

Child Care and Early Learning e-Newsletter

June 3, 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).

The Ministry of Education Memo and Updates

Please see the Provincial News Release regarding the [extension of the Declaration of Emergency](#) for Ontario to June 30, 2020.

The Ministry of Education provides regular updates related to the closure period and with funding and operational direction. On May 11, 2020 the Ministry of Education released a memo (dated May 9, 2020) to all Child Care operators with their approach to Child Care Sector Funding during the COVID Outbreak.

The following information has been pulled from the memo provided by the Ministry of Education:

Child Care Centres

Fixed Overhead Costs

As part of the Federal COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, and in partnership with Ontario, the federal and provincial governments have announced the Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA). The federal government designed the program and program details are being finalized by the federal government. To receive more information, visit the [Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's website](#) and sign-up to receive additional details including when the application process opens.

Provincial funding will be provided through the Ministry of Education to eligible child care operators who benefit from the OCECRA to pay the tenant portion (25%) of rent as outlined in OCECRA. The other 12.5% of provincial funding for those that benefit from OCECRA will flow through the OCECRA process. Child care operators should work with their landlords to determine whether they will benefit from this program.

Funding will also be provided for other eligible fixed monthly overhead costs, so centres are able to re-open operations following the conclusion of the state of emergency.

Provincial funding will be provided through CMSMs/DSSABs for child care operators that have a purchase of service agreement for general operating and/or fee subsidies. CMSMs/DSSABs will work directly with child care operators to confirm the fixed overhead costs of operators. For further clarity, not having a purchase of service agreement means not having a purchase of service agreement for general operating and/or fee subsidy funding with a CMSM/DSSAB.

The province will directly fund child care centres who do not have a purchase of service agreement.

The Ministry will provide an application form. This will ensure ease of completion and consistency where possible. Additional financial documentation such as invoices and receipts will be required to support the amount of funding requested (for example, rent or lease contract, utility bills, etc.). Further details and instructions on the application process, can be found on the [Government of Ontario website](#).

A completed application form that has been signed by an individual with signing authority, along with the supporting documentation, are to be e-mailed to the Ministry using the email address childcare@ontario.ca. Please use the subject line "Application (Overhead) - Insert Name of Centre and City/ Town – NonPOS Centre".

Salary and Wage Supports

The federal government has announced supports for businesses and individuals related to COVID-19, including the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) for businesses and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit for individuals.

For your ease of reference, the [federal government site](#) outlines all federal supports in Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan.

All child care centres will be required to apply for Federal COVID-19 Economic Response Plan funding to support staffing costs retroactively to March 15, 2020.

We encourage child care operators to research and optimize these federal supports for staff not working during the emergency closure period so that they are in a position to re-open following the conclusion of the declaration of emergency and ensure staff are supported throughout the outbreak.

Home Child Care Providers

Provincial funding will be provided to CMSMs/DSSABs for licensed home child care agencies with a purchase of service agreement where home child care continues to operate and serve families during this period.

The province will provide funding to cover the fees for families that are eligible for emergency child care directly to licensed home child care agencies who do not have a purchase of service agreement with a CMSM/DSSAB for general operating/base funding for home child care and/or fee subsidy.

The Ministry will provide an application form. This will ensure ease of completion and consistency where possible. Additional financial documentation such as invoices and receipts will be required to support the amount of funding requested. Further details and instructions on the application process, can on the Ministry of Education [website](#).

A completed application form that has been signed by an individual with signing authority, along with the supporting documentation, are to be e-mailed to the Ministry using the email address childcare@ontario.ca. Please use the subject line "*Application (ECC) - Insert Name and City/ Town – NonPOS Home Child Centre*".

Additional Supports for Child Care Centres and Home Child Care Agencies

The following changes have been made to provide additional supports to the child care sector during these unprecedented times:

- Licensing application, renewal and revision fees will be waived during the emergency closure period and for 60 days after the order is lifted.
- Licenses set to expire during the emergency closure period will be automatically extended by 6 months.
- The requirement to provide updated vulnerable sector checks and first aid training renewals for existing child care centre staff and home child care providers and their families will be extended during the mandatory closure period. During this time, child care providers will maintain strict health and safety measures as regulated by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

COVID-19 Updates

Reopening

There have been numerous inquiries from child care operators seeking direction on the reopening of child care. Currently, everyone including the Children's Services Division is awaiting direction and clarification from

the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to guide local planning and decisions. As information is received specific to the reopening of child care, it will be shared with the community.

The Durham Region [Community Reopening Toolkit](#) will be updated regularly for general information

Reconciliation Process

As the system manager for the Region of Durham, the Children Services Division (CSD) is implementing the review and reconciliation process for operators with a Purchase of Service Agreement (POSA) as set out by the Ministry of Education. More information is available in the [May 19 Early Learning and Child Care Update](#).

Licensed Child Care operators will receive a survey this week requesting information on the support's organizations have applied for. This information will be used to inform the reconciliation process. Quality Assurance Advisors will contact organization leads to complete the data collection and analysis process.

Licensed Child Care Operators who do not have a POSA with Durham should review the provincial information related to how to apply for fixed cost funding related to COVID-19 in the attached memo. This includes operators who only receive Wage Enhancement funding from the Region of Durham.

General Operating and Fee Subsidy Funding

The CSD has continued to make General Operating Program (GOP) payments up to and including the June payment. Regular GOP payments will continue at this time. In the month of April, operators with a POSA received a monthly payment equivalent to their average Fee Subsidy payment. Now that the provincial funding direction has been provided, it has been determined that the fee subsidy equivalent payments are discontinued to reduce the amount of recovery that may occur. All Funding payments made during the closure period will be included in the reconciliation process.

Any operators with concerns related to cashflow or any question may express them to the Quality Assurance Advisor completing the reconciliation process with them or Julie Gaskin, Manager of Early Learning.

Contact Information and Submissions

A reminder to please be sure the Children's Services Division has up-to-date contact information and documentation on file for your organization. During closures some documentation may have lapsed such as Insurance Certificates or updated Parent Handbooks and any other documents that may be outstanding at this time. These documents will be required for reopening. If there are questions, please contact your Quality Assurance Advisor.

Professional Learning

Continuous Professional Learning continues to occur in Durham during the COVID-19 closures. The [GROW newsletter is available](#).

Please continue to send your questions to Julie Gaskin at Julie.Gaskin@durham.ca. Due to the high volume of emails, questions will be gathered to provide information and clarification in the form of email updates to all operators. As we work with our Ministry of Education advisors to build the sustainability plan for Durham, we will continue to provide clarification and communication as quickly as possible. Thank you all for your cooperation and commitment to maintaining early learning and child care in Durham Region.