

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) in Child Care Centres

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Purpose

- To ensure consistency in IPAC practices across licensed child care centres throughout the province.
- To support child care operators in evaluating, and enhancing their current IPAC practices using provincial recommendations.
- To be used as a reference for the [Child Care Centre Cleaning and Disinfection Schedule](#).

Instructions for Use

When to use:

This checklist is intended to provide a summary of infection prevention and control (IPAC) recommendations in licensed child care centres.

It can be used for ongoing self-assessment by child care operators/licensees to review existing processes and identify gaps in practices that require correction or modification.

The notes sections can be used for observations or corrective actions.

There may be additional considerations left to the discretion of the Public Health Unit (PHU) and PHUs are encouraged to provide their own resources to supplement the recommendations in this checklist.

This checklist can be used in addition to, but does not replace, the advice, guidelines and recommendations, or other direction from provincial Ministries or local public health authorities.

Assessor Information

Administrator (or designate):

First name:

Last name:

Date (yyyy-mm-dd):

Setting Information

Setting name:

Address:

City:

Postal Code:

1 - Sign and Symptom Screening, and Exclusions for Infections

1.1 Daily surveillance is conducted by designated and trained staff to identify children and staff with signs and symptoms of illness.	Yes	No	N/A
1.2 Children who are not well enough to be at the child care centre are identified and separated from other children, pending pick-up by parent/guardian.	Yes	No	N/A
1.3 Children and staff with signs or symptoms of illness are excluded as per public health recommendations (as applicable).	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

2 - Hand Washing and Respiratory Etiquette

2.1 Designated hand washing sinks are available in food preparation, diaper changing areas and as per public health direction.	Yes	No	N/A
2.2 Hand washing sinks:			
• Are connected to permanent plumbing	Yes	No	N/A
• Are supplied with hot (not exceeding 43°C) and cold running water under pressure	Yes	No	N/A
• Are supplied with liquid soap and paper towels in dispensers	Yes	No	N/A
2.3 Liquid soap containers are not topped up.	Yes	No	N/A
2.4 Bar soap is not used.	Yes	No	N/A
2.5 Staff and children receive age-appropriate education and training on when and how to perform hand washing and respiratory etiquette.	Yes	No	N/A
2.6 Hand washing by children is supervised by staff.	Yes	No	N/A
2.7 Signage on how to perform hand washing is posted.	Yes	No	N/A
2.8 Staff and children perform proper hand hygiene at appropriate times, such as:			
• Upon entering the child care centre	Yes	No	N/A
• After diapering and toileting	Yes	No	N/A
• Before and after tooth brushing or assisting with tooth brushing	Yes	No	N/A

• Before and after sensory play, including sand, water, play dough and other materials that cannot be cleaned and disinfected	Yes	No	N/A
• Before and after eating	Yes	No	N/A
• After any contact with body fluids (e.g., after wiping or blowing a nose)	Yes	No	N/A
• Before and after contact with animals and/or cleaning animal enclosures	Yes	No	N/A
2.9 Non-expired alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with a concentration of 70-90% alcohol and a natural product number (NPN) is available for use by staff when hands are not visibly soiled.	Yes	No	N/A
2.10 ABHR is not accessible by children.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**3 - Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection****Disinfectants**

3.1 All disinfectants are non-expired and have a drug identification number (DIN) or natural product number (NPN) assigned by Health Canada, as applicable. Products with short contact times are preferred.	Yes	No	N/A
3.2 Disinfectants are prepared and used following the manufacturer's instructions for use (e.g., contact time, dilution, using test strips to verify concentration, if applicable).	Yes	No	N/A
3.3 Disinfectants are appropriate for the intended use.	Yes	No	N/A
3.4 Staff who use disinfectants have been trained on the proper use of required personal protective equipment, if applicable.	Yes	No	N/A
3.5 Items are cleaned (i.e., washed, rinsed and dried) prior to disinfection and manufacturer's instructions are followed.	Yes	No	N/A
• If a "one-step" cleaner and disinfectant is used, pre-cleaning is required if the item is heavily soiled.	Yes	No	N/A
• Rinsing with potable water after disinfection is required if items are mouthing by infants/young children.	Yes	No	N/A
3.6 Cleaning and disinfecting products decanted from the original container are labelled as per Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) requirements.	Yes	No	N/A

