

Child care and early learning e-newsletter

October 22, 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:

Funding Updates

General Operating Program Funding – POS Operators Only

Wage Enhancement (WE) – All Operators Receiving WE

Funding Applications for COVID-19 Related Absences and Mandated Closures – POS Operators Only

Special Purpose Funding – POS Operators Only

Operator Portal – All Operators

Fee Subsidy Designated Holidays for 2021

SNR Survey – All Operators

Funding Updates

For 2021, the Ministry of Education has allowed municipalities to use some flexibility within our current budget to maximize support provided to child care operators. There has been no additional funding provided by the province for child care services in 2021.

As our Division continues to closely monitor spending to meet our mandated obligations, we have also looked for ways to reduce the pressure on child care operators and parents due to the COVID-19 absence policies. Supporting children, families and our child care partners is our priority as we move forward with additional funding supports for COVID-19 related absences and mandated program closures. These additional funding supports are available to operators with a Purchase of Service Agreement (POS). See below for more information.

Questions related to funding allocations or contractual obligations can be directed to Julie Gaskin, Manager, Early Learning at Julie.gaskin@durham.ca .

Thank you for the work you do, providing quality child care for children and families in Durham Region.

General Operating Program Funding – POS Operators Only

The annual GOP survey will be uploaded to the Operator Portal the week of November 15th, 2021.

The data collection period will be for the same week (November 15, 2021).

Mark the date on our calendar to be sure submissions occur on time. **Surveys due:**

December 3, 2021 for **Single Site** operators

December 8, 2021 for **Multi-site** operators

All GOP data collected informs our planning for the upcoming year and ensures your centre is adequately supported.

Wage Enhancement (WE) – All operators receiving WE

This is a reminder that all Child Care Operators are expected to take advantage of eligible Federal Supports during the pandemic recovery. As per the [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\) web site](#) the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) has been extended to October 23, 2021.

The rate of CEWS may change from claim period to claim period. Claims must be completed before the application deadlines as noted on the CRA web site. Remuneration claimed through CEWS is inclusive of Wage Enhancement.

If your organization did not meet the eligibility for a CEWS claim period, you will be required to provide notice to the Children's Services Division as part of the WE reconciliation submission.

The 2021 year end WE reconciliation will occur early in 2022. The reconciliation process will be posted on the operator portal in the coming weeks. Repayment of all unused WE funding will be required once reconciliations are analyzed. As WE may only be used for eligible expenditures, we recommend holding WE funding separate from operating funds to support timely repayment of unused WE to the Region of Durham.

Funding Applications for COVID-19 Related Absences and Mandated Closures – POS Operators Only

Applications for funding are currently posted to the Operator Portal. Application due dates vary by month as indicated in the Portal. Applications are being processed as we receive them to ensure allocations occur quickly.

COVID-19 Related Absences:

For the period of September 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 fees must not be charged (or credit/refunds provided) for children who are absent due to COVID-19 related reasons.

We encourage operators to work with families to provide refunds/credits for COVID-19 related absences that occurred between April 1, 2021 and August 31, 2021.

Closures due to COVID-19:

Applications for closures include the closures of child care rooms, centres or provider homes that were ordered closed or supported to close by Durham Region Public Health and closures of programs due to Ministry of Education Mandate (school age program closures).

Please review the application's information page for more details and requirements.

For auditing purposes, service providers must maintain financial documentation to verify spending outlined on their reconciliation submissions. This spending must also be reported in organizational audited financial statements. Additional documentation to support what has been reported in the funding applications or financial statements may be requested.

Special Purpose Funding – POS Operators Only

[Special Purpose Funding Application forms are posted on our web site.](#) Funding is available for health & safety expenses, toys & equipment purchases, transformation activities, training activities and backfill costs that support training attendance. Funding is approved and allocated on a first come, first served basis and must be for expenditures occurring in the 2021 calendar year. Incomplete applications will not be processed. The Application deadline has been extended to November 15, 2021.

Please contact Janine Keith for more information at Janine.keith@durham.ca

Operator Portal – All Operators

When accessing templates or forms on the portal, download the file to open in the originating application (Word, Excel, etc.), complete the template/form and save it for your records. When complete, upload the document back onto the Portal into the appropriate folder to complete the submission. The appropriate Children's Services staff will be notified automatically.

The Operator Portal is intended to be used as a communication access point. The Portal is NOT a document storage system so be sure to download and save all documents to your own filing system for your own records. Only current documents will remain on the Portal and historic documents will be removed.

If you need support or clarification on the use of the Portal, please contact Darlene Burns at Darlene.burns@durham.ca

Fee Subsidy Designated Holidays for 2021

As noted in the Fee Subsidy Designated Statutory Holiday memo, the recognized STAT days for 2021 are:

Christmas Day recognized on December 24, 2021

Boxing Day recognized on December 27, 2021

We have updated the original STAT day for New Year's Day 2022 to match the school board calendars and will observe that day on December 31, 2021

We recognize that some operators may recognize days differently than those listed, however the Fee Subsidy policy will apply as stated in your [Fee Subsidy Payment Policy Manual](#).

Please contact Julie Gaskin if you have questions or concerns at Julie.gaskin@durham.ca

Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) Services Survey – All Operators

We are seeking information and feedback on Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) services available to child care operators. The brief survey will be included in your GOP questionnaire or will be posted in the Operator Portal as a stand-alone survey for non-

POS operators. This information helps to guide our planning for the upcoming year. We value your input and appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey.

More information on the [SNR services available](#) to the Early Learning and Child Care community in Durham Region is listed on our web site.

If you have questions or concerns regarding SNR programs available to your program, please contact Julie Gaskin at Julie.gaskin@durham.ca.