

NH CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND PROVIDER COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) March 24, 2020

During this challenging time, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Care Licensing Unit and the Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration (the Bureau) will now be providing regular FAQ and/or Updates to keep you informed. Please review the information and utilize the included links, emails and phone numbers to help you navigate your current needs. If you have any questions or requests that are not addressed here, please send them to DHHS.ChildDevelopment@dhhs.nh.gov or call 603-271-4242 to leave a message.

General Questions during a State and Federal State of Emergency

Q: Why are child care programs still operating when schools have closed?

- A. Child care is a critical service in the lives of working families. All state agencies are working closely with one another, along with the Governor's office to ensure providers have the information they need to continue to provide safe and quality care. The Child Care Licensing Unit (CCLU) and the Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration (CDHSC) is working with the Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) and the Governor's office, and using guidance from Federal agencies, including the Center for Disease Control (CDC), to support child care and families in New Hampshire.

The Governor's executive orders on COVID-19: <https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-media/emergency-orders/>

Guidance from the CDC for schools and child care: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>

Q: Should programs follow public school system closures?

A: Programs should assess their own need to close in conjunction with local health officials. Guidance from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html> Updated information from DPHS on Covid-19 in NH can be found here: <https://www.nh.gov/covid19> and <http://nh.childcareaware.org/>

Q: What does the Federal State of Emergency mean for child care providers?

A: The Federal State of Emergency allows for broader federal aid and services for the state. Any changes for the state is under the jurisdiction of each State's Governor.

Q: Did or will the CDC order all child care closed across the nation?

A: The CDC did not order all child care closed across the nation. The CDC does not have the authority to order closures. This is an individual state decision.

The CDC has provided guidance on child care and schools at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Emergency Child Care Questions**Q. Who do I contact if I want to provide emergency child care or have current need to stay open for emergency child care?**

A: A partnership between Child Care Aware of New Hampshire (CCAoNH), CCLU and the BCDHSC is working closely to assist child care providers during this time. CCAoNH is calling all programs, across the state to determine your status – open, closed, open for emergency care only, closed and willing to reopen. If you have not received a call or returned one please ring CCAoNH's emergency lines at if you have not received an update call, please call one of the emergency lines at (603) 578-1386 ext. 28 or ext. 33 as soon as possible.

Q. How do I tell you what our needs (supplies, staff, etc.) are to continue operating or to reopen?

A. First complete the needs survey at <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07egz2vuark7up6l5v/a003k83cyh33/questions>.

This will get you into the master database. We will then reach out to you with resources.

Licensed Program Questions***Q: If I want to care for more children in my licensed program, what do I need to do?***

A: Send your request to CCLUOffice@dhhs.nh.gov including the name of your program, town, and answer the following questions:

- The number of additional children you wish to accept.
- What classrooms will be over capacity.
- Whether the additional children will exceed the program's overall capacity.
- Whether the child to staff ratio will be maintained or not.

Health and Safety Questions**Q: Is there guidance available on cleaning techniques, screening of staff and children and program set-up ideas to increase the health and safety of our program environment and attendees?**

A. Yes, in addition to the previously mentioned resources, the Department will be releasing additional information as well as sponsoring an informational webinar on Wednesday, March 25th at 5:15 PM. The link for the meeting is <https://zoom.us/j/252243668> Meeting

ID: 252 243 668 or Join by computer (best) or by phone (646) 876-9923. The webinar will be recorded and posted, along with written guidance about operating your program safely

Q: What do I do if we have a suspected exposure or confirmed COVID-19 infection?

- A. 211-NH is serving as the Information and Referral for the Division of Public Health or contact your healthcare provide for guidance. Also, please send an email to Dianne.chase@dhhs.nh.gov to ensure that CCLU and BCDHSC are aware of the issue.

Staffing Questions

Q: What happens if staff do not want to work because they are concerned the spread of disease?

- A: If staff calling out leads to ratio concerns, please assess whether you feel you can safely care for children and call the CCLU (271-9025) for consultation or to address a wavier if needed.