3.7 If bleach is used, concentration and contact time are appropriate for the intended task. The concentration is verified using test strips and bleach solution is replaced daily. Yes No N/A

3.8 Cleaning and disinfection products are not accessible by children. Yes No N/A

Notes/Comments:

Waste Management

3.9 Plastic-lined, lidded, waterproof garbage containers (preferably hands-free) are used. Yes No N/A

3.10 Garbage containers are cleaned and disinfected weekly and when visibly soiled Yes No N/A

3.11 Waste is collected and removed daily or as often as needed (whichever is shorter). Yes No N/A

Notes/Comments:

Linen and Laundry

3.12 Crib and cot linens are dedicated to a single child and are laundered when visibly soiled or weekly, at a minimum. Yes No N/A

3.13 Soiled linens are placed in a designated, cleanable receptacle. Yes No N/A

3.14 Towels, bibs and face cloths are to be used once per child and laundered after use. Yes No N/A

3.15 Bedding is stored in a manner that prevents contamination. Yes No N/A

3.16 Soiled clothing is placed in a single-use bag or receptacle and sent home for laundering and soiled clothing is not rinsed, soaked or washed at the child care centre. Yes No N/A

3.17 Items used for cleaning (e.g., cloths, mop heads) are laundered separately from other items (e.g., linens, dress-up clothes and face cloths). Yes No N/A

Notes/Comments:**Furniture, Surfaces, and Equipment**

3.18 Walls, floors and ceilings are clean and in good repair.	Yes	No	N/A
3.19 Furniture and equipment are maintained in good repair (e.g., free of cracks, rips, and tears) and stored in a clean and sanitary condition.	Yes	No	N/A
3.20 Surfaces and furniture are smooth, non-porous and cleanable.	Yes	No	N/A
3.21 Soft furniture (e.g., couches, chairs) upholstered with porous fabric has removable covers that can be laundered.	Yes	No	N/A
3.22 Cribs or cots are dedicated, labelled with children's names, and are disinfected when visibly soiled, and following established schedule. If cribs or cots are shared, these are cleaned and disinfected after use by each child.	Yes	No	N/A
3.23 Cots/mattresses are made of a cleanable, non-absorbent material and are maintained in manner that facilitates cleaning and disinfection, and that does not pose a safety hazard.	Yes	No	N/A
3.24 Mattresses are covered with a protective waterproof barrier to prevent contamination and are cleaned and disinfected when visibly soiled, or as per established schedule.	Yes	No	N/A
3.25 Carpets and area rugs are vacuumed and steam cleaned following an established schedule, or as needed.	Yes	No	N/A
3.26 High chairs are cleaned and sanitized* after each use.	Yes	No	N/A
3.27 Extra items not being currently used are removed from child care rooms.	Yes	No	N/A

*Sanitize means to treat food contact surfaces to reduce microorganisms to a level that will not compromise food safety, as defined in [Ontario Regulation 493/17](#) (as current).¹

Notes/Comments:

4 - Toys and Sensory Play Management

Toys

4.1 Mouthed toys are immediately removed from use and stored separately in a designated, labelled container until able to be cleaned and disinfected or laundered (as applicable).	Yes	No	N/A
4.2 Mouthed toys are cleaned and disinfected or laundered after each use (as applicable). Mouthed toys are rinsed following disinfection.	Yes	No	N/A
4.3 Toys are maintained in good repair.	Yes	No	N/A
4.4 Toys are cleaned and disinfected or laundered following an established schedule.	Yes	No	N/A
4.5 Dress-up clothes are laundered weekly or as needed (i.e., when visibly soiled).	Yes	No	N/A
4.6 Shared or communal plush toys are only used if they can be laundered as needed or as per an established schedule	Yes	No	N/A
4.7 Baskets, bins or containers used to store toys or other items are cleanable or equipped with a cleanable liner.	Yes	No	N/A
4.8 Cleanable toys are replaced when broken or when they can no longer be cleaned and disinfected.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

