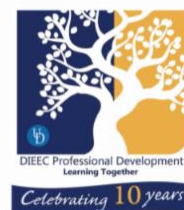


REACH

a monthly e-newsletter for Delaware's early childhood and school age programs



June 2020



You're here for Delaware's children and families.
We're here for YOU!

OUR PATH FORWARD Reopening

Supporting your programs while
navigating through COVID-19.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Martha Buell

Dear Members of the Early Care and Education Community of Delaware:

This is the longest spring I can ever remember. Still, as we turn to summer, and our state begins the process of "reopening," we at the DIEEC want to do whatever we can to assist and support

you as you continue to heroically provide services and programming that the working families of Delaware so desperately need.

Winston Churchill once said, "Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have." It is clear to all of us here at the DIEEC that providing a healthy and safe early childhood education program (ECE) is a patriotic act of the highest order, it always has been, and it will always remain so.

I know that the members of the ECE Community are ready to put in the hard work necessary to keep all children and families safe – your own families and children, your staff, and the children and families you serve. But as you are engaged in this work, please remember that you need to keep yourself healthy – both physically and mentally. Even in the midst of all that you must do each day, take time for yourself, to calm and distress. As they say on airplanes, put on your oxygen mask before helping others – this is great advice and reminds us to make self-care a priority, you must care for yourself so that you can continue to care for others. Those of us at the DIEEC believe that early childhood educators are "essential personnel," along with first responders and health care.

In this newsletter, our goal is to bring you some resources that might help you meet the challenges you are facing; we hope it is helpful.

[Delaware's Child Care and COVID -19 Site](https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/child-care/)

<https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/child-care/>

REOPENING PHASE 1

What You Need to Know

What we know about the virus and the overall situation continues to evolve rapidly as the state responds to the pandemic to ensure the safety and health of its constituents. The following is the most updated information impacting your operations.

Today, June 1 begins Phase 1 of the governor's plan to ease Delaware into reopening. This step comes more than two months after the stay-at-home-order was enacted to slow the spread of COVID-19.

During Phase 1, open child care programs must continue to be designated as Emergency Child Care Sites (ECCS) in order to be open and serving children and families. Child care programs that are closed are allowed to reopen to provide care to essential personnel and/or open businesses whose staff cannot work from home and do not have alternate care options.

By way of background, operating as an ECCS has been an option for programs since March 30, when the governor modified the original State of Emergency Declaration to permit child care programs to apply to open as emergency child care sites.

An emergency child care site must meet these [requirements](#) that build on existing DELACARE regulations and address the face-covering criteria, smaller group sizes, and cleaning protocols, among other topics. NOTE: The additional requirements for DSCYF-designated emergency child care sites is attached to the end of this publication.

Additionally, parents/guardians will need to provide their child care program with the certification form signed by their employer, confirming they work for an essential or reopened business, cannot work from home, and do not have access to other child care. You can find a copy of this certification form by clicking on this [link](#). The form is also attached to this publication.

For early childhood education programs (centers and homes), enhanced reimbursement will continue to be available.

Programs who would like to open as ECCS should contact their licensing specialist.

Delaware continues to update information related to child care at <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/child-care/>.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Cultivating Hope by Patricia Lynch

Psychologists define resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, and other significant sources of stress. These include family and relationship problems, serious health issues, or workplace, and financial stressors. One, some, or perhaps even all of these adversities may have touched a family during this pandemic.

Resilience involves "bouncing back" from these difficult experiences and also can include far-reaching personal growth. As we navigate our new course, we need to have confidence that we are life-long learners, creative thinkers, problem solvers, and passionate professionals who, when faced with adversity, will rise exuding strength, compassion, and grit.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Safety and health are always at the forefront of your operations. Now, as you manage through COVID-19, implementing safety and health practices requires exceptional vigilance. And, yes, it can be overwhelming.

