
Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner

Bureau of Child Care
125 Worth Street
NY, NY 10013

February 26, 2020

Re: Update on Novel Coronavirus

Dear Families,

This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention discussed possible options for what could happen if there is local person-to-person transmission of the novel coronavirus in the United States, including recommendations for child care programs to consider.

At this time, it is important to listen to facts and not respond to fear. Currently there are no confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in New York City and the risk to New Yorkers remains low.

However, transmission of the virus in other countries has raised our level of concern, and we are preparing for the possibility of person-to-person transmission in New York City. The measures that are put in place should local person-to-person transmissions begin will depend on the number of individuals affected and the general severity of illness we experience in our city. The NYC Health Department is vigilantly preparing for all possible scenarios, and we will continue to monitor and communicate about any possible impact to our child care providers.

There are no plans to close child care programs at this time. This is an extreme measure that can be disruptive to day-to-day life, and the decision to implement will be at the direction of public health experts.

All New Yorkers should continue to practice general flu prevention measures including:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve
- Wash your hands regularly
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get your flu shot – it's never too late
- Stay home if you're feeling sick. Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms and travel history.

Please read the Frequently Asked Questions available at schools.nyc.gov, or visit nyc.gov/health at any time for important updates.

We will continue to clearly communicate with child care providers about our ongoing efforts regarding the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Hawkins".

Simone C. Hawkins
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Childcare
Division of Environmental Health