

March 15, 2020

## Communication to Child Care Providers Following Executive Order 20-02

Thank you for your continued service to provide the most essential care and education to our youngest Minnesotans. Without each of you and your staff, many in Minnesota's workforce could not perform their day-to-day duties that are essential to keeping our communities safe and healthy, especially health care and emergency personnel during this peacetime emergency. We need you and your staff to stay well and stay open to provide a safe and nurturing space for our children. We know that COVID-19 has created new and, at times, uncertain situations for each of us. We hope that the information below helps you to know the Governor's Office and state agencies are working hard to support you as a child care provider during this time.

The Governor's Office and State Agencies are working together to provide child care providers regulated by the state the following supports and information:

- The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is providing [resources](#) specific to child care settings and schools to understand the evolving situation and mitigate the risk of COVID-19.
- **Today we are launching a hotline specifically for child care providers to address your questions directly and rapidly: 1-888-234-1268.**
- Please refer to the specific guidance for child care providers at the end of this email and we urge you to follow [MDH and the Center For Disease Control and Prevention guidance](#) for you, your staff and the families you serve. People who are 70 and older, or people of any age who have underlying health conditions that put them at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, should stay at home and avoid gatherings or other situations of potential exposures, including travel.
- We encourage employers to accommodate these needs for these population and call the hotline listed above with questions.
- Parents and Guardians who need child care resources can call Child Care Aware of Minnesota at 1-888-291-9811 or go to [www.parentaware.org](http://www.parentaware.org) to search on-line for child care options.
- State agencies are exploring options to provide emergency financial resources to support providers who remain open or experience financial loss due to closure related to COVID-19. As these options are made available, we will be communicating with you and will aim to make it as easy as possible for providers to access emergency capital and other resources during this difficult time.
- Children being served by the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and Early Learning Scholarship will continue being served and funded. Please note the following about each program:
  - Please refer to the updated Early Learning Scholarship policy, on page 16 of this [document](#) on funding for absent days additionally flexibilities that will be made available as funds allow.

- Please refer to [CCAP Medical Condition Documentation Form \(DHS-4602\) for information on CCAP absent days and medical exemptions.](#)
- For child care and other early childhood programs participating in Parent Aware, we will extend the end date for Parent Aware ratings scheduled to expire during the period of the public health crisis and allow for flexibility in meeting requirements and deadlines for those applying for ratings.
- We will make more child care provider training available on-line as well as provide Parent Aware coaching and other consultation virtually instead of in-person.
- We will extend the expiration date of any license in good standing scheduled to expire during the period of the public health crisis and allow for flexibility in meeting requirements and deadlines for completing the licensing renewal process.
- We will provide on-going communication as new information and supports are available.

## Child Care Provider Guidance to Mitigate the Risk of COVID-19

It will take a community effort to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. Please continue to follow [recommendations from MDH and the Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), including:

- Allow for accommodations for staff and families who are age 70 and older and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions – like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example. [Refer to MDH and Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidance on high-risk populations.](#)
- Conduct more frequent handwashing (at least 20 seconds) for all staff and children.
- Conduct more frequent classroom disinfecting for areas such as doorknobs, sign-in and sign-out areas, iPads, toys, tables, shelves, etc.
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing (e.g., stagger large muscle room/outside time).
- Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptom screening) of students, staff, and visitors (if feasible).
- Closely monitor children for any signs of illness and separate them from other children until they are picked up.
- Staff should stay home if they show signs of any cold or flu-like symptoms. If there is a reason to believe that a staff may have COVID-19, and where there is the ability to test, we will request that they get tested or obtain a doctor’s note clearing them to return to the center.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover a cough. Cough or sneeze into an elbow or use a tissue. Immediately place it in the trash, and wash their hands.
- Avoid handshaking and use other non-contact methods of greeting such as a hand wave or smile.