



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated March 16, 2020

Call 211 in Oregon if you can't find the answer you need online. They can give you general COVID-19 information.

For Providers

Closing:

Q: Even though schools are closed, are child care facilities (home based or center based) required to close?

No, child care programs are not required to close. This decision is up to individual providers. They should consider guidance from the CDC, Oregon Health Authority and the governor's [social distancing guidance](#). Families should contact their provider to make sure they are operating.

Q: How will my child care be notified if I need to close for health reasons?

If there is a specific health issue related to staff, children, or families involved in the program, the local public health authority will work with the individual provider.

Q. How will programs be notified if entire areas or the whole state is closing child care?

Visit the Early Learning Division website for the most up to date information at www.oregonearlylearning.com. Updates are posted regularly. We would also notify providers via email or mail.

Q. We are located in a public/private school that closed. Are we required to close?

No, if the school is still allowing you to use the facility, the Office of Child Care is not requiring you to close. However, we understand if this forces programs to close. We ask you to notify 211 or your licensing specialist if this is the case.

Q. Does the school closure directive apply to private kindergartens?

No, private schools were not directed to close under the Governor's Executive Order. However, they should view this as guidance and review the Oregon Health Authority webpage, CDC webpages and consult with local public health to determine the best course for their school.

Continuing Operations:

Q. I am interested in setting up an emergency child care and am not sure the process?

The Early Learning Division is working on multiple options to support emergency child care needs. For the most up to date information, continue to visit our website at www.oregonearlylearning.com/.

Q. Is there any way to enroll in the Central Background Registry more quickly to get substitutes or temporary employees on board?

The Office of Child Care is working at both the state and federal level to find options. For the most up to date information, continue to visit our website at www.oregonearlylearning.com.

Q. My renewal appointment is coming and I am concerned that I will have staff out sick and will need to be teaching rather than helping with the renewal visit?

If the renewal application was submitted on time, your program will not expire and you may request the appointment be rescheduled. If the application was not submitted timely, the licensing specialist will work to conduct the visit and renew the license with as little disruption to your teaching needs as possible.

Q. Will there be an extension on completing the required training for licensing renewal?

For Certified Family/Certified Center, a temporary license will be issued and you will be provided additional time to complete the training. For Registered Family, the license will be issued with additional time to complete the training.

Q. I run a family child care in my home and I may be at higher risk due to my age or medical condition. What should I do?

Talk to your health care professional, review the [CDC's guidance](#) for higher risk populations, and consider a closure. Reach out to your licensing specialist to see if there's a solution to offer temporary staffing. If you decide to close, please call 211 and/or your licensing specialist to notify them of closure.

Q. Will there be an extension on CPR renewals since trainings are cancelled?

Yes. The Office of Child Care is working on options to address this concern and locate appropriate training. For the most up to date information, continue to visit our website at www.oregonearlylearning.com.

Q: I don't have enough staff to remain open for child care. What should I do?

The Office of Child Care is aggressively working on options to address this issue, such as flexibility with substitutes or temporary staff. If you need to request an exception to continuing operations, please use this online form:

Certified Child Care Centers and Certified Family Child Care Homes

<https://oregonearlylearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Certified-Facility-Exception-Request-CRT-159.pdf>

Registered Family Child Care Homes

<https://oregonearlylearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/RF-259-RF-Exception-Request.pdf>

Submit exception requests to Angela.Rodriguez@state.or.us. The Office of Child Care is processing these daily.

If you are considering closing, due to operational challenges, and desire to stay open, please contact your licensing specialist to discuss a plan for assistance. Your decisions about closure should factor in the need to comply with CDC, public health, and [governor's guidance](#) for protection of children and staff from the coronavirus pandemic. The Office of Child Care also recognizes that child care programs will need to close due to operational challenges and/or concern about safety.

Q. Can I have my own children home together with the child care children while schools are closed?

If your children are under the age of 13 they count as child care children. If you need a temporary exception for [Registered Family](#) or [Certified Center or Certified Family](#) to numbers of children in care, you may submit a request.

Q: Are other rule exceptions available?

