

Memorandum

Subject: Provincial government announces reopening of licensed child care centres

Date: June 9, 2020

To: Licensed child care service providers

From: Darlene Edgar, Director of Children's Services, Community Services

On June 9, 2020, the provincial government announced that the licensed child care system may begin to reopen commencing Friday, June 12, 2020, as the province enters phase II of the provincial reopening plan.

Because of the mindful planning and work needed to be completed before reopening, Niagara Region Children's Services fully expects that no local licensed child care service provider will be in a position to reopen on June 12, 2020.

At this time, specific operating requirements for licensed child care under a global pandemic, while imminent, have not yet been released by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, service providers are cautioned about communicating any particulars with parents. As well, because of the logistical planning and work required to prepare licensed child care centres under the new operating requirements, service providers are again cautioned not to announce any specific reopening date until further details are provided.

The timeline to reopen will also depend on additional requirements set by the provincial government, such as the approval to reopen by the local Medical Officer of Health, and the development of a COVID-19 response plan for each centre, should a staff member or child be exposed to the virus.

The Minister of Education did state that the forthcoming operating requirements will be much like the operating requirements of emergency child care. Therefore, Niagara is well positioned given its experience with providing emergency child care. The information recently shared by Niagara Region Children's Services will support licensed child care service providers in developing plans and reopening operations.

Niagara Region Children's Services will follow-up with licensed child care service providers as details related to the reopening of licensed child care become available from the Ministry of Education.

While awaiting the provincial operating requirements, Niagara Region Children's Services recommends that licensed child care service providers recall staff and begin initial preparation of centres, such as cleaning and disinfecting, and removing hard to clean items and toys that are likely to spread germs.

Thank you,

Darlene Edgar RECE

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Director