



ANNOUNCEMENT: C-10 #01
OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING
BUREAU OF CERTIFICATION SERVICES

ISSUE DATE: March 23, 2010
EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately
SUNSET DATE: Ongoing

SUBJECT:	PEMA Update to Emergency Plan Toolkit for Child Care Facilities
TO:	Child Care Center, Group Child Care Home and Family Child Care Home Operators; Pennsylvania Key and Regional Keys; CCIS Agencies; Pre-K Counts Grantees
FROM:	Todd Klunk Acting Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning



PURPOSE:

To share information regarding the updated Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) emergency plan toolkit for child care facilities.

BACKGROUND:

Statement of Policy - On December 27, 2003, the Department of Public Welfare published a statement of policy requiring child care facilities to have an emergency plan. The statement of policy went into effect on June 24, 2004. To assist child care facilities in complying with the new requirement for an emergency plan, PEMA staff, in cooperation with the Department, developed a Day Care Planning Toolkit. The Planning Toolkit is composed of the following sections:

- Planning Guide
- Basic plan
- Checklists
- Supporting Documents

Regulatory Amendment - On September 24, 2008, the child care facility regulations were amended to include the requirement for a facility emergency plan (see 55 Pa. Code §§3270.27, 3280.26 and 3290.24, relating to emergency plan). The minimum requirements for an emergency plan were the same requirements that appeared in the previous statement of policy.

DISCUSSION:

In September 2009, the emergency planning toolkit had been in place for five years. PEMA determined that it was time to review the toolkit to see if any revisions were needed. A workgroup convened that included representatives from PEMA, County Emergency Management Agencies, OCDEL and the Pennsylvania Child Care Association. Through a series of meetings, the work group reviewed the plan requirements and made revisions.

The updated toolkit retains the same format as the original toolkit. Changes were made to wording and to the order of the sections in the toolkit. The changes do not alter the information that appears in the plan.

Child care facilities are NOT required to rewrite their emergency plans to conform to the updated toolkit. If during the annual review of the emergency plan the operator determines updates are needed, only that section of the plan must be updated. It is not necessary to rewrite the entire plan.

Child care facilities developing an emergency plan for the first time are encouraged to use the PEMA toolkit. By using the toolkit, the facility will fulfill the minimum regulatory requirements regarding the content of the emergency plan. Additionally, county emergency management agencies are aware of the toolkit and are familiar with its content.

The updated toolkit is now available on the PEMA website. The hyperlink to access the toolkit remains unchanged and is:

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=4625&&PageID=480221&level=2&css=L2&mode=2>

NEXT STEPS:

Child care facilities:

1. Child care facilities that developed emergency plans using the prior toolkit are **NOT** required to rewrite their emergency plans.
2. Child care facilities with existing emergency plans can use the new toolkit to update sections of their emergency plans as needed.
3. Child care facilities are still required to send their emergency plans and emergency plan updates to their county emergency management agency or the agency designated by the county agency to receive emergency plans.
4. Child care facilities developing an emergency plan for the first time are encouraged to use the updated PEMA toolkit.

OCDEL staff and OCDEL contractors should be aware of the updated child Care Emergency Plan Toolkit and the above message to child care providers.

Child care facility operators who have comments and questions regarding this announcement should contact the appropriate Regional Office of Child Development and Early Learning: Central Region 800-222-2117; Northeast Region 800-222-2108; Southeast Region 800-346-2929; Western Region 800-222-2149.

All other comments and questions regarding this announcement should be directed to OCDEL at (717) 346-9320.