

March 20, 2020

Dear PHLpreK Childcare Providers,

This memo is an update to the letter from March 15 regarding the PHLpreK program in coordination with the evolving Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We continue to hear from families, Providers, and other early childhood partners during this time and while not every issue is resolved at this moment, we want to update you on the below items. As before, we continue to urge all families, providers, and hubs to follow the city's Department of Public Health updates to the COVID-19 situation at the [website HERE](#).

1. The city of Philadelphia issued its most recent emergency order on March 17, 2020, which can be found here: [EMERGENCY ORDER](#).
2. As noted in the above emergency order (page 4, Section 3, b), **all** childcare (family, commercial, school, etc.) facilities are considered non-essential and should be closed until further notice.
3. The only Providers open at this time are those granted a waiver to remain open. Those sites are only permitted to serve:
  - a. Children of medical, police, fire, DHS and other essential city employees
  - b. Children of all other essential services, as listed in the emergency order, above*(Note: Family Child Care and Group Residential Providers are not required to have waivers at this time to remain open, but may choose to close)*
4. Providers able to serve children identified in # 3 above may apply for a waiver from temporary closure by emailing: [RA-PWDRACERT@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PWDRACERT@pa.gov). Please include "Waiver Request – Philadelphia County" in the subject line. The email should also include the address of your agency, contact information and what population you serve.
5. The state will then send the waiver to the City's Office of Children and Families. A member of our team will follow-up with a request for additional information to ensure you are serving the population as identified in the emergency order. You must submit this form electronically in order to be considered for a waiver approval.
6. During this time, we will continue to pay Providers their monthly allocations, regardless of attendance and/or closure until April 30, 2020
  - a. Providers will be paid for their highest approved enrollment total during January, February, or March 2020 (whichever is highest).
  - b. We will be waiving the 180-day service requirement at this time, but we encourage sites to consider ways in which they can make-up days lost in the future.
7. As we will continue to pay PHLpreK providers during this time, the expectation is that Providers continue to pay its staff. We understand that Providers receive funding across a variety of revenue streams. If a Provider feels there is a need to lay off staff and request them to file for unemployment, please inform your Hub, PHMC, and our office immediately.
8. If families of essential/emergency services are in need of child care, they can contact the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) at: (215) 382-4762 and ask to speak with the emergency services coordinator for additional information. They will share what sites are currently open and the daily rates being charged at this time. If children are already receiving a public subsidy, the family will not be required to pay for the service.

9. The City of Philadelphia acknowledges the deep concerns surrounding COVID-19 and how it could affect your organization's operations. We share your concerns and recognize the gravity of the situation and how it is affecting businesses of all sizes across the country. The City of Philadelphia continues to focus on the health and safety of the public as we also seek to limit the economic impact of an outbreak of coronavirus in Philadelphia.
10. Please know that the Philadelphia Department of Commerce and PIDC are working on a COVID-19 business relief package that will be rolled out in the near future. We are asking the business community to **please fill out this [brief survey](#)**, which will help inform us of your most pressing needs. This is an unprecedented challenge for businesses—large and small—around the country. The situation remains extremely fluid, so please know that we're doing everything in our power to assist the public in navigating through this difficult period.

As noted, this is a rapidly developing situation, and we will provide updates as needed. Any/all Provider exception requests should be directed to their Hub. If the Hub cannot resolve, the Intermediary (PHMC) and the Mayor's Office of Children and Families will make final determinations.

Again, we sincerely appreciate all you do to support the city's children and their families during this time. If anything changes, I will be sure to keep you updated.

Kind Regards,

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Chief of Early Childhood Education  
Mayor's Office of Children and Families

CC:

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