

Child Care and Early Learning e-Newsletter

April 27, 2020

Welcome to The Regional Municipality of Durham's Child Care and Early Learning updates e-newsletter. This edition is to update child care operators on health-related recommendations and information related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Spotlight: The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

Emergency Order Extension:

Please see the [Ontario Newsroom News Release](#), extending all emergency orders in place to-date under *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* until May 6, 2020. Child care operators would have also received a memo from Shannon Fuller, Assistant Deputy Minister with details of this order as it relates to child care.

I have received some requests for clarification on the previously announced Declaration of Emergency that is extended to May 12. To clarify, Emergency Orders speak to Provincial directives to the public under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. These orders can only be put in place if the Province has enacted a Declaration Emergency under the act. In summary, at this time the Declaration of Emergency is currently in place until May 12, and the Emergency Order for closure (and other limitations) is currently in place until May 6. For details on these declarations and orders please refer to the links in the news release below or visit the [Provincial Emergency Information and Orders website](#).

School Closures:

Please see the [Ontario Newsroom News Release](#) regarding the extension of school closures to at least May 31st, 2020.

Funding Updates:

If your organization is making any changes in business practices or decisions regarding operations post-closure, please inform Children's Services by contacting Julie Gaskin at Julie.gaskin@durham.ca.

Funding via Economic Support Options:

- Child care operators are encouraged to take advantage of the federal and local opportunities for economic supports. We have provided [a summary of economic support options](#) on our web site and will update regularly.
- Reconciliation for the 2020 year will be complex – we are recommending everyone to be diligent in maintaining **documentation of all economic support applications** (both acceptances and declines) as this information will be critical to reconciling 2020 funding.
- For guidance on applications or clarification on these supports, please contact the organization providing the support for guidance. Children's Services staff are unable to give direction on the multitude of supports that are managed outside of our Department.

GOP funding:

- GOP payments for May will be made this week based on previously contracted amounts.
- We are keenly aware of the financial constraints of the current situation and so, to provide support for operators during the current closures, we are offering the opportunity for you to request an **advance**

of 1 – 4 months, May-August, of your remaining 2020 GOP allocation. Please contact me to discuss this option – Julie.gaskin@durham.ca.

Wage Enhancement Funding:

- You will receive your WE payment this week for May based on previous amounts. The reconciliation of 2019 is still in process and any repayment of 2019 Wage Enhancement allocations have been deferred until child care reopens.
- The Ministry of Education is working with the Federal Government to provide clarity on how Wage Enhancement can be used with the various employee scenarios that exist. We understand there is uncertainty with the use of WE if staff have been laid off or placed on furlough and we will provide clarification to you once we receive direction from the Province.

Fee Subsidy Billings:

- For child care centres who are closed, a payment to offset the loss of the April Fee Subsidy payment will be made as a direct payment to your organization and not paid through the OCCMS billings system. Your April payment will be calculated using an average of January, February and March.

One Time Special Purpose funding:

- The 2020 Special Purpose applications are [now available](#) for Capacity Building, Health & Safety, Transformation and Toys & Equipment funding. We are currently processing Capacity Building applications to offset the cost of training and education opportunities you may be engaging in before, during and after closures. Health & Safety, Transformation and Toys & Equipment funding applications will be held until after centres reopen.
- To support your Educators to maintain their CPL, we have posted a special edition of the [Spring Grow](#) newsletter. Please share with your staff.

Reconciliations:

- All payments made to your organization will be included in the reconciliation process we are currently developing.
- As you take advantage of all of the [financial supports options](#), be sure to keep a copy of all documentation for reconciliation post-recovery.

Additional supports:

We understand that operators are experiencing stress maintaining their businesses in a time where revenue is minimal or non-existent. The Ministry of Education has been working with the CMSM's and the Federal Government to develop a plan that should allow municipalities to use our 2020 Provincial allocations to provide support the early learning and child care system to maintain the highest level of stability possible during recovery. We will share the details of this plan as it is finalized.

As we learn more about the Provincial directions, we will be reaching out to you for more information about the financial supports you have been accessing to aid us in developing a plan to support your organization to move toward reopening.

Thank you for your commitment during this time. The Children's Services Team are committed to maintaining Durham's Child Care sector and we will do all we can to keep you and the ELCC sector well positioned to enter the recovery phase of the pandemic.

If you have questions, please reach out to me and I will do my best to provide information as it is available.