Water Play

4.9 Children wash their hands before and after using water play tables.	Yes	No	N/A
4.10 Children with non-intact skin/open wounds do not use shared/communal water play tables.	Yes	No	N/A
4.11 Water is discarded and replaced after every use.	Yes	No	N/A
4.12 Toys used in water play are cleaned, disinfected and air dried after each use.	Yes	No	N/A
4.13 Water-retaining toys are not used.	Yes	No	N/A
4.14 Water play tables are emptied, dried, cleaned and disinfected prior to refilling.	Yes	No	N/A
4.15 Only potable water is used in water tables.	Yes	No	N/A
4.16 Disinfectant or other chemicals are not added to the water.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**Indoor Sensory Play**

4.17 Children wash their hands before and after sensory play (e.g., before and after handling play dough and other sensory materials).	Yes	No	N/A
4.18 Children are provided with individual, dedicated portions of homemade play dough, which are discarded when visibly contaminated or weekly, at a minimum.	Yes	No	N/A
4.19 Homemade play dough portions are labelled with child's name, and stored in a manner that protects against contamination in between uses.	Yes	No	N/A
4.20 If homemade play dough, ooblek or other sensory play materials contain flour as an ingredient, flour is heat-treated prior to use.	Yes	No	N/A
4.21 Food items (e.g., corn, rice, pasta) are not recommended to be used in sensory tables. If used during sensory play, children are supervised to ensure ingestion does not occur, and food items are discarded after each use.	Yes	No	N/A
4.22 Commercial play dough is discarded following an established schedule or as needed (e.g., when wet, visibly soiled).	Yes	No	N/A
4.23 Containers previously used to hold meat or eggs, or that were used in bathrooms are not used for crafts (e.g., egg cartons, meat trays, toilet paper rolls) unless purchased new.	Yes	No	N/A
4.24 Hand washing is performed before and after use of nature-based play items (e.g., feathers, leaves, bark) and other sensory items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected.	Yes	No	N/A
4.25 Nature-based play items are discarded and replaced when integrity is impacted (e.g., wet or damaged).	Yes	No	N/A
4.26 Nature-based play items and other sensory items that are not able to be cleaned and disinfected or laundered are removed from use during outbreaks. Non-cleanable items are removed from use for a period of 2 or more weeks before being brought back into the classroom.	Yes	No	N/A
4.27 Items that present a choking or inhalation hazard, or that may contain toxic chemicals, are not used in sensory play (e.g., talcum powder, sawdust, compost, potting soil).	Yes	No	N/A
4.28 Play sand is silica-free and store-bought and is replaced as per established schedule, or when visibly contaminated (whichever is sooner).	Yes	No	N/A
4.29 Bins or tables that hold sensory items are emptied, cleaned and disinfected according to an established schedule.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**Outdoor Play Areas**

4.30 Sandboxes are covered when not in use.	Yes	No	N/A
4.31 Sand in sandboxes or in sand play areas is raked daily, inspected for signs of contamination and safety concerns, and replaced every season or as required.	Yes	No	N/A
4.32 Outdoor play areas are inspected daily prior to children going outdoors to ensure that they are free of visible hazards (e.g., sharp objects, animal droppings).	Yes	No	N/A
4.33 Outdoor play equipment is removed from use and repaired or replaced when damaged.	Yes	No	N/A
4.34 Stagnant water is removed from outdoor play areas.	Yes	No	N/A
4.35 If tires are used in outdoor play areas, holes should be drilled to prevent water accumulation in the inner rims of the tires.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**5 - Diapering and Toileting Practices****Diaper Change Area**