If you are an emergency child care site or considering reopening as one, we want to provide you with a breakdown of the expectations for keeping you, your staff, and children of essential workers and their families safe and healthy.

First, as a baseline, you must continue to adhere to existing DELACARE regulations enforced by the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL). Additionally, there are new requirements and guidelines as a part of the State of Emergency, its modifications, and Executive Order 38.

The requirements center around:

- Revised group size and ratio requirements

The landscape of the early care and education field may differ from previous times. Still, our ability to learn, lead, and empower in this new world will surely exemplify hope for the children, families, staff, and communities.

It is essential to acknowledge the insights, ideas, and feelings of all members of our learning communities, building on strengths, and creating a vision where everyone feels empowered as an integral team member. This message of inclusivity can lead to a renewed sense of cohesion and belonging, essential facets of any positive, forward-thinking, and thriving community. Reopening the early care and education programs will take effort. Carol S. Dweck, a renowned psychologist, highlights the importance that "effort is one of those things that gives meaning to life. Effort means you care about something, that something is important to you, and you are willing to work for it." She notes, "to picture your brain forming new connections as you meet the challenge and learn. Keep ongoing."

We need to envision a better tomorrow; our students, families, and staff are counting on us.

- Cleaning and Sanitizing
- Drop Off and Pick up Routines to include Screening

Further, effective May 1, the Governor's thirteenth modification to the State of Emergency requires businesses to adhere to additional safeguards against the spread of COVID-19.

For child care businesses, these practices include:

- All child care providers and/or staff working in child care facilities must wear cloth face coverings while at work;
- Business owners must provide these cloth face coverings to staff if staff do not already have them;
- Business owners must provide access to hand sanitizer for staff;
- Business owners must deny entry to anyone over the age of 12 who is not wearing a face covering, if one is not available to be provided to that person.
- Face coverings are not required for any child under 12, and children under two may not wear face coverings.

Although this may seem like a lot, we have to remember that these practices will help us move to the next phase of re-opening and most importantly, prevent the spread of COVID-19.

We encourage you to check out the CDC website for additional recommendations. The website also includes simple directions for making cloth face coverings and hand sanitizer.

This state website is another resource to locate supplies.

COMMUNICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It's safe to say that, although there are incredibly helpful pieces of information being shared right now, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by all of the resources. This current, oversaturated climate of articles, websites, interviews, data charts, and more can leave us with an unclear map of where to go next or where to begin.

Hoping to make that path clearer, we have collected and organized some resources that quickly break down what's important to know right now, from financial support to self-care.

Health & Safety: For specific guidance on health and safety precautions as they directly relate to your program, please visit the CDC's webpage for child care program guidelines. Here you will find social distancing strategies, cleaning effort outlines, face-covering tips, and more. Please be advised that programs must adhere to OCCL regulations as well as additional requirements for DSCYF-designated emergency child care sites. **State of Delaware Guidance:** The State of Delaware's COVID-19 response page is the information hub for regular updates from Governor John Carney and other state officials. Delaware continues to prepare for reopening, with Phase One going into effect on June 1. **Financial Supports:** As changes to the workforce continue to shift, it is important to stay informed on what financial assistance is currently offered to programs. Enhanced Reimbursement, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), and the CARES Act are some of the financial resources available to child care programs throughout the state. Please visit the respective websites for further guidance and information. **Self-Care:** The mental health impacts of social isolation, uncertain work, and the overall experiences of living through a global pandemic can sometimes be overlooked. Your well-being is incredibly important to us during this time- we encourage Delaware's early childhood educators to utilize the National Alliance on Mental Health and Mental Health America websites for mental health resources. If you or someone you know are currently struggling, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24/7 for help at 1-800-

DIEEC PD continues to develop and offer various virtual and live training options for the upcoming weeks. We are committed to your professional growth and development, and we have intentionally created content that helps you care for and educate young children during these uncertain times.

