

Illness & Infection Control Policy – 2026

I. Purpose & Commitment to Community Health

At Bizzy Bees Therapy at The Ability Institute (BBTAI), we are committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for all children, families, and staff.

Many children served within our organization:

- are medically complex,
- are immunocompromised,
- have respiratory vulnerabilities,
- participate in feeding therapy,
- utilize shared adaptive equipment,
- or experience sensory and regulatory challenges that may increase health and safety risks during illness exposure.

Because therapy services involve close physical interaction, shared therapeutic spaces, movement-based intervention, feeding activities, and hands-on support, infection prevention and illness management are critical components of protecting both individual children and the broader clinic community.

This policy exists to:

- reduce the spread of illness and infection,
- protect medically vulnerable children and staff,
- support safe participation in therapy services,
- clarify expectations regarding attendance during illness,
- and maintain a healthy clinical environment for all families served by BBTAI.

II. General Illness Expectations

Children should attend therapy only when they are well enough to safely and meaningfully participate in services.

Families are expected to keep children home when they demonstrate:

- contagious illness symptoms,
- fever,
- vomiting,
- diarrhea,
- significant respiratory symptoms,
- unexplained rashes,
- or any condition that may place other children, caregivers, or staff at risk.

BBTAI reserves the right to request that a child leave the clinic or reschedule services if staff determine that participation is unsafe due to illness or infection concerns.

III. Fever Policy

Children may not attend therapy if they have:

- a fever of 101.0°F or greater,
- fever-reducing medications masking symptoms,
- or fever-related symptoms impacting participation.

Children must remain fever-free for a minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication prior to returning to therapy services.

IV. Vomiting & Diarrhea

Children experiencing:

- vomiting,
- diarrhea,
- or severe gastrointestinal illness,

may not attend therapy sessions.

Children must remain symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours prior to returning to therapy services unless otherwise medically cleared.

Because many therapy spaces involve:

- shared surfaces,
- movement equipment,
- sensory activities,
- and feeding-based intervention,

strict gastrointestinal illness precautions are necessary to protect the clinic community.

V. Respiratory Illness Symptoms

Children demonstrating significant respiratory symptoms including:

- persistent or uncontrolled coughing,
- difficulty breathing,
- wheezing,
- excessive nasal discharge,
- severe congestion,
- lethargy,

- or inability to safely participate

may be asked to remain home or reschedule therapy services.

Families are encouraged to use good judgment regarding contagious respiratory illness exposure, particularly during periods of increased:

- influenza,
 - RSV,
 - COVID-19,
 - and other viral illnesses within the community.
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VI. Contagious Illnesses

Children diagnosed with contagious conditions including, but not limited to:

- influenza,

- COVID-19,
- RSV,
- strep throat,
- conjunctivitis/pink eye,
- hand-foot-and-mouth disease,
- lice,
- impetigo,
- chickenpox,
- or other communicable illnesses

must follow return-to-care recommendations provided by:

- their physician,
- public health guidance,
- and BBTAI infection control expectations.

Bizzy Bees Therapy LLC at The Ability Institute reserves the right to request medical clearance when appropriate to ensure safe return to therapy participation either due to illness, injury, hospitalization, or surgical intervention.

VII. Open Wounds, Rashes, & Skin Concerns

Children with:

- unexplained rashes,
- draining wounds,
- contagious skin conditions,
- or uncovered lesions

may be unable to safely participate in therapy services until medically cleared or appropriately treated.

All wounds or skin concerns should be:

- properly covered,
- monitored,
- and communicated to staff when relevant to participation or safety.

VIII. Medication & Symptom Masking

Children should not attend therapy when:

- medication is being used solely to temporarily mask contagious symptoms,
- participation is significantly impacted by illness,
- or rest and recovery are clinically more appropriate than therapy participation.

Our organization strongly believes children benefit most from therapy when they are:

- regulated,
 - comfortable,
 - healthy,
 - rested,
 - and able to actively engage in meaningful intervention activities.
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IX. Feeding Therapy & Infection Control

Additional infection control precautions may apply during:

- feeding therapy,
- oral motor intervention,
- food exploration,
- and swallowing-based treatment sessions.

Families participating in feeding services are expected to:

- disclose illness symptoms,
- notify staff regarding exposure concerns,
- provide accurate allergy information,
- and follow all clinician recommendations regarding food handling and participation.

BBTAI reserves the right to modify or discontinue feeding-based activities if illness or infection concerns are present.



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X. Medical Complexity & Immunocompromised Considerations

Due to our progressive Complex Care Program, many children receiving services at BBTAI may:

- have compromised immune systems,
- utilize medical equipment,
- experience respiratory vulnerabilities,
- or face increased risk from exposure to contagious illness.

Families are expected to exercise caution and community responsibility when considering attendance during periods of illness or possible exposure.

We deeply appreciate family partnership in helping us protect vulnerable members of our clinic community.

XI. Staff Illness & Clinic Sanitation

BBTAI is committed to maintaining rigorous sanitation and infection prevention procedures.

This includes:

- routine cleaning and disinfection of therapy spaces and equipment,
- bi-weekly professional hospital-grade infection control and cleaning services,
- hand hygiene practices,
- feeding equipment sanitation utilizing high power sterilization equipment and dishwashers,
- and staff illness protocols designed to reduce transmission risk.

Staff members demonstrating contagious illness symptoms are also expected to follow organizational illness and return-to-work expectations.

XII. Courtesy & Communication During Illness



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We understand that illness and unexpected health concerns occur, particularly within pediatric populations.

Families are encouraged to communicate openly and proactively with our Care Coordination Team regarding:

- illness concerns,
- exposure questions,
- medical updates,
- and participation safety considerations.

Our team remains committed to approaching illness-related scheduling needs with compassion, professionalism, flexibility, and respect whenever possible.

XIII. Attendance & Illness-Related Cancellations

Illness-related cancellations remain subject to our *Attendance & Scheduling Policy*.

However, families are strongly encouraged to prioritize health, safety, and infection prevention over attendance when contagious illness is present.

Our organization believes protecting the health and safety of the broader clinic community is a shared responsibility. If your child is diagnosed with an illness or condition that will limit their participation in services for a period of time, please notify our team immediately so that we can support your scheduling needs.

If a child has a communicable illness but is presenting in a manner that would not limit them from therapy participation, telehealth services are a great option to uphold continuity of care.

XIV. Emergency Medical Situations

If a child becomes ill or experiences a medical emergency during therapy services:

- caregivers will be contacted immediately,
- emergency response procedures may be initiated,



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- and emergency medical services may be contacted when necessary.

Examples of this include:

- Sudden alterations or changes in mental status outside the child's typical presentations
- Seizure presentation lasting longer than five minutes or requiring administration of emergency medication
- Changes in color that indicate the cardiopulmonary status of the child is in immediate threat.

Families are responsible for maintaining accurate:

- emergency contacts,
 - medical history,
 - medication information,
 - allergy information,
 - and physician contact information at all times.
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XV. Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have reviewed and understand the ***Illness & Infection Control Policy***,
- I understand my responsibility to keep my child home when contagious illness symptoms are present,
- I understand that BBTAI reserves the right to modify or discontinue participation when illness or infection concerns arise,
- and I agree to support infection prevention efforts to protect children, families, and staff within the clinic community.

Patient Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____



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Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Last Updated: May 2026