5.1 Diaper changing areas are located separately from food preparation and eating areas.	Yes	No	N/A
5.2 Flooring in the diaper change areas is in good repair and easily cleanable (e.g., no carpet).	Yes	No	N/A
5.3 Diaper change procedure is posted near each diaper changing table and followed.	Yes	No	N/A
5.4 Diaper changing areas are supplied with an approved disinfectant, liquid soap and paper towels in dispensers, and a designated fixed hand washing sink located adjacent to the diaper change table.	Yes	No	N/A
5.5 Diaper change tables are cleaned and disinfected daily and as needed, or after each use if no change pad is used.	Yes	No	N/A

5.6 Diaper change pads/mats are cleaned and disinfected after each use unless a liner is used. If a liner is used, the liner is changed after each diaper change and the pad/mat is then cleaned and disinfected at the end of the day	Yes	No	N/A
5.7 Diaper change areas are supplied with a lined waste container with a foot-operated lid.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**Diapering Supplies**

5.8 Diapering supplies are available within arm's reach of diaper change pad/table and stored in a manner that prevents contamination. Diapering supplies are not stored on the diaper changing pad when not in use.	Yes	No	N/A
5.9 Diaper change supplies are individually labelled (e.g., creams, ointments).	Yes	No	N/A
5.10 Creams, ointments, and wipes are dispensed in a manner that prevents contamination of the remaining product (e.g., products are in a dispenser, a new applicator or clean single-use gloves are used).	Yes	No	N/A
5.11 Single use gloves are available at each diaper change station and are recommended to be used for all diaper changes.	Yes	No	N/A
5.12 Diaper change pads are constructed of durable, impervious, smooth, easily cleanable material and are in good condition (e.g., no rips or tears).	Yes	No	N/A
5.13 Used reusable/cloth diapers are placed in a leak proof bag or impervious container labelled with the child's name.	Yes	No	N/A
5.14 Used diaper-storage containers are stored in a well-ventilated room not used for food preparation or food storage and in an area not accessible to children.	Yes	No	N/A
5.15 Reusable/cloth diapers are sent home with parents/guardians daily for laundering.	Yes	No	N/A
5.16 Soiled clothing and diapers are not rinsed and/or washed at the child care centre.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

Toileting

5.17 Toilets and potty seats (i.e., toilet seat inserts) are cleaned and disinfected following the established schedule and when visibly soiled.	Yes	No	N/A
5.18 Potty seats are constructed of smooth, impervious, cleanable material, are in good condition and stored in a manner that prevents contamination.	Yes	No	N/A
5.19 Staff and children perform hand washing after toileting.	Yes	No	N/A
5.20 Washrooms are supplied with fixed sinks (i.e., connected to permanent plumbing), supplied with hot and cold running water under pressure, liquid soap, paper towels, toilet paper in dispensers and a waste receptacle.	Yes	No	N/A
5.21 Toys, craft supplies and other play items are not stored in washrooms.	Yes	No	N/A
5.22 All surfaces (faucets, counters, walls, floors) are cleaned and disinfected following an established schedule and when visibly soiled.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

6 - Tooth Brushing

6.1 Toothbrushes are individually labelled with each child's name and are not shared between children.	Yes	No	N/A
6.2 Toothbrushes are stored at least six feet away from toilets (space permitting), in a manner that prevents touching and/or cross contamination, and that facilitates air drying.	Yes	No	N/A
6.3 Toothbrush holders are cleaned and disinfected following an established schedule.	Yes	No	N/A
6.4 Shared toothpaste is dispensed in a manner that prevents contamination of the remaining product (i.e., toothbrushes do not have direct contact with toothpaste dispenser).	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

7 - Medication, Medical Device and Personal Item Management

Personal Items

7.1 Each child has designated and labelled storage for personal items.	Yes	No	N/A
7.2 Personal items are labelled and stored in a sanitary manner. Items stored on hooks are spaced in a manner to prevent cross-contamination.	Yes	No	N/A
7.3 Shared products such as creams or lotions are dispensed in a manner that does not contaminate remaining portion.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