Check out the virtual training sessions planned for the beginning of June. We hope they spark your interest. Keep in mind the virtual platform is self-paced and instructor-facilitated

- Play: The Role of Play in Any Setting
- Preschool Math Ideas Hiding in Plain Sight

We understand that navigating the dashboard for virtual trainings through the Community of Practice platform can be challenging. This document provides step-by-step instructions.

For live trainings, held in real-time via Zoom, June sessions kick off with:

- Relationship-Based Care for Infants and Toddlers - Sessions on two consecutive Wednesdays - June 3rd and June 10th (registration open through Monday, 6/1)
- Understanding Behavior as Communication - Tuesday, June 16th (registration open through Friday, 6/12)

Once registered for any online workshop, you will be contacted via email from a DIEEC staff member before the date with further information.

We encourage you to continue to check the DIEEC PD website for updates. As always, your unwavering commitment to the children of Delaware does not go unnoticed and is truly appreciated.

As always, if you have questions, please call us on (302) 831-3239 or email us at institute-early-childhood@udel.edu.

www.dieecpd.org

273-8255. DIEEC Resources: For information and updates directly related to Stars and DIEEC PD, please continue to visit our COVID-19 resource hub, as well as our family child care provider resource page. Delaware 2-1-1: Delaware 2-1-1 is a free-of-charge, confidential referral and information helpline and website that connects people from all communities and of all ages to the essential health and human services they need. To access the helpline via phone, dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-560-3372 to reach a community resource specialist Monday-Friday, 8 am through 9 pm. You can also text your zip code to 898-211 for assistance

[Visit our website](#)

FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

Delaware Health and Social Services Supports Child Care Reopening

The Division of Social Services (DSS), the agency that administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)/ Purchase of Care program, received a \$9.7 million increase to the CCDF program through the CARES Act due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

DSS intentionally planned from the time the state of emergency was declared, how it would address the impact and aftermath of the state of emergency on our childcare infrastructure.

To proactively assist providers in reopening, the increase was used to provide support to:

- providers that remained open as emergency childcare sites;
- providers that chose to close and pay their staff;
- providers that closed and chose not to pay their staff.

Specifically, the funds were used to reimburse emergency child care sites based on their authorizations rather than their actual attendance. Providers are reimbursed for all children authorized to their sites regardless of whether or not each authorized child attends. Those that closed are reimbursed based on their February enrollment.

In May the state paid \$2.65 million to 287 closed providers. Also, the state continues to waive parent co-pays and is assuming this expense as well to ensure that providers continue to receive their monthly budgeted revenue. The state is currently spending an additional \$2 million dollars per month on childcare.

And finally, the Division held its first meeting on child care reopening earlier this month. It will continue to work with our early care and education partners to strategically assess the needs of those programs that are open and those that are currently closed as we reopen the state.

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

Delaware Stars for Early Success, website: www.delawarestars.udel.edu

DIEEC Professional Development, website: www.dieecpd.org

Main: (302) 831-3239 | Fax: (302) 831-4223



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Early Childhood



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Engage families and communities to promote the safety and well-being of children through prevention, intervention, treatment and rehabilitative services.

March 30, 2020

Revised April 28, 2020

Revised May 5, 2020

Additional requirements for DSCYF-designated emergency child care sites

Effective April 6 and continuing until the State of Emergency is lifted, the child care provided by child care centers and child care homes will be limited to those providers who have certified that they are only providing care to the children of personnel working for essential businesses as defined by Governor Carney's State of Emergency, or personnel of businesses permitted to open per the Governor's announcement on May 5, 2020, and cannot work from home. These providers will be designated as emergency child care sites by DSCYF. All other child care facilities must close until the end of Governor Carney's State of Emergency.

