
	Management Area: Children's Services	Version No: 6.0 Pages: 7
	Category of Procedure: Operational	Approval Date: 07/07/2023 Procedure Approver: Head of Children's Services
Procedure Title: Dealing with Infectious Diseases Procedure		Author: Head of Children's Services

# YMCA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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## Dealing with Infectious Diseases Procedure

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## 1. Purpose

The YMCA of South Australia aims to provide a safe and hygienic environment that will promote the health of the children. Children's health, safety, and wellbeing are a priority and YMCA.

As the care needs of a sick child cannot be met without dramatically reducing the general level of supervision of the other children, or risking other children's health, parents are asked not to bring sick children to the centre and to collect unwell children.

## 2. Scope

The scope of this procedure applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, educators, and volunteers. This procedure applies to all YMCA Member Associations. For the purposes of this document, we refer to these as the YMCA. All Policies and Procedures must conform to this procedure.

## 3. Procedures

### Illness

#### Definition of Illness


- A child will be considered sick if they:
- Sleep at unusual times or is lethargic.
- Has a fever over 38°.
- Is crying constantly from discomfort.
- Vomits or has diarrhoea.
- Needs constant one on one care.
- Has an infectious illness.

If a child is unwell at home, parents will be asked not to bring their child to the service. If a child becomes ill or develops symptoms at the centre, the parents will be contacted to collect the child. The child who is ill will be comforted, cared for, and placed in a quiet isolated area with adult supervision until the child's parent or other authorised adult takes them home.

During a fever, other methods will be employed to reduce the child's temperature until the parents arrive, or help is sought. Such methods include some clothes removed as required, clear fluids given, tepid sponges administered.

If a child's temperature is very high, cannot be brought down and parents cannot be contacted and the situation becomes serious, the child will be taken to the doctor, or an ambulance called.

If a staff member is unwell, they should not report for work. Staff should contact the Service Director as soon as possible to inform them that they are unable to attend work.

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If a staff member becomes ill or develops symptoms at the centre, they can return home if able or organise for someone to take them home. The Service Director will organise a suitable replacement as soon as possible.

## Infectious Diseases

### Exclusion

The need for exclusion depends on:

- The ease with which the infection can be spread.
- The ability of the infected person to follow hygiene precautions.
- Whether or not the person has some immunity to the infection (either vaccination or past infection)
- To a lesser extent, the severity of the disease.

Children and staff will be excluded from the service if they are ill with any contagious illness. This includes diarrhoea and conjunctivitis. The period of exclusion will be based on the recommendations outlined by SA Health.

The decision to exclude or re-admit a child or staff member will be the responsibility of the Service Director based on the child's symptoms, medical opinion, and SA Health for children who have infectious diseases or who have been exposed to an infectious disease.

The Service Director or staff members have the right to refuse access if concerned about a child's health. A doctor's clearance certificate will be required for all infectious diseases such as measles, mumps, diphtheria, hepatitis A, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid, and paratyphoid before returning to the service.

A regularly updated copy of the Department of Health guidelines on infectious diseases will be kept attached to the Family Handbook for reference by staff, management and can be found on the website.


Families will be notified of an occurring infectious disease through Xplor and a sign will be displayed at the service.

### Notifiable Infectious Diseases

Under the [South Australian Public Health Act 2011](#), medical practitioners, diagnostic laboratories hospital chief executives, directors of child services (Regulation 175,) or school principals are required to notify SA Health of cases suspected of having or diagnosed with specified infections or diseases.

Some of which include:

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Measles
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

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- Poliomyelitis
- Rubella (German Measles)
- Tetanus
- Covid

A full list is available on the SA Health website.

Notification of infectious disease should be directed to the local SA Health and should be within 3 days of diagnosis. All infectious diseases notification forms are available from SA Health.

