

Ministry of Education Ministère de l'Éducation
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Memorandum To: Child Care and Early Years Partners

From: Shannon Fuller
Assistant Deputy Minister
Early Years and Child Care Division

Date: July 30, 2020

Subject Child Care and Early Years Programs Re-Opening
Update

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we work together to re-open the child care and early years sector across the province and support children and families. The health and safety of children continues to be the government's top priority.

Today, the government announced next steps to support the healthy and safe reopening of child care and early years programs across the province, including programs in First Nations communities.

We are happy to share that, effective September 1, 2020, all licensed child care centres and before and after school programs will be permitted to operate at full capacity. Licensees will continue to be required to maintain ratios and group sizes as set out under *the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)*. The enhanced health and safety procedures that were put in place as part of our re-opening plan, will remain in place to protect children, staff and families.

Authorized recreation provider-operated after school programs and extended day before and after school programs will be required to follow standard ratios and maximum group sizes set out in the *Before and After School Kindergarten to Grade 6 Policies and Guidelines*.

Families whose children attended a licensed child care centre immediately before the emergency was declared, must be given at least 14 days' notice to accept a placement available on or after September 1, 2020. Licensees can begin charging fees once a space has been accepted. If a parent chooses not to accept a space, the licensee will be permitted to require fees to hold the space or will be able to offer the space to another family.

As of September 1, 2020, licensees will be expected to ensure that child care staff and home child care providers wear face coverings at all times while they are working, and that ministry guidelines are followed on the use of masks and face coverings for school age children who are at a child care premises.

A supply of face coverings will be delivered to licensed child care settings, EarlyON locations and First Nation on reserve Child and Family Programs, and there will be no charge for these supplies. Further details on this process will be provided in the coming weeks.

The ministry is currently updating the *Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak: Child Care Reopening* document to support the full re-opening of child care programs and it will be released in the coming days. Updates are also being made to the *Before and After School Kindergarten to Grade 6 Policies and Guideline* to provide COVID-19 operational guidance.

In addition, effective September 1, 2020, EarlyON Child and Family Centres and First Nation on reserve Child and Family Programs will also be permitted to reopen with in-person programming where participants pre-register and additional health and safety protocols are in place. These additional protocols will be outlined in an operational guidance document for EarlyON that will be provided in the coming weeks.

We wanted to share this information as soon as possible to support planning and outreach to families.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration as we work together in partnership to maintain the delivery of safe and high-quality licensed child care and early years programs across Ontario. We continue to put the health and safety of Ontario's children and families at the forefront and we are basing our decisions on advice from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and the experts at the COVID-19 Command Table.

Thank you,

Shannon Fuller