Child care centers and homes may continue to operate or re-open as long as they submit an application on de.gov/coronavirus by April 3 certifying that they will follow additional requirements set forth by DSCYF and enforced by the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL), including existing DELACARE Regulations as well as the suspensions or modifications set forth in guidelines previously issued pursuant to Executive Order 38 and any modifications to the State of Emergency. Before being designated as an emergency child care site by DSCYF, a provider must demonstrate that they are able to and will adhere to the following requirements developed by OCCL and the Division of Public Health.

- 1. Child care homes and centers may only provide care to the children of essential personnel or personnel of businesses permitted to open per the Governor's announcement on May 5, 2020, and are unable to work from home.** (Find more information [at this link](#).)
 - a.** The provider must require all parents (existing clients and parents/guardians seeking care) to certify that they work for an essential or open business and are unable to work from home. This certification may include any of the following:
 - i.** A letter from the parent's employer stating that they are an essential or open business and the parent cannot work from home;
 - ii.** The presentation of a work ID card which states the parent's employer and position/occupation;
 - iii.** The presentation of the completed "essential employee certification" form developed by DSCYF;

- iv. If the provider already has information confirming the essential employment status of a parent whose child is already enrolled in care, additional information is not required.
 - b. If a parent is unable to certify their employment status, the provider must discontinue or deny providing care to the child(ren) of that parent.
 - c. All children enrolled on or after the order will be enrolled on a temporary basis. Any child who was enrolled prior to the order shall resume their prior enrollment at that location after the State of Emergency is lifted.
- 2. **For all children enrolled on or after April 6, providers must use the “temporary emergency child care enrollment form,” “health history form,” and “temporary Child Information Card” developed by DSCYF and store it with the child’s file. These forms can be found at de.gov/coronavirus. The work address of the parent/guardian must include the exact address and building number or name, if applicable.**
- 3. **REVISED and EFFECTIVE 5/1/20: Providers must adhere to the following screening practices for adults and children entering the facility:**
 - Adults who drop off and pick up children must do so at the entrance to the facility, not the classroom, unless the classroom has its own separate entrance where the child can be safely dropped off. Staff will receive the children and see that they arrive safely in their classrooms.
 - Providers must ensure that staff and children do not have an elevated temperature before entering the facility. This may be done by actively monitoring a person’s temperature before entrance to the facility, or by asking staff and children (or a parent/guardian on behalf of the child) to report their temperature upon arrival.
 - It is best to use touchless thermometers (forehead/temporal artery thermometers) if possible, but if you must use oral or other types of thermometers, make sure to clean the thermometers thoroughly between each person, as to not spread infection.
 - Follow the manufacturer’s directions to disinfect the thermometer.
 - If no directions are available, rinse the tip of the thermometer in cold water, clean it with alcohol or alcohol swabs, and then rinse it again.
 - Personnel screening for fever should consider wearing gloves and face masks per CDC recommendations.
 - If a staff member or child reports or is noted to have body temperature at or above 99.5 degrees Fahrenheit, they must be sent home.
 - Providers must also ensure that each incoming staff member and child (or the child’s parent may answer on their behalf) is screened with a basic questionnaire each time they enter the child care facility. The questionnaire shall include at least the questions below:
 - Do you have any of the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of smell or taste?

- If NO, proceed to the next question.
- If YES, but symptoms have a known cause (asthma, COPD, chronic sinusitis, etc.), the staff member or child may not be admitted to child care and must be referred to their primary care provider for clearance to return.
- If YES, or the staff member or child is otherwise symptomatic and considered at risk for COVID-19 exposure, the staff member or child may not be admitted to the facility and should isolate at home.
 - The staff member or child should maintain home isolation until at least 3 days have passed *since recovery*, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
 - At least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*.
 - After discontinuation of home isolation, persons must continue to avoid sustained close contact with others, maintain strict social distancing and hand hygiene, and not return to work or child care for an additional 4 days (for a total of 7 days without symptoms) due to the possible risk of continued infectiousness. Persons may return to work or care after this 7-day period; however he/she should continue to recognize the risk of infectiousness and self-monitor for symptoms.
- Staff members should consult medical professionals if desired or needed and should adhere to screening decisions made by the primary care provider or DPH medical personnel as appropriate.
- If at any time a doctor confirms the cause of the staff member or child's fever or other symptoms is not COVID-19 and approves them to return to work or care, then the provider shall follow the appropriate DELACARE Regulations and their facility's policies in regard to return to work or child care.
- Have you been in *close contact* (e.g., within 6 feet for more than a few minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 infection?
 - If NO, the staff member or child may proceed with work or may receive child care at the facility.
 - If YES, the staff member or child will be required to stay at home for 14 days from the time they were exposed to confirmed COVID-19.