Medication and Medical Devices

7.4 Personal medication, labelled with the child's name, is stored out of reach of children and in accordance with instructions for storage on the product label (e.g., some products may require refrigeration).	Yes	No	N/A
7.5 Medical devices (e.g., thermometers) are cleaned and disinfected after use, following the manufacturer's instructions. Single-use tips or covers are changed after each use for each child.	Yes	No	N/A
7.6 Medical devices intended for use by one person are dedicated, individually labelled and cleaned and disinfected following the manufacturer's instructions for use.	Yes	No	N/A
7.7 Medical devices are stored out of children's reach and manufacturer's instructions for use are available on-site.	Yes	No	N/A
7.8 An approved biohazard (sharps) container is available for safe disposal of sharp instruments (e.g., needles, lancets).	Yes	No	N/A
7.9 Sharps containers are sealed and replaced when the contents reach the fill line or when three quarters full.	Yes	No	N/A
7.10 Sharps containers are not accessible by children.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

8 - Communal Dining

8.1 Staff perform hand hygiene before serving food to children, or before handling food service utensils.	Yes	No	N/A
8.2 Children involved in food preparation or service do so in an appropriate location (e.g., within the classroom), are supervised, perform hand washing before handling food, equipment or utensils and are assigned age-appropriate activities that do not pose a risk of injury (e.g., due to scalding or sharp utensils).	Yes	No	N/A
8.3 Food is transported and stored in containers with lids and in a manner that protects food from contamination.	Yes	No	N/A
8.4 Tables are cleaned and sanitized* before and after use.	Yes	No	N/A

*Sanitize means to treat food contact surfaces to reduce microorganisms to a level that will not compromise food safety, as defined in [Ontario Regulation 493/17](#) (as current).¹

Notes/Comments:

9 - Resident and Visiting Animal Management

General

9.1 Parents/guardians are notified of the presence of animals prior to bringing any animals on site.	Yes	No	N/A
9.2 Chicks, reptiles (e.g., snakes, lizards, geckos, bearded dragons), and amphibians (e.g., frogs) are not recommended on site (either as visiting or resident animals). ²	Yes	No	N/A
9.3 Exotic, stray, very young, birthing or pregnant, symptomatic or aggressive animals are not recommended on site (either as visiting animals or resident animals).	Yes	No	N/A
9.4 Dogs and cats have up-to-date rabies immunizations and records are available on site.	Yes	No	N/A
9.5 Staff and children perform hand washing before and after handling an animal and/or having contact with the animal enclosure.	Yes	No	N/A
9.6 Children are supervised while handling animals and are not permitted to kiss animals.	Yes	No	N/A
9.7 Surfaces touched by animals are cleaned and disinfected.	Yes	No	N/A
9.8 Children are not permitted to handle animal waste or bedding.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**Resident Animals**

9.9 Animals are housed in an enclosure and are prevented from free roaming or from contacting play items (e.g., sand boxes, toy bins).	Yes	No	N/A
9.10 Animals are kept away from areas where food is served, prepared or stored.	Yes	No	N/A
9.11 Animal cages, enclosures or tanks are maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.	Yes	No	N/A
9.12 Designated staff are assigned to clean and care for resident animals and their enclosures.	Yes	No	N/A
9.13 Children are not involved in feeding animals or in cleaning their bedding or enclosures.	Yes	No	N/A
9.14 Enclosures are not cleaned in any area where food is prepared and water from a tank is not disposed of in a sink used for hand hygiene.	Yes	No	N/A
9.15 Resident animals with signs of illness are removed from the child care centre and are provided with veterinary care.	Yes	No	N/A
9.16 Animal food and water dishes are washed separately from human food service equipment, utensils and multi-service articles (e.g., in a dedicated sink, not used for hand hygiene, food preparation, dish washing or toy washing).	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**Bites and Wound Management**

9.17 Written policies for managing child and staff exposures to blood and body fluids, including animal and human bites that break the skin, are available.	Yes	No	N/A
9.18 Animal bites and scratches are immediately washed with soap and water, documented, and reported to the parent/guardian and the local public health unit. ³	Yes	No	N/A
9.19 Staff receive proper training for managing bites and open wounds.	Yes	No	N/A
9.20 First aid equipment is readily available.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

