

Child Care and Early Learning e-Newsletter

June 18, 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).

Early Learning Updates – Reopening Guidelines

General Reopening Reminders

Prior to reopening, please ensure your organization has done the following:

- Water Testing: A reminder that testing facilities are open so sites requiring regular testing are required to comply with regulations as usual;
- Documentation required by the Children's Services Division (CSD) must be up to date (insurance certificate, parent handbook, etc.);
- Let the Children's Services Division know your site's re-opening date (actual or estimated - update estimated dates as soon as it is confirmed);
- Attestation and policies should be submitted to the Ministry of Education; and,
- **Attestation and policies forwarded to Julie.Gaskin@durham.ca once signed by the Ministry of Education.**

Resources and Information to support operators to reopen will be uploaded to the [Children's Services Web site](#) and additional health related resources on the Health Department [Toolkit web site](#). You can find sample posters and general guidance information on this web page and under the Child Care tab information is updating regularly so check back often.

Guiding Documents for Reopening Requirements

As per the Ministry of Education [Reopening Guidance document](#), all Operators are required to:

1. Follow the Ministry of Health [Guidance for Emergency Child Care document](#) as the primary guidance tool for the Region of Durham as per the Medical Officer of Health
2. Follow the direction provided in the Ministry of Education [Child Care Re-Opening guidance document](#) second to the guidance document (#1 above)
3. Follow the Regulatory amendments to the CCEYA <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/R20621>
4. Follow licensing requirements as provided in the CCEYA <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/#covid>

Sample Policy Templates are now available on our web site under the drop-down – [Sample Enhanced Health and Safety Policy and Procedure templates](#). These templates have been developed with Durham Region Health Department as the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and are intended to provide you with the information you need to support the reopening process. Please feel free to use these policy templates to guide your reopening.

Personal Protective Equipment

The CSD is pleased to be able to provide a limited amount of PPE to child care centres who have not been able to secure an adequate supply for re-opening. Available PPE includes touchless thermometers, surgical masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, gowns and goggles or face-shields. Availability will vary by week. In-stock items will be provided as required to child care operators on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see the attached PPE application and waiver, which should be completed and submitted to Janine Keith at Janine.keith@durham.ca. This application will also be uploaded to [our web site](#) soon.

Durham Region Operating Criteria (DROC)

Your QA's are supporting operators to reopen safely and are not commencing inspections during the reopening phase. The Health and safety policies and processes required during the pandemic and during re-opening will guide programs to reopen safely. Where possible, we encourage educators and operators to continue following pedagogical and Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) criteria within the enhanced health and safety protocols. Educators are encouraged to connect with their QA and Training Specialists during reopening for support.

Special Needs Resourcing Services

Special Needs Resource Agencies in Durham are working together to ensure children, educators and operators can access the support they need during reopening. Options for support are currently under development and details will be shared as they are finalized. Currently, our SNR network of service agencies are working with the Children's Services Division and Durham's Medical Officer of Health to develop resources and processes that ensure that the health and well-being of children and educators are supported and that protocols are followed for on-site support where necessary.

Funding

On June 11, the Ministry of Education provided a [funding memo](#) with [guidance document](#) including information on support for operators during the reopening phase. This included improvements to the initial guidance for the provincial sustainability funding approach that was introduced in a memo sent out in May 2020. The funding is part of our original 2020 Provincial funding allocation. Please note that there is no additional funding at this time. The funding guidelines and amendments include more flexibility for The Region of Durham Children's Services Division to use the funding to support POS operators with the current Provincial funding allocation.

CSD is working to develop a plan to support our operators with costs related to the following:

- Salaries and wages during the closure period
- Eligible rent paid during closure
- PPE to support reopening
- Reduced capacity at reopening

We have been gathering the data we need to reconcile funding during closure and are developing the data collection process for reopening funding and to reconcile payments already made in 2020. We will provide more information as the process evolves.

Previous EL Updates and communications are located on our web site under the heading [Children's Services COVID-19 early learning updates](#).

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.