

## Child Care FAQs for Families in Need of Care

Updated: June 1, 2020

### **I am considered an essential worker. Where can I find open child care?**

Child care providers in counties under the Stay at Home order (red phase) are permitted to operate with a waiver to provide child care for essential workers and their families. A map of child care facilities operating with a waiver is available [here](#). After the Stay at Home order is modified to allow a county to transition to the yellow or green phases, workers can find child care options here: [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov).

### **How do I know if my child care provider submitted a waiver to provide services to kids of essential workers?**

Only child care centers and group child care operating outside a residence located in counties in the red phase are required to obtain a waiver if they intend to remain open. To identify child care providers and part-day school age programs permitted to operate in red counties, visit the [Coronavirus Child Care Map](#).

### **I am going to work in a yellow or green phase area. Where can I find open child care?**

Workers who need child care in counties in the yellow or green phases can find child care options here: [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov). Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRCs) can also support families by assisting with determining eligibility for the child care subsidy program, Child Care Works (CCW) and to connect families with child care. To locate the ELRC that supports your community, visit [www.raiseyourstar.org](http://www.raiseyourstar.org).

### **What are my options if I have school-age children and schools are closed?**

Many licensed child care providers serve school-age children and expand the availability of enrollment slots and program activities to be responsive to families' needs. For licensed child care, parents can search by the child's or children's ages on [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov) to find providers. Additionally, many communities support part-day school-age programming that is not licensed. Children who were in kindergarten and older can enroll in these options developed and operated locally by community-based agencies like YMCAs or United Ways. Parents can find Frequently Asked Questions on part-day school-age program and camp guidance [here](#).

### **Who should I contact if I have questions about local child care?**

Resources are available to families seeking to understand information about child care in their community.

- Information on all child care including information about their operations, licensing inspection results, and quality level designation are available at [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov).
- Local ELRCs can assist in answering questions and help families in selecting a provider. Find your ELRC at [www.raiseyourstar.org](http://www.raiseyourstar.org).

### **What if there are no child care facilities open in my area?**

Child care may not be available in every community. If you are having difficulty finding child care, contact your ELRC at [www.raiseyourstar.org](http://www.raiseyourstar.org).

### **How do I know the child care facility I am using is safe?**

All open child care facilities must follow [CDC guidelines for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#).

### **What do I do if I am concerned that my child care is not operating according to the CDC guidelines for safety?**

Contact the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)'s [Child Care Certification Regional Office](#) in your community to report concerns regarding the health and safety of children in care.

### **Are child care staff required to wear masks?**

All staff should wear cloth face coverings while providing child care. Instructions from DOH on how to make a cloth face mask are available [here](#).

**Is my child required to wear a mask?**

No, children are not required to wear masks. However, per current CDC guidance, masks are recommended for older youth, when feasible. Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on babies and children under age two because of the danger of suffocation. More information on the CDC's guidance for child care providers is available [here](#).

**How do I know if anyone working at the facility has tested positive?**

In the event a staff member or child tests positive, a general communication will be shared by the provider to inform parents of enrolled children when there is a case of a communicable disease, including COVID-19. Specific detail regarding the exposure will not be shared. When notified that an exposure occurred, parents should follow up with their own health care provider to determine next steps.

**Does my child need their temperature taken when they come in every morning?**

Yes. The CDC Guidance to Child Care Providers that Remain Open advises that one of three screening methods occur for all children and staff daily. All methods include determining the child's temperature to ensure they are not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Depending on the method selected by the provider, the temperature can be taken at the child care facility prior to entrance or at home and reported to the provider.

**Are there any changes to the required child to caregiver ratios?**

Currently, there are no changes to the child-to-caregiver ratios. The CDC Guidance advises strategies to maintain social distancing which focus on group management within child care while recognizing it is not feasible to maintain a 6-foot separation for young children. Child care entities should make efforts to maintain children in the same groups and assigned to the same staff daily. In addition, groups should not interact with each other or change rooms throughout the day to the extent possible.

**What special precautions are needed to ensure child care spaces are safe and clean?**

Caring for Our Children (CFOC) provides [national standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting](#) educational facilities for children on a routine basis. That guidance can be found [here](#). COVID-19 mitigation requires that child care providers increase the frequency of their existing cleaning and sanitizing. Additionally, parents should limit items coming to child care from home, including items used for napping. Items used should be washed at the child care facility.

**What do I need to know about multisystem inflammatory syndrome?**

More information on multisystem inflammatory syndrome is available through the CDC [here](#) or DOH [here](#). If you are concerned about symptoms your child is experiencing, please contact your health care provider.

**What if I need help paying for my child's care?**

Pennsylvania's child care subsidy program, CCW, can be accessed two ways: online at [www.compass.pa.gov](http://www.compass.pa.gov) or by contacting the ELRC that serves your community at [www.raiseyourstar.org](http://www.raiseyourstar.org).