10 - Occupational Health and Safety

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

10.1 Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as single-use gloves, masks and eye protection are accessible and available for use when required (as applicable). If available, a gown may be worn to protect clothing from contamination with infectious material.	Yes	No	N/A
10.2 Staff, volunteers and childcare practicum students are trained on the proper use (putting on, taking off and disposal) of PPE.	Yes	No	N/A
10.3 Appropriate PPE is worn for the type of activity (e.g., gloves are worn for cleaning up blood or body fluids).	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

Immunization Requirements

10.4 Children have pre-entrance immunizations in accordance with relevant regulations.	Yes	No	N/A
10.5 Staff, volunteers and childcare practicum students have required immunizations prior to starting employment, in accordance with relevant regulations.	Yes	No	N/A
10.6 Child and staff immunization records are available on site and provided to the public health unit upon request.	Yes	No	N/A
10.7 Results of tuberculosis screening for staff, if required by local Medical Officer of Health, are available onsite and provided to public health unit upon request.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:**11 - Outbreak Control Measures**

11.1 Surveillance for respiratory and gastrointestinal infections in children and staff are conducted daily.	Yes	No	N/A
11.2 The local Public Health Unit is notified in a timely manner when the number of cases of infection exceeds the normal baseline for the facility.	Yes	No	N/A
11.3 Child care operators follow direction from public health unit related to outbreak management (i.e., submission of a daily line list, exclusion and infection control measures).	Yes	No	N/A
11.4 Children and staff are instructed to perform proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette when indicated, with practices reinforced.	Yes	No	N/A
11.5 Frequency of disinfection of high-touch surfaces is increased during outbreaks.	Yes	No	N/A
11.6 The concentration, contact time and label claim of disinfectant used during an outbreak is appropriate to suspected/identified pathogen.	Yes	No	N/A
11.7 Symptomatic children and staff are isolated away from others until they can leave and excluded from the facility as per health recommendations.	Yes	No	N/A
11.8 Parents are encouraged to seek medical attention for their children and complete necessary testing with their health care provider.	Yes	No	N/A
11.9 Communal activities (such as sensory and water play), dress-up activities and use of items (e.g., nature-based play items) and toys that can't be cleaned (e.g., plush toys) are stopped during outbreaks.	Yes	No	N/A
11.10 Parents and guardians are notified of outbreaks and relevant exclusion criteria as per organizational policies and procedures and public health recommendations.	Yes	No	N/A
11.11 Outbreak signage is posted at the entrance to the facility during an outbreak.	Yes	No	N/A
11.12 Staff and children are cohorted or have limited movement between rooms.	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

12 - Policies and Procedures

12.1 Policies and procedures, consistent with applicable standards (see Resources section), are available onsite and include (but aren't limited to):

• Blood and body fluid spills and exposures, including bites that break the skin	Yes	No	N/A
• Cleaning and disinfection	Yes	No	N/A
• Food handling	Yes	No	N/A
• Hand hygiene	Yes	No	N/A
• Illness screening and reporting	Yes	No	N/A
• Outbreak preparation, response and reporting	Yes	No	N/A
• Pet and animal management	Yes	No	N/A
• Immunization of staff and children, including up to date records of immunization/exemption	Yes	No	N/A
• Reporting the Diseases of Public Health Significance. ⁴	Yes	No	N/A
12.2 Policies and procedures are updated annually.	Yes	No	N/A
12.3 Staff review policies and procedures applicable to their work annually.	Yes	No	N/A
12.4 Policies and procedures are site-specific (for organizations with multiple sites).	Yes	No	N/A

Notes/Comments:

Summary of Action Items (set a date for completion for each item):

References:

1. *Food Premises*, O Reg 493/17. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/170493>
2. Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Recommendations for the management of animals in health care settings, 2018 [Internet]. Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2018 [cited 2025 Jan 17]. Available from: <https://files.ontario.ca/moh-ophs-ref-recommendations-management-animals-child-care-settings-2018-en.pdf>
3. *Communicable Diseases - General*, RRO 1990, Reg 557. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900557>
4. *Designation of Diseases*, O Reg 135/18. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/180135>

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