

# Child care and early learning updates e-newsletter

**June 3, 2022**

Welcome to The Regional Municipality of Durham's Child Care and Early Learning updates e-newsletter. These e-newsletters provide licensed child care operators in Durham Region with updated information related to child care.

This edition includes the following topics:

- Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system updates:
  - Current status
  - Licensee information follow up session
  - CWELCC implementation phases
  - Next Steps

## Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system updates

### **Current Status**

Thank you for your continued patience as we build the CWELCC processes to support a smooth transition.

The Children's Services Division (CSD) has completed the application tool and is pleased to announce the CWELCC application will open on Monday June 6, 2022.

Applications will be reviewed and processed as they are received. Approval letters will be circulated once Regional Council approval to proceed has been obtained at the end of June.

**The child care operator portal will be used to share all information for operators with an active funding agreement.**

**Head office emails will be used until portal access is provided for operators with no active agreement.**

Funds for parent refunds and fee reductions will be provided to licensees who are successfully enrolled into the CWELCC system. CWELCC applications must be submitted, approved, and service agreements must be signed before payments to operators can begin.

### **Information follow up session**

A second Licensee information session is scheduled for Monday June 6 at 1:30 p.m. This session is an opportunity to provide clarifications and to address specific concerns.

The questions and answers from the first licensee information session held in May will be updated to include any questions posed during the upcoming June information session. This will be posted to operator portal once complete.

CWELCC is an exciting and positive opportunity for Durham Region families and the early learning community. We are encouraging all child care licensees to opt in during this transformational year.

Please forward your CWELCC questions to [childcareoperators@durham.ca](mailto:childcareoperators@durham.ca) prior to the June 6 info session.

A Microsoft Teams invitation was sent to head office email addresses on file for your organization. Email [childcareoperators@durham.ca](mailto:childcareoperators@durham.ca) if you have not received the invitation.

For specific details, please refer to the Ministry of Education [CWELCC Addendum Guidelines](#) shared with licensees.

CWELCC information, updates, and application details will be circulated in the child care operator portal. If you require support using the child care operator portal, please contact Darlene Burns for assistance at (905) 668-7711 x 2644 or [darlene.burns@durham.ca](mailto:darlene.burns@durham.ca).

### **CWELCC implementation phases**

The CWELCC application for Durham Region will open on June 6, 2022 and remain open until August 31, 2022. The application will be posted in the operator portal.

All licensees with programs serving children under the age of six (or turning six before June 30) in Ontario are eligible to apply to participate in the CWELCC system.

Participation in the CWELCC system is optional; however, licensees are encouraged to participate so that families can benefit from fee reductions. Licensees must opt in or opt out of participation in the CWELCC system before September 1, 2022.

#### **Opting out:**

Licensees who opt out of the CWELCC system are ineligible for any CWELCC funding including both parent refunds and workforce wage funding. Wage enhancement funding agreements are not impacted by opting out of CWELCC.

**Operators opting out must complete an opt out form.** Opt out forms will be processed and confirmation letters will be sent in the coming weeks.

#### **Opting in**

The application to opt in will open Monday June 6, 2022. The information required includes but is not limited to the application sample provided in the [CWELCC Addendum Guidelines](#).

## **CWELCC implementation phases:**

Phase 1 application opens - June 6, 2022 to August 31, 2022

Licensees will complete the online application and submit any additional required documentation via the operator portal. **Applications will be deemed complete only after all required information is submitted.**

Phase 2 applications processed - June 6, 2022 through the fall of 2022.

- CWELCC applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Only complete applications will be processed. Applications are deemed complete once ALL relevant documentation is submitted.
- Parent Refund Allocation Data Template completion – Once the CWELCC application is received and under review, licensees will be provided with the Parent Refund Allocation Data Template. The template must be submitted within seven days of receipt of the CWELCC approval letter. The template will be used to determine allocations for licensees to provide refunds to families for the period beginning April 1, 2022.
- During this period CSD will review applications for eligibility and send out confirmation of approval via the operator portal beginning in July. If we determine your organization is ineligible, we will reach out to discuss options and next steps.

Phase 3 contractual funding agreements signed, allocations calculated, and rates refunded/reduced – July 30 through fall 2022:

- Following approval letters, licensees will receive their CWELCC contractual funding documents via the operator portal.
- Parent Refund Allocation Templates must be submitted via the operator portal within seven days of receipt of the approval letter.
- Once Parent Refund Data Templates are processed and CWELCC agreements are signed and returned, payments will be processed.
- Within 31 days of notification of acceptance into the CWELCC system, licensees are required to reduce current rates by 25%.
- Within 60 days of notification of acceptance into the CWELCC system licensees are required to provide refunds to families backdated to April 1, 2022.

Phase 4 operator budget processes refined and base fees calculated – September to December 2022:

- As 2022 is a transitional year, child care operators enrolled in the CWELCC system will continue to be funded at current levels. This includes funding to support current rates and a continuation of any funding currently being provided by the Region according to contracted agreements. Families must only be charged the new base fee (the fee as of March 28, 2022, less 25% to a minimum of \$12). CWELCC will cover the actual cost of providing care and transitional gaps if needed.
- Our team will work with licensees to determine the actual cost of care and may

adjust to reflect base fees for 2022 if current base fees do not reflect the actual cost of care.

- Monthly allocations to offset fee reductions for eligible children will be paid in advance, to licensees based on operating capacity. A monthly report and reconciliation will be required and completed via the operator portal by site.

Funding to cover the cost of providing care to children ineligible to participate in CWELCC will continue as is. This can include parent fees, fee subsidy funding, and general operating program funding.

### **Next Steps**

The CWELCC transition will continue through 2022. This will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Operator budget consultation sessions – Children’s Services Division staff will work with child care operators to update the annual budget template and reporting process that meets CWELCC requirements and supports accuracy and reduces administrative burden.
- Profit threshold – Children’s Services Division staff will work with for-profit/commercial operators to assess and set reasonable profit thresholds allowable under the CWELCC.
- Budget template information sessions will be held to support our child care operators to complete the budget template in an accurate and timely manner.
- Information sessions on audit preparation will also be conducted help childcare operators prepare for annual audits throughout the year.

The Children’s Services Division is pleased to support the implementation of the CWELCC system in Durham Region. We are ready to help you, licensed child care operators, to navigate the transition into this new phase of providing support to families in our Region.

Please reach out to our team if you require support or have questions at [childcareoperators@durham.ca](mailto:childcareoperators@durham.ca) and watch your operator portal for ongoing information and details.