

LDS Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

Last update: November 18, 2021

This policy covers health and safety measures related to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, absences due to illness, and other safety and security issues related to serving children and youth at our Learning Centres and online.

SUMMARY (further details in sections below; please read the whole document!):

- **EVERYONE** (instructors, staff, students, parents and family members) **aged 6 (or in Kindergarten) and above is required** to wear a medical or non-medical **mask** indoors AND when dropping children/students off OUTSIDE the building or learning centre. Exceptions to this policy are noted in section 2.
- Drop off and pick up of students is done outside of the Learning Centre (unless family members are taking part in the program, like SLP or Early RISers, or in a meeting/intake). Family members may only wait in the Centre if authorized by LDS front desk staff.
- EVERYONE must wash or sanitize their hands immediately upon entry to a Learning Centre, and must do so regularly throughout the day.
- If anyone is showing signs of sickness (outside of known allergic or other reactions), they must stay home.
 - Students who are mildly sick may be **required** (depending on timing and prep required) to do their session ONLINE unless they are personally unable to do so due to learning needs.
 - Students who are so sick they are not able to focus on instruction may cancel their session without penalty. Sessions generally cannot be rescheduled.
 - Staff who are mildly sick are required to work from home wherever possible. Staff who are so sick they cannot work are required to take time off per our sick leave policy.

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1) Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all staff (contractors, employees, volunteers) and families (parents, guardians, students/children) attending in person at any LDS location.

An LDS location includes but is not limited to East Van and North Van Learning Centres, LDS Access, any LDS hosted events or gatherings. This policy is superseded by school policy where LDS is providing service at a school via RISE at School.

This policy is in effect as of November 18, 2021 and may be modified by LDS's Executive Director with or without notice. Updates to this policy will be available on our website <https://ldsociety.ca/policies/>.

2) General health and safety (pick up/ drop off, masks, distancing and sanitization):

- Families are to drop off and pick up children OUTSIDE the building.
 - In North Vancouver, this is OUTSIDE our unit but within the North Van library building.
 - Family members participating in Early RISers, SLP, intakes or other programming or appointments may come in, sanitize, wear a mask and comply with the rest of this policy.
 - Family members may only wait in the Centre if authorized by LDS front desk staff.
- Capacity limits are not required for our spaces but we require physical distancing and may enforce a capacity limit depending on the circumstance.

- Physical distancing is required wherever possible.
- When you enter the Learning Centre, you are required to wash your hands or use the provided hand sanitizer.
- GUESTS to a Learning Centre are required to sign in; the sign in sheet collects information includes date, your name, and your contact number.
- **EVERYONE** (instructors, staff, students, parents and family members) **aged 6 (or in Kindergarten) and above is required** to wear a medical or non-medical **mask** indoors AND when dropping children/students off OUTSIDE the building or learning centre. The only exceptions to this are
 - when a student or adult provides LDS with written notice of exemption for personal health or behavioural reasons;
 - when staff are seated at a desk and are distanced from others;
 - when one of the following circumstances may temporarily apply:
 - A person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person
 - If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it
 - If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask.
 - If a person is eating or drinking
 - If a person is behind a barrier
 - While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (for example, a hearing impairment), where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important.

3) Absence due to illness

If anyone is showing signs of sickness (outside of known allergic or other reactions), they must stay home.

- Students who are mildly sick may be **required** (depending on timing and prep required) to do their session ONLINE unless they are personally unable to do so due to learning needs.
- Students who are so sick they are not able to focus on instruction may cancel their session without financial penalty.
 - Sessions generally cannot be rescheduled.
 - We reserve the right to require a doctor's note after repeated absences due to sickness. Please note this is out of respect for our instructors and our staff's time, and out of respect for students on our waiting list who may be able to take advantage of an under-utilized session time.
- Staff who are mildly sick are required to work from home wherever possible. Staff who are so sick they cannot work are required to take time off per our sick leave policy.

