

Child Care and Early Learning e-Newsletter

July 14, 2020

Welcome to The Regional Municipality of Durham's Child Care and Early Learning updates e-newsletter. These newsletters are to update child care operators on a variety of topics related to the closure and re-opening of child care including recommendations and information related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Early Learning Updates – Reopening Updates

Expanded Cohorts

On July 13th the Minister of Education announced that the cohort numbers for child care will be allowed to expand from ten people to fifteen people beginning July 27. The details of this expanded cohort capacity are being finalized by the Ministry of Education and will be shared as soon as possible. See memo attached.

Serious Occurrence Reminder

We would like to remind you to follow The Ministry of Education Serious Occurrence reporting and Durham's Serious Occurrence reporting process – please see attached and you can also find the information on our web site under the section "Operating a Child Care Centre". This includes immediately reporting any serious updates due to positive COVID results.

Wage Enhancement Payments

During the pandemic closures, operators continued to receive Wage Enhancement payments. As there was no entitlement to this funding during closure, these payments will be reconciled against future WE payments. Wage Enhancement payments will only be reinstated once the closure payment amounts have been fully reconciled. Upon reopening, Operators are expected to utilize those closure allocations to pay the portion of WE that is not recoverable through the CEWS.

Fee Subsidy Advances

As announced in the [Early Learning updates from May 19](#), fee subsidy advances were discontinued for all sites except for Home Child Care Operators. Once centres reopen to full operations, your organization can reapply to receive advance payments based on the enrollment at the time of application.

Quality Assurance Advisor / Training Specialist Support

Our Quality Assurance and Training Specialist teams have been working hard to connect with child care sites as they begin reopening. PPE drop off's have provided great opportunities to chat. We encourage child care supervisors and staff to reach out to your QA or training specialist if you have questions or concerns.

Town Hall

On July 9, the CSD held our first virtual 'Town Hall' session and we saw a terrific response with more than 400 members of the Early Learning community joining in. This town hall offered the opportunity for questions and answers about the reopening phase of child care including clarifications from our local Public Health. The information from that meeting is being summarized and will be shared with our ELCC community.

As a reminder, you can view previous Early Learning Updates and communications on our web site under the heading [Children's Services COVID-19 early learning updates](#).

We thank you all for your continued commitment to early learning in Durham. Please contact your Quality Assurance Advisor and the Children's Services Division if you have questions. We will continue to provide information and clarification in the form of email updates to all operators as quickly as possible. Thank you all for your cooperation and commitment to maintaining early learning and child care in Durham Region.