

SoonerStart COVID-19 Re-Entry Plan



OKLAHOMA
Education



SoonerStart COVID-19 Re-Entry Plan

The SoonerStart Re-Entry Plan provides protocols for the safe delivery of early intervention services. These protocols align with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Oklahoma Department of Education (OSDE) and the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) and are intended to:

- Insure equitable and appropriate services for SoonerStart families;
- Prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of families, children, and our workforce;
- Sustain our partnerships with families around their children's growth and development; and
- Support SoonerStart personnel to deliver early intervention services to children and families.

SoonerStart currently utilizes the Oklahoma COVID-19 Alert System; a four-tiered risk measurement tool with corresponding color categories that identify the current COVID-19 risk level, to inform service delivery options. As experts learn more about COVID-19 and as conditions surrounding this pandemic evolve, this guidance may change at either a state or site level.

PHASE I: SOONERSTART STAFF RETURN TO OFFICE

Trigger: Any county that is considered a “Green, Yellow or Orange” county in accordance with Oklahoma’s COVID-19 Alert system

<https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/covid-19-alert-system>

As permitted by local and state ordinances, SoonerStart Staff will return to their designate office as long as they do not have:

- A temperature of over 100 degrees, muscle or body aches
- A cough, sore throat, congestion or runny nose
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Diarrhea, Nausea, Vomiting

Full or part-time telework may be approved on an individual basis depending on local office protocols or for staff who meet the criteria for at-risk personnel. Supervisors will audit staff for at-risk health conditions to make individualized decisions. Alternative work locations must be approved by the appropriate agency supervisor.

Face coverings must be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained in accordance with CDC guidelines. This may include areas such as restrooms, breakrooms/kitchens, or common areas. Face coverings are not required when an employee is able to adhere to social distancing protocol, such as working independently in an office.

Supervisors will audit office space to ensure adequate social distancing space is available. If desk space is less than 6 feet from another individual, supervisors will consider an alternative work plan which may include alternating staff office days, alternate desk location, etc.

All staff are to support the cleaning of commonly touched materials and surfaces in their work area, including:

- Door handles
- Light switches
- Desk tops / table tops
- Printers / Phones
- Kitchenette items

Note: Some supplies might be limited for a period of time due to a national shortages. State staff will be working with Regional Directors to secure items as quickly as possible.

Staff who have had COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate at home and cannot return to the office or provide in-person services until:

- He/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without being given fever-reducing medications **AND**
- has had improvement in symptoms **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

Staff who have been exposed to COVID-19 (within 6 feet of an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis) should self-quarantine for 14 days.

Staff that are able to work while quarantined may continue to provide services through phone and/or video conferencing technology.

In-Person Meetings

In-person staff meetings or professional development should only be conducted if video conferencing is not available. For in-person meetings, participants need to adhere to 6-foot distancing and other CDC health guidelines, including wearing face coverings. If meeting in a conference room, participants should be aware of table tops or chairs they touch and disinfect these areas when the meeting concludes. SoonerStart staff are expected to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before and after meetings (and periodically throughout the day). CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water whenever possible because handwashing reduces the amounts of all types of germs and chemicals on hands. But if soap and water are not available, using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can help you avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

PHASE II: CONTINUED VIRTUAL VISITS WITH LIMITED IN-PERSON VISITS

Trigger: Any county that is a “Green or Yellow” county in accordance with Oklahoma’s COVID-19 Alert system

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During Phase II, telephone or video conferencing services will continue as the default option for early intervention services unless:

- the family lacks the resources to participate in virtual visits; or
- services are not effective using teleconferencing methodologies

In the instances outlined above, in-person visits should be offered at the local health department where cleaning procedures can be monitored and social distancing can be achieved. Staff may also offer in-person services in alternate outdoor locations such as a public park or the family’s front lawn.

Eligibility evaluations during Phase II will continue virtually with one service provider.

The Resource Coordinator will contact families that indicate they do not have the technology resources or that virtual services are not effective to schedule an IFSP meeting to discuss service options including possible face-to-face visits. Please note that for families receiving face-to-face visits, the procedures for obtaining verbal consent will be discontinued.

For families continuing with phone consultation and/or video conferencing, staff will continue to follow the COVID-19 virtual procedures found on the SoonerStart Staff website.

SoonerStart will return to providing only virtual services with families during any period of time that the family’s county of residence is at risk level Orange or Red as indicated by the Oklahoma COVID-19 Alert System.

