

Ministry of Education
Early Years and Child Care Division

315 Front Street West, 11th floor
Toronto ON M5V 3A4

Ministère de l'Éducation
Division de la petite enfance et de
la garde d'enfants

315, rue Front Ouest, 11^e étage
Toronto ON M5V 3A4



TO: Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Service Administration Boards (CMSMs and DSSABs)

FROM: Shannon Fuller
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years and Child Care Division

DATE: June 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Child Care Re-Opening Guidance

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we work together to support children and families, and the child care sector. As the province continues to gradually re-open, supporting the child care and early years sector is crucial to allow parents to return to work. That is why I am happy to share with you that today we are releasing an [operational guidance document](#) to support you as you begin planning and preparing to re-open child care. As service system managers, we encourage you as well as child care operators to begin planning, getting in touch with families, and making the necessary arrangements to re-open.

I want to express my gratitude for sharing your feedback and lessons learned in order to support the planning required to re-open child care, and the creation of this guidance document. Along with advice from public health, your input is critical to ensuring that we put measures in place that will support a safe, welcoming, and sustainable child care sector as we re-open.

Approach to Re-Opening

As you are aware, we have been working with all levels of government and child care partners to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on our sector in a way that puts the health and safety of Ontarians at the centre, provides financial sustainability for operators, and reassures families that child care options will be available to them when they are able to return to work.

Operators can access their child care centre immediately to begin planning and preparing to re-open. Starting June 12, once centres are prepared to operate including having enhanced health and safety measures in place, they are permitted to re-open.

Emergency child care, including associated provincial funding, will come to an end on June 26, 2020. CMSMs and DSSABs are encouraged to assist families currently receiving ECC to find an alternate child care arrangement, where required. To support families as they transition back to paying fees, the province will continue to cover child

care fees for these families until June 26, whether they continue to access emergency child care during this time or have transitioned to another child care arrangement.

Operational Guidance for Re-Opening

Ensuring that safe child care spaces are available for families, when they need them, will allow families to re-enter the workforce with confidence.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres will remain closed until the Chief Medical Officer of Health determines it is safe for them to open. We thank EarlyON centres for their patience during this time, and their continued efforts in supporting children and families through virtual programming and connections.

The [operational guidance document](#) that we are releasing today was developed with support from the Ministries of Health and Labour, Training and Development, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, as well as the child care sector, and includes information on licensing requirements and health and safety measures to have in place for the reopening. It also provides helpful links to reference documents, as well as considerations to support your re-opening planning. All licensed child care settings will be required to follow enhanced health and safety protocols as well as the advice of local public health units. We will provide you with additional reference material to support your re-opening planning.

Next Steps

We are requesting that school boards, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/District Social Services Administration Boards and child care partners, in collaboration with local public health units, work together to ensure full-day licensed child care programs located in schools are able to re-open.

In order to support child care re-opening efforts, the ministry is requesting that school boards find safe ways to provide child care operators with sufficient time to enter their centres located in schools, in order to prepare their space and ensure they meet the operational guidelines provided by the ministry.

A guidance document specific to funding is also being developed with the following principles:

- Recognition of the critical importance of a sustainable funding approach for the child-care sector that maximizes the use of all available funding supports;
- Commitment to streamlining the funding reconciliation for the closure and reopening period;
- Child-care centres and educators will not be required to repay top up funding paid during the closure period; and
- No undue hardship will be placed on municipal budgets.

The ministry is committed to working closely with all of its partners to support children and families and to keep everyone safe. We continue to put the health and safety of Ontario's children and families at the forefront and we are basing our decisions on advice from Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and the experts at the COVID-19 Command Table.

Thank you,

Shannon Fuller