Who to contact

To report that your child cannot attend that day for any reason including reporting any symptoms of sickness: email info@ldsociety.ca AND call **604.873.8139**

If you have any urgent need and aren't able to get through to other numbers, please text (preferred) or call Jenn Fane, Director of Education at 778.789.8044

4) Pick up and drop off children

Children will be released from LDS when parents or guardians arrive to pick them up. If you need to contact us during pick up or drop off, please call **604.873.8139** or email info@ldsociety.ca

Students under 16 years of age will only be released to the parents or guardians that we have on file. If you need to make alternate arrangements to have a friend, sibling or other person pick up your child, please confirm this with us in writing well in advance. Students won't be able to be released to unauthorized persons and additional fees may apply if we need to keep staff at our Learning Centre late for supervision.

If you have not picked up your child after 10 minutes of their session being completed, we will contact emergency contacts.

5) Our Space

LDS continues to maintain a clean environment through routine and thorough cleaning processes.

All instruction is done in highly-visible locations with doors open and regular monitoring done by multiple staff. Further information on students' safety and security at our Centres and online is available in our program policies.

LDS East Vancouver location's air is only circulated within our space and not shared with other units. The East Vancouver learning space has HEPA filters that are changed regularly and the space has a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating of 13, which is hospital grade. Our one-to-one in-person session spaces have been designed to include a protective shield, fans to increase air circulation and are arranged to maximize social distancing.

6) Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Staff will minimize close physical contact with the students whenever possible. Staff may come into direct contact with students for safety reasons or to assist the child.

If staff need to be in close proximity with students, they will sanitize and/or wash hands first and wear a face mask.

Staff will continue maintain physical distancing (2 meters) from one another as well as from parents/guardians and other adults who drop off and pick up students.

We follow a "hands to yourself" rule.

7) Behaviour Management and Safety Concerns

LDS strives to make every student feel welcome, comfortable and supported. In a group setting where there are multiple students, we rely on each student to display a certain amount of autonomy. This is important for their learning, the learning of their peers, and especially for the safety of everyone. We expect parents and guardians to give us the best, full description of their child's learning and behavioural needs prior to attending sessions at LDS so we can make the best assessment of if and how we can meet their needs.

If instructor, volunteer or other staff time is fully diverted to managing one student's behavioural needs for extended periods of time, it not only jeopardizes everyone's educational experience, it can also compromise safety of that child and of others in the group (where they are participating in a small group). This can be true even in online learning where a child is not able to focus and engage in the activity at hand.

It is for these reasons, that if any staff member has any concerns about a student's ability to engage, act safely or listen to instructions, we:

- Will, if appropriate, contact the parents or guardians immediately to try to resolve the issue(s);

- Reserve the right to require instruction to be in person OR online, as the case may require;
- Reserve the right to cancel instruction/sessions/camps;
- Reserve the right to ask parents or guardians to pick up their child(ren) immediately if a safety or health issue has arisen that is not resolvable.

8) Emergencies and First Aid

We have several staff with current first aid training and there will always be at least one adult with current CPR and first aid training on site. First aid kits are available on premises and small kits will be taken on any outings (e.g. to the park). Staff cannot diagnose and cannot treat injuries or medical issues beyond washing cuts with water and applying a bandage, assisting in stopping a nosebleed, and administering CPR if needed. Emergency contacts and, if needed, 911, will be called in the event of any medical issue or incident beyond minor scratches and bruises.

9) Vaccination

We currently do not have a policy on vaccination. We have strongly encouraged all staff to receive full vaccinations and have supported them in doing so.

A vaccination policy is currently in development for at least our staff members. We will update our community as soon as this is available.

10) Resources and context

The BC government's [Restart plan](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart) outlines the four steps to reduce restrictions in public spaces and in workplaces. Step 3 began on July 1, 2021, and started a transition period in how COVID-19 is managed in workplaces. In Step 3 of the Restart plan, employers are no longer required to maintain a COVID-19 Safety Plan and can instead transition to communicable disease prevention.

During this transition period, Learning Disabilities Society (LDS) will continue to operate safe and specialized in-person one-to-one remedial instruction and small group programming.

Much of the information we are sourcing in this document can be found in the following places:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing/when-to-get-a-covid-19-test>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools>

11) Feedback

We endeavour to do our best to keep this policy updated and helpful. If you notice an omission or have a question, please call or email: ED@ldsociety.ca or 604.873.8139