

U.S. NEWS

Child care provider issues Ebola advisory for families

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Early education provider Bright Horizons implemented a host of precautionary guidelines for parents and staff on Wednesday to assuage concerns about the potential spread of **Ebola** in U.S.

The organization said employees who had traveled to an Ebola-impacted area—including Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal and Nigeria—must remain out of work for a period of 21 days from the date he or she departed the affected country.



Reuters

People wearing protective clothing for the Ebola virus, in Freetown, Sierra Leone, September 28, 2014.

Initially flat, Bright Horizons shares tumbled nearly 2 percent after the announcement.

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Bright Horizons asked parents to notify staff if they, their child, any household member or other close contacts travel to an Ebola-impacted areas.

"If you, your child, a member of the household or a close personal contact have traveled to an impacted country the child must remain out the child care center or school for a period of 21 days from the date they departed the affected country," the notice said.

Robert Wheeler, chief medical officer of On Call International, said he agrees with Bright Horizons' decision.

"This is a reasonable public health directive and is consistent with the CDC guidance for people with potential Ebola virus exposure," Wheeler said. "Early symptoms in young children may not be detected in a timely fashion, allowing for the potential exposure of other children" to the Ebola virus.

He said all travelers returning from countries affected by the current Ebola epidemic should self-monitor themselves for symptoms for three weeks, which is the extent of the incubation period—the time from infection with the virus to the onset of symptoms.

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Ebola has sickened more than 7,000 people and killed over 3,300 people in West Africa.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed that the first case of Ebola, which spreads through direct contact with an infected individual's body fluid or organs, was diagnosed in the U.S. on Tuesday.

The patient, who arrived in Dallas from Liberia, came in contact with multiple school-age children in the state who are currently being monitored for symptoms, according to Texas Gov. Rick Perry.

Bright Horizons operates several child care and education facilities in the Dallas area.



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