



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Masking Guidance Memo 2022-01 for ESIT Providers

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A Message from The State Office of the

Early Support for Infants
and Toddlers Program



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Masking Guidance Memo 2022-01 for ESIT Providers

Dear ESIT Providers,

The purpose of this Guidance Memo 2022-01 is to:

- Briefly address Gov. Inslee's recent announcement regarding [updated health guidance](#) which includes the posting of a revised date for lifting the state's indoor masking requirement
- Provide research-based recommendations for consideration by local provider agencies and their governing bodies
- Communicate next steps in reconvening the COVID-19 Tri-Stage Workgroup

While Gov. Inslee's announcement lifts the masking requirements for the general public in designated settings effective March 12, it also maintains masking requirements in health care settings and stresses the importance of mindfulness related to continued masking in support of vulnerable families within the communities we serve. In the spirit of proceeding cautiously with family safety and comfort being held at the center of Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) programming, the ESIT State Leadership Office strongly recommends the continued use of masking as a primary strategy to protect children, families, and the practitioners that serve them.

Additional recommendations appropriate for ESIT as a family-centered program transitioning to more in-person services include:

- Drawing on the same individualized, sensitive, and supportive approach to safety with each child and family that is in line with ESIT's core values
- Continued implementation of the current agency Tri-Stage Plans which include masking requirements and use of additional transmission prevention strategies
- Watching for updated [Department of Health](#) masking guidance

The ESIT State Leadership Office will reconvene the COVID-19 Tri-Stage Workgroup to support the development of Stage III Guidance to support provider agencies in their planning and communication with families as they transition back to in-person services.

Thank you for all you do to support infants, toddlers, and their families.

If you have questions, please contact Laurie Thomas, ESIT Program Administrator, at laurie.thomas@dcyf.wa.gov.

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