Procedures for In-Person Visits

SoonerStart Staff

Before meeting with a family for a face-to-face in visit, the service provider (and RC, if applicable) must answer “no” to the following questions:

- Have you had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Are you currently ill? Do you have symptoms of a cold, cough, shortness of breath, chilling, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches or a temperature of 100 degrees or more?
- Have you temporarily lost your sense of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?

Staff who have had COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate at home and cannot return to the office or provide in-person services until:

- He/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without being given fever-reducing medications **AND**
- has had improvement in symptoms **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

Staff who have been exposed to COVID-19 (within 6 feet of an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis) should self-quarantine for 14 days. The state's contact-tracing procedures shall be followed with regard to both isolation and quarantine, as indicated.

Staff who are able to work while quarantined may continue to provide services through telephone and/or video conferencing technology.

SoonerStart staff should adhere to the following safety precautions:

- Staff must wear face covering when meeting in-person with children and families.
- Staff must wash hands or disinfect hands immediately before and as soon as possible after the visit with the family.
- In-person visits conducted at health departments will be in one designated room. The room will be sanitized before and after every visit. All unnecessary toys and items in the room will be removed.
- Any items used during the visit will be supplied by the provider. The provider will sanitize all items before and after each visit.
- Meeting at alternative service locations such as a public park or any outside space at the family's home is encouraged.
- Service Providers should utilize coaching practices to the greatest extent possible in an effort to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet between yourself and the child or parent.
- Services will not be provided in a child care setting at this time. Other options should be explored.

SoonerStart Families

When scheduling the in-person visit, staff will ask the family:

- Have you or anyone living in your home had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Are you or anyone living in your home currently ill? Do you or anyone living in your house have symptoms of a cold, cough, shortness of breath, chilling, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches or a temperature of 100 degrees or more?
- Have you temporarily lost your sense of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, the in-person visit cannot be scheduled however, a virtual visit must be offered.

SoonerStart family members who report having COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate at home and cannot receive in-person services until:

- He/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without being given fever-reducing medications **AND**
- has had improvement in symptoms **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

SoonerStart family members who report being exposed to COVID-19 (within 6 feet of an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis) should be advised to self-quarantine for 14 days. The state's contact-tracing procedures shall be followed with regard to both isolation and quarantine, as indicated.

SoonerStart families will participate in the following safety precautions:

- The Service Provider will call family the morning of the scheduled visit to ask health screening questions about the child, parent/guardian, and other household members. If anyone in the household has COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or tested positive for COVID-19 since the earlier scheduling call, the in-person visit will be cancelled.
- Adult family members will be required to wear face coverings for all in-person services conducted indoors. Face coverings for adult family members will be encouraged but not required for In-person services held outdoors as long as social distancing of at least 6 feet can be maintained.
- For appointments conducted at the health department, only one parent/guardian will be allowed to be in the room with the child or children receiving services.
- Upon entry into the health department, both parent/guardian and child will have their temperatures taken and asked additional screening questions regarding COVID-19 symptoms.
- Parent/guardian will be required to use hand sanitizer before visit begins.
- If SoonerStart staff notes that a parent/guardian or child is coughing, has a runny nose, or seems ill, they will inform the parent/guardian that the visit cannot occur in person and offer an alternate time for a virtual visit.
- The parent/guardian will be asked to limit items brought into the health department setting (i.e. purse, diapers/wipes, bottle/cup).

PHASE III: IN-PERSON SERVICES WITH RESTRICTIONS, OPTIONAL VIRTUAL SERVICES

Trigger: Any county that is considered a “Green” county in accordance with Oklahoma’s COVID-19 Alert system

<https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/covid-19-alert-system>

During Phase III, the option of in-person services is expanded to include families requesting face-to-face visits in addition to those families meeting the criteria in Phase II. Virtual visits via telephone and video conferencing will also be available as an option for early intervention services. Regardless of the location or method of services, all verbal consent procedures will be discontinued in Phase III.

The Resource Coordinator will contact each family currently receiving virtual services to discuss the option of continuing with services provided by phone or video conferencing technology or shifting to in-person services. In-person visits may occur at the local health department, an out-of-doors location such as a public park, or the client’s front lawn, or the family’s home with proper precautions in place (i.e. masks, social distancing). An IFSP team meeting will be scheduled with families requesting to move from virtual services to in-person services to determine what modifications to the IFSP are needed.