Q: I want to stay open, but I am short-staffed. How do I get more qualified staff?

- A. CCAoNH is developing a database of available staff that already meet licensing requirements. If you are in need of additional staff please call Child Care Aware of New Hampshire's Emergency Child Care line at Emergency Child Care Lines at (603) 578-1386 ext. 28 or ext. 33 or visit the COVID-19 information at <http://nh.childcareaware.org/emergency-lines-for-covid-19/>

Q: I can't get my staff in for a fingerprint appointment, what can I do?

- A. During the State of Emergency, you may hire staff prior to completing a background check through CCLU, as long as the staff is always supervised until a background check is complete. At this time, if an individual has completed a background check because they are a recent school employee, a licensed professional with a completed a background check as part of their licensing requirements, or had a background check completed through their most recent employer, that will satisfy the requirement. It is important that you keep documentation of how you verified the background check on file, and send a copy of that verification with the Household and Personnel Form to CCLU. Eligibility cards are not required at this time. When the State of Emergency is over, individuals hired under these guidelines will need to complete the regular background check process, including obtaining an Eligibility Card, if they remain employed in your program.

Q: Where do I go to apply for unemployment?

- A. You can apply at <https://www.nhes.nh.gov/>.

Q: Am I eligible for unemployment?

- A. The state has expanded eligibility to those who may not have previously had access to unemployment. Please go to www.nhes.nh.gov for additional information.

Q: How much of a benefit will I receive on unemployment?

- A. This varies based on your wages. The following link should provide a rough indication of how much you will receive. <https://www.nhes.nh.gov/forms/documents/des-1049.pdf>

Q: Is there a waiting period for unemployment benefits?

- A. This has been waived in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order. Please go to www.nhes.nh.gov for additional information.

There will be a webinar on March 26, 2020 with representatives from NHES. Information see information at <http://nh.childcareaware.org/>

Child Care Scholarship Questions**Q: What changes have occurred in the Child Care Scholarship Fund related to the COVID-19 crisis?**

- A. Full payment to providers enrolled through the Child Care and Development Fund. If the child is not receiving care at another location, payment to the provider is at the child's service level regardless if the child is present or the provider is closed. A provider is to use the Disaster Option when billing.

As of March 17, 2020, full time payment to afterschool providers for families enrolled in CCDF, which typically is only available during the summer and school vacations.

Q: When do I use the DISASTER option?

- A. You will use the disaster option whether the child is absent or present.

Q: If my program is closed due to COVID-19, can I still bill?

- A. Yes, you can still bill if your program is closed. Please use the DISASTER option and follow the billing instructions.

Q: How do I get the instructions or live support to do my billing correctly?

- A. The instructions were sent out by email on Thursday, March 19th if you do not have them. Please email sarah.nelson@dhhs.nh.gov or call and leave a message at 603-271-4242 with your phone number and the best time to reach you. You will receive a return call from a blocked number from one of our staff that are working offsite.

General Questions and Contacts

NH Child Care Licensing Unit

8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday

Telephone Numbers

Telephone	(603) 271-9025
Toll Free Number	(800) 852-3345, ext. 9025
TDD Access Relay	(800) 735-2964
Fax Number	(603) 271-4782

E-Mail

CCLUoffice@dhhs.nh.gov

Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration

8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday

Telephone Numbers

Telephone	(603) 271-4242
Toll Free Number	(800) 852-3345 ext. 4242
TDD Access Relay	(800) 735-2964
Fax Number	(603) 271-8712
Claims Payments Toll Free	(888) 294-4353
Credential Information	(603) 271-4684
Licensed Plus	(603) 271-4684

Child Care Aware of New Hampshire

Main Toll Free Phone Line: 1-855-393-1731

Child Care Referral & Consultation Line: Ext. 31 or (603) 578-1386, ext. 31

Training & Technical Assistance/Help Line: Ext. 32 or (603) 578-1386, ext. 32

Emergency Child Care Lines: (603) 578-1386 ext. 28 or 33