4. Early Care and Education Center providers must adhere to the following ratios and group size:

	Age of Child	Minimum Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size*
Infant	Under 12 months	1:4	8
Young toddler (1 year old)	12 through 23 months	1:6	10
Older toddler (2 year old)	24 through 35 months	1:8	10
Young preschool child (3 year old)	36 through 47 months	1:10	10
Older preschool child (4 year old)	48 months or older and not yet attending kindergarten or higher	1:10	10
School-age child	Attending kindergarten or higher	1:10	10

*Maximum group size must apply to the number of children in a classroom or other enclosed space. Rooms utilizing half walls may count as enclosed spaces but providers should ensure that they are still able to maintain 6 feet of distance between groups of children.

5. Family and Large Family Child Care Homes must follow DELACARE Regulations regarding the number and ages of children served, but may not serve more than 10 children.

6. Providers must ensure that they have adequate staff each day to meet the restricted ratio and group size requirements above.

7. Providers must suspend the use of all outside contractors, programs, and entertainment.

8. Cleaning and sanitizing requirements in addition to those in DELACARE Regulations:

- a. Suspend use of sand and water table play
- b. Suspend use of play-doh or other clay-like materials
- c. Suspend use of toys that children wear on their faces such as masks and goggles
- d. Staff and children must wash hands upon entering the classroom and upon leaving
- e. All hard surfaces must be sanitized twice a day and as needed
- f. Toys should be separated for sanitizing immediately after being placed in a child's mouth

- g. All frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, faucets and phones) should be sanitized frequently throughout the day
 - h. Access to food preparation areas should be restricted to only staff who are essential to food preparation
- 9. Providers must ensure that they have adequate supplies to meet the additional cleaning and sanitizing requirements above.**
- 10. Providers must continue to allow OCCL to inspect the facility and all of its records to ensure compliance with these additional requirements.**
- 11. Providers must notify OCCL within one business day in the event that they decide to close the facility for any reason.**
- 12. EFFECTIVE 5/1/20: The Governor's thirteenth modification to the State of Emergency requires businesses to adhere to additional safeguards against the spread of Covid-19. For child care businesses, these practices include:**
 - a. All child care providers and/or staff working in child care facilities must wear cloth face coverings while at work;
 - b. Business owners must provide these cloth face coverings to staff if staff do not already have them;
 - c. Business owners must provide access to hand sanitizer for staff;
 - d. Business owners must deny entry to anyone over the age of 12 who is not wearing a face covering, if one is not available to be provided to that person.
 - e. Face coverings are not required for any child under 12, and children under 2 may not wear face coverings.



DSCYF Emergency Child Care Site - Essential Personnel Certification

Revised May 5

Only employees designated as essential or employees of businesses permitted to open per Governor John Carney's announcement on May 5, 2020, and are unable to work from home may use child care at an emergency child care site.

Employees must certify to their licensed child care provider that they qualify as essential or are employed by an open business per the Governor's announcement on May 5, 2020, and cannot work from home. Please fill out the following verification:

I am considered essential personnel or employed at an open business, **and** cannot work from home.

Employee Name _____

Employer _____

Employer Signature _____

Date _____

Employer Contact Information _____