### Infection Control

- Regular and thorough cleaning practices will be carried out daily, weekly and monthly as required and are recorded in the Service Communication Book.
- Cleaning and maintenance checklists are done monthly using the IMS system and are verified by area managers.
- Supply and appropriate use of personal protective equipment such as gloves are implemented at the service.
- Training for educators is given when required. Food safety training is mandatory.
- For educators and children who have diarrhoea or vomiting, exclusion is 48 hours in line with recommendations from SA health to prevent an outbreak.
- We support children to take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing. The educational program can include children's life skills for infection control awareness, hygiene and protective practice.
- Our educators and staff model health and personal hygiene practices with children and reinforce these messages with families.


### Immunisation

The aim of immunisation is to prevent people from acquiring vaccine preventable diseases by achieving high vaccination rates in the community, through SA Health.

- Families are asked for their immunisation status upon enrolment.
- Children under the age of 19 years of age must meet the immunisation requirements to receive Child Care Subsidy and Family Tax Benefit.

Following changes to the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (the Act)*, from 7 August 2020, children will not be able to enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met.

The Act states:

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- an early childhood service must not enrol a child if all immunisation requirements are not met
- a child cannot attend, or continue to attend, an early childhood service if all immunisation requirements are not met
- early childhood services must keep a current copy of an approved immunisation record for each child enrolled in, or attending that service, and
- approved immunisation records must be supplied by parents/guardians to the early childhood service at specified times.

For most children, an approved immunisation record will be an 'immunisation history statement', which is downloaded from the Australian Immunisation Register.


The immunisation history statement is an official record of immunisations given to a child, and it will also indicate if a child has any approved exemption.

In very rare circumstances, a certificate from the Chief Public Health Officer or a document approved by the Chief Public Health Officer may be accepted.

A letter from a GP, an overseas immunisation record or the South Australian Child Health and Development Record (the "Blue Book") are not considered approved immunisation records.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Department / Area	Role / Responsibility
Children's Services Management	<p>Is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of the procedure and related systems, ensuring content meets all legislated requirements.</p> <p>To facilitate procedure awareness to all educators on the appropriate implementation and use of the procedure.</p>

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Responsible Persons	<p>Nominated supervisor/service management will oversee the implementation and service adherence of the procedure.</p> <p>Nominated supervisor/person with management and control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate.</p> <p>Is responsible for addressing any instance of non-compliance with this procedure and implementing strategies to help prevent non-compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the procedure.</p>
All employees, volunteers & students	<p>Responsible for meeting the requirements outlined in this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for raising concerns or complaints following this procedure.</p>

## 5. Definitions

### Educators

Any person YMCA employs or engages – including paid employees, volunteers, Board Directors, contractors, consultants, and student placements.

### Exclusion period


Families keep their children at home in the event of illness or disease within the service. The aim is to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in the service, as the less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease and people who are at risk of catching the disease, the less chance the disease has of spreading.

Exclusion periods are based on the time that a person with a specific disease or condition might be infectious to others.

### Infectious disease

A disease that is designated under a law of a relevant jurisdiction or by a health authority as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education and care service.

Infectious diseases are illnesses caused by the spread of microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites) or prions to humans from other humans, animals, or the environment, including food and water.

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### Immunisation

Immunisation protects you from harmful diseases before you come into contact with them. It uses your body's natural defences to build resistance to specific diseases. If you come into contact with that disease in the future, your immune system remembers it and responds quickly to prevent the disease from developing.

### 6. Key Relevant Documents

- YMCAs of Australia Illness and Infectious Diseases Policy
- Medication policy
- Nutrition and food procedure
- Department of Health guidelines
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Staying Healthy in Childcare 6<sup>th</sup> Edition
- SA Health

### 7. Monitoring Evaluation and Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years or earlier for reasonable cause or upon the request of the YMCA South Australia Board.

### 8. Version History

Version	Date	Description of changes	Effective Date	Review Date
2.0	27/05/2016	Updated.		
3.0	05/08/2019	Converted to Procedure.		
4.0	17/02/2022	Review and update.		
5.0	07/07/2023	Review and Update links.	07/08/2023	July 2025
6.0	26/05/2025	Updated to reflect staying healthy in childcare 6 <sup>th</sup> edition. Removed expired links. Updated infection control section. Added immunisation requirements. Updated roles and responsibilities. Revised relevant documents. Removed COVID 19 section.	26/05/2025	May 2027