For new families, eligibility evaluations will be conducted at the local health department by a multidisciplinary team (two staff members representing different disciplines).

SoonerStart will return to providing only virtual services with families during any period of time that the family’s county of residence is at risk level Orange or Red as indicated by the Oklahoma COVID-19 Alert System.

Procedures for In-Person Visits

SoonerStart Staff

Before meeting with a family for a face-to-face in visit, the service provider (and RC, if applicable) must answer “no” to the following questions:

- Have you had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Are you currently ill? Do you have symptoms of a cold, cough, shortness of breath, chilling, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches or a temperature of 100 degrees or more?
- Have you temporarily lost your sense of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?

Staff who have had COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate at home and cannot return to the office or provide in-person services until:

- He/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without being given fever-reducing medications **AND**
- has had improvement in symptoms **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

Staff who have been exposed to COVID-19 (within 6 feet of an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis) should self-quarantine for 14 days. The state’s contact-tracing procedures shall be followed with regard to both isolation and quarantine, as indicated.

Staff who are able to work while quarantined may continue to provide services through telephone and/or video conferencing technology.

SoonerStart staff should adhere to the following safety precautions:

- Staff must wear face covering when meeting in-person with children and families.
- Staff must wash hands or disinfect hands immediately before and as soon as possible after the visit with the family.
- Any in-person visits conducted at health departments will be in one designated room. The room will be sanitized before and after every visit. All unnecessary toys and items in the room will be removed.
- Any items used during the visit will be supplied by the provider. The provider will sanitize all items before and after each visit.
- Meeting at alternative service locations such as a public park or any outside space at the family’s home is encouraged.
- If services are provided in the family’s home, participants should try to stay in one location in the home and be mindful of the surfaces and objects being handled or touched.
- Service Providers should utilize coaching practices to the greatest extent possible in an effort to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet between yourself and the child or parent
- Services should only be considered in a child care setting when in-person or virtual services are not possible for the family. However, this option may not be available at many childcare facilities that continue to prohibit visitors. If services occur in a childcare setting, extra precautions may be in place, per the facility and CDC recommendations.

SoonerStart Families

When scheduling the in-person visit, staff will ask the family:

- Have you or anyone living in your home had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Are you or anyone living in your home currently ill? Do you or anyone living in your house have symptoms of a cold, cough, shortness of breath, chilling, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches or a temperature of 100 degrees or more?
- Have you temporarily lost your sense of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?

If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions, the in-person visit cannot be scheduled however, a virtual visit must be offered.

SoonerStart family members who report having COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate at home and cannot receive in-person services until:

- He/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without being given fever-reducing medications **AND**
- has had improvement in symptoms **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

SoonerStart family members who report being exposed to COVID-19 (within 6 feet of an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis) should be advised to self-quarantine for 14 days. The state's contact-tracing procedures shall be followed with regard to both isolation and quarantine, as indicated.

SoonerStart families will participate in the following safety precautions:

- The Service Provider will call family the morning of the scheduled in-person visit to ask health screening questions about the child, parent/guardian, and other household members. If anyone in the household has COVID-19 like symptoms as described by the CDC or tested positive for COVID-19 since the earlier scheduling call, the in-person visit will be cancelled.
- Adult family members will be required to wear face coverings for all in-person services conducted at the health department and in the family's home. Face coverings for adult family members will be encouraged but not required for In-person services held outdoors as long as social distancing of at least 6 feet can be maintained.
- For appointments conducted at the health department, only one parent/guardian will be allowed to be in the room with the child
- If SoonerStart staff observes that a parent/guardian or child is coughing, has a runny nose, or seems ill at the time of the in-person visit, they will inform the parent/guardian that the visit cannot occur in person and offer an alternate time for a virtual visit.

PHASE IV: IN-PERSON SERVICES WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS, OPTIONAL VIRTUAL SERVICES

Trigger: TO BE DETERMINED

During Phase IV SoonerStart staff and families may resume in-person services and meetings, including staff meetings, with no restrictions regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and social distancing. Staff will resume procedures for new referrals, intakes, evaluations, IFSP meetings and individualized service visits as outlined in the SoonerStart Operations Manual.

Eligibility evaluations and IFSP meetings will be held face-to-face however, SoonerStart will continue to offer families the option of virtual early intervention service visits if allowed by the rules and regulations set forth by the Office of Special Education Programs and the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA).



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