

Regarding the Extension of Response Measures Relating to Early Childhood Education and Childcare Facilities

4th March 2022

Oita Prefecture Novel Coronavirus Infection Countermeasure Headquarters
Oita Prefecture Emergency Socio-Economic Revitalisation Headquarters

When the Semi-Emergency Coronavirus Measures were lifted in Oita Prefecture, priority countermeasures were implemented in response to the frequent outbreaks of cluster infections in early childhood and childcare facilities. With the understanding and cooperation of related persons, the number of infections in pupils of these facilities has fallen from 91 in the week before last, to 52 last week, with the suppression of cluster infections in elderly care facilities occurring in parallel with this trend. The results of these priority countermeasures are therefore becoming increasingly clear. However, at the same time, this is a critical moment for Oita Prefecture, as infection rates within the prefecture have stopped falling and there are also signs of another wave of infections on the horizon. We therefore request your cooperation on the following measures.

1. Request regarding early childhood education and childcare facilities

Events that hold importance to pupils and their parents and guardians, such as pre-school graduation ceremonies, are now close at hand. In order for these to go ahead safely, from 6th March we continue to request that, in the case there is even one positive case within a class and there is concern that infection has spread, you refrain from sending your child to that class for five days.

With the exception of situations where a pre-school is temporarily closed due to the outbreak of a cluster infection, pre-schools may continue to hold their graduation ceremonies. Before hosting graduation ceremonies, we request that, along with closely following fundamental infection countermeasures such as maintaining apt ventilation, a plan of action is devised for the day, involving precautions such as limiting the number of guests and shortening the length of said ceremony.

When hosting events where it is not feasible to postpone or cancel, please follow these same countermeasures outlined above.

We request that employers give special consideration to employees who are involved in child-raising and allow for them to take time off of work if necessary.

2. Request regarding elderly care facilities

As rapid antigen test kits will be distributed to all elderly care facilities where infection has been detected, we request that all members of staff at these facilities take a test all at once.

Further, we request that all staff and residents of elderly care facilities who have not yet received their third dose of the vaccine do so as soon as possible.

3. Request regarding the third vaccination dose

The third dose of the vaccine is vital both in preventing the spread of the Omicron variant, and preventing serious infection.

The effectiveness of the third dose remains the same even if you get a different vaccine from your first two doses. There is a lot of appointment availability for the Moderna vaccine at the Prefectural Vaccination Centre and respective mass vaccination facilities in each locality, so an early vaccination possible.

As the Omicron variant spreads rapidly, methods of keeping at bay the spread of infection that have worked up until now, such as identifying close contacts of infectious persons, are no longer effective. The third vaccination dose is therefore the most effective preventative method. In order to protect your loved ones, please get vaccinated with your third dose at a nearby medical facility or mass vaccination facility as quickly as possible.

You must not let your guard down when it comes to the highly infectious Omicron variant. To reiterate previous guidance, please closely follow infection countermeasures, including observing the appropriate usage of masks, avoiding crowding, and ensuring apt ventilation.

Although countermeasures have caused inconvenience over a long period of time, we again sincerely request your continued understanding and cooperation with regard to the above outlined priority measures.