

Child care and early learning e-newsletter

March 12, 2021

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:

COVID-19 Vaccinations: Prioritization of Education and Child Care Workers

Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) Regulatory Amendments

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Spring Forward with Current COVID-19 Guidance

COVID-19 Vaccinations: Prioritization of Education and Child Care Workers

On March 5, the Ministry of Education provided the following update regarding COVID-19 vaccinations for education and child care workers in a memo from Minister Stephen Lecce:

Thank you for your continued efforts in keeping schools and child care settings open and safe.

As you are aware, the province continues to expand capacity and ramp up efforts under the phased roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan. I am pleased to share the government's announcement that the province is moving forward with Phase Two of this plan which includes education and child care

workers. Phase Two, which focuses on vaccinating populations based on age and risk is expected to begin in April and be completed by the end of July.

As you know, prioritizing education and child care workers is something I have advocated for some time. Vaccine prioritization for education and child care will commence with education and child care sector workers who work directly with children in both schools and licensed child care settings. Education workers as a group includes bus drivers who transport students. It is estimated that over 300,000 education and child care workers in schools and licensed child care settings would be eligible for early vaccination under Phase Two.

Local public health units are responsible for distribution of vaccines and will provide further information on how education and child care workers can access vaccines in their communities. Ontario is working with all public health units to plan and implement mass immunization clinics across the province.

We recognize that education and child care workers have been on the front-line of this pandemic and have worked to keep our children, students and families safe and supported over a difficult time. The government recognizes the importance of vaccinations for education and child care workers to support continued health, safety and well being for staff, children and families across the province. By vaccinating education and child care workers, we are providing greater protection for the school and child care community.

Specific guidance will be forthcoming to provide additional details of workers captured in Phase Two prioritization.

Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) Regulatory Amendments

On February 26, the Ministry of Education announced Regulatory Changes under [Ontario Regulation 137/15](#) of the CCEYA, 2014. These updates took effect on March 8.

The attached tip sheet provides an overview of the new or changed requirements. Changes focus on clarifying the intent of regulations, removing requirements that are duplicative or outdated, reducing administrative burden, and setting out additional health and safety measures, many of which the sector has already implemented as a response to COVID-19.

Updated Operational Guidance Documents

The Ministry of Education has updated operational guidance during COVID-19 documents based on the enhanced health and safety protocols that were introduced through a series of memos. The updated guidance can be found on the Province of Ontario's [website](#):

[Operational Guidance for Child Care During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

[Before and After School Programs Kindergarten-Grade 6](#)

Supports through Invest Durham

Is COVID-19 significantly impacting your business? Invest Durham may help.

Did you know that the Economic Development Division in Durham Region offers resources, connections and professional development opportunities to support businesses in Durham? Their Economic Task Force is responding to the needs of local businesses for a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Licensed child care operators are an integral part of Durham Region's economic growth and development. Whether you are looking to expand your online presence, hire staff, establish connections or build clientele, you will find relevant supports, information and resources on their website. Please visit their [website](#) to begin exploring ways that Invest Durham assists local businesses, including a calendar of events. Be sure to subscribe to their events calendar to join in [free weekly webinars](#). Stay tuned for further information in the coming weeks.

Child Care Recovery Strategy Working Group

Durham Region's Best Start Network Child Care Sub-Committee is forming a 'Child Care Recovery Strategy' working group of community partners to address key issues that the child care sector is facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The group will collaborate to strategize ways to help strengthen our early learning community. If you are interested in joining the working group, please send an email to beststart@durham.ca.

Durham Region Online Daily Screening Tool for Licensed Child Care

Durham Region's daily [online screening tool](#) for licensed child care is now available and can be found on the Durham Region [website](#). This tool can be used by licensed child care operators in Durham Region for the daily screening of children, staff, and essential

visitors. This tool has been adapted from the Ministry of Health, COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening and the Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to meet Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) requirements dictated by the Durham Region Health Department and legislative requirements within the Child Care and Early Years Act (2014). This screening will help parents determine if their child should attend child care, self-isolate, consult with a health care provider and/or contact the Durham Region Health Department. For failed screenings, it also provides clarity for when a child may return to care.

It's Time to Cast your Vote! College of Early Childhood Educators' Council Election

Between March 11 and April 14, members of the College of Early Childhood Educators in District 4 (Central East Region, which includes Durham Region) can cast their vote to elect members to the College of Early Childhood Educators' Council.

Council members help to build public trust and confidence in the RECE profession. Through their work on committees, council members oversee policy direction and make decisions related to entry to practice requirements, ethical and professional standards, and professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity. Each of these decisions plays a big part in shaping what RECEs do every day, in their professional practice.

Council President, Stacey Lepine, encourages you to consider selecting a candidate that best represents your community. Diversity is a key component of an effective Council, bringing together a breadth of perspectives. A diverse Council allows the voices of the profession and of the public that, historically, have not been heard to be heard. Diversity is key in a profession as unique and diverse as the children and families it supports. The College of Early Childhood Educators' Council requires a multi-dimensional group of elected members to best represent the dynamic communities in which we live and work.

The candidates for District 4 are:

- Natalie Kyo Chan
- Millicent (Millie) Forbes
- Laure (Laurie) Higgins
- Sharmina Nasrin
- Stacey Stevenson
- Jessica Rogers Tourloukis

Visit the [College of Early Childhood Educator's website](#) to read the biographies of the candidates in your district and ensure you cast your vote before April 14!

Spring Forward with Current COVID-19 Guidance

On March 10, the Children's Services Division hosted members of the Health Department during an online workshop to provide current early learning and child care (ELCC) specific COVID-19 guidance and to answer questions from the ELCC community. The slideshow that was presented during this workshop is attached for review.