The Office of Child Care is looking at potential emergency temporary rules. More information will be available March 17. If you need a temporary exception, submit a request for [Registered Family](#) or [Certified Center or Certified Family](#). Please contact your licensing specialist if you have further questions.

Q: Am I able to accept more children beyond my licensed capacity?

The Office of Child Care is looking at potential emergency temporary rules. More information will be available March 17. If you need a temporary exception, submit a request for [Registered Family](#) or [Certified Center or Certified Family](#). Please contact your licensing specialist if you have further questions

Q. Do I have to provide parents a refund if I close my child care? Should I refund the lost

tuition?

Consult the agreement or contract you have with parents. The Office of Child Care does not regulate this area.

Q. What if my child care has to close?

Please call 211 and/or your licensing specialist to notify them of closure.

Q: What if I want to open a child care program on-site for my employees?

If you are interested in opening a child care program at this time, please contact the Office of Child Care: 1-800-556-6616.

Exposure and Cleaning:

Q: What should I do if I think a child, their family, my staff, or I have been exposed to this virus?

Tell that person to watch for fever, cough or trouble breathing. If these symptoms develop, that person should stay away from others, and not go to work or school until 72 hours after both resolution of fever (off medicine) and the resolution of cough. COVID-19, like the flu, often causes mild illness. Not everyone who gets sick needs to visit a healthcare provider. People who become ill can call their healthcare provider to decide together if symptoms are severe enough that a medical visit is needed. It's very important that you call ahead before going to a clinic. That way the ill person and the clinic can put together a plan for the ill person to be seen in a way that avoids exposing others.

Q. In the event that a child(ren) gets the virus, am I held responsible/liable for that?

First, follow all suggested Oregon Health Authority guidelines including not allowing sick children or staff to be in attendance. Existing Office of Child Care rules address when to keep children out of care. These rules are in the [COVID-19 section of the ELD's website](#), organized by facility type for reference. You can download the information to post or share with families.

Seek legal advice if you have liability concerns. This is not an area we regulate.

Q. Are special cleaning supplies needed to kill the virus?

Office of Child Care rules require regular cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting of toys and materials. The American Chemical Council has compiled [a list of products](#) – solutions, concentrates, and wipes – that have been pre-approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during the COVID-19 outbreak. Use all cleaning products according to directions on the label.

You can also find more information at the [CDC Disinfecting page](#).

Q. If a home-based provider has a family member who is staying home sick, must they notify their families of the fact? What if the family member was confirmed to have COVID-19?

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the home, the provider must follow the direction of the local health authority. Family members who are ill but do not have a confirmed case should stay separate from the child care area until their fever is gone and symptoms are better for at least 72 hours.

Home-based child care providers who are ill but do not have a confirmed case should either (a) close the facility, or (b) Separate themselves from the child care and have a qualified substitute caring for the children.

In both instances providers should increase cleaning procedures.

Q. We are running out of sanitizing/disinfecting products and won't be able to continue to follow sanitation guidelines. What are the options?

The Early Learning Division is working on options to supply additional cleaning materials. In the meantime, bleach has generally been available. There may be additional resources online for purchase.

Q. Can I tell parents they are not allowed in the center and they must drop off and pick up at the door?

Office of Child Care rule states parents must have access to the program so an exception would be needed. Exceptions to rules may be submitted to Angela.Rodriguez@state.or.us and are reviewed daily.

Q: What support is the state offering providers at this time?

We know not all child care providers can stay open during this time – whether due to safety or operational challenges. Oregon's governor has [requested federal assistance](#) to provide flexible funding to support providers in the event of closure.

We are listening to the concerns of providers and working with partners and the governor's office to also explore the need for resources and policy flexibility. Changes may include licensing requirements or greater flexibility for Employment Related Daycare Providers (ERDC). For the most up to date information, continue to visit our website at www.oregonearlylearning.com.

Q: Are publicly funded programs such as Preschool Promise, Oregon Pre-Kindergarten and Relief Nurseries required to close?

No, not at this time. A program may decide to close in consultation with their local public health department or due to operational issues.