



Children's Services
Social & Community Services
Halton Region
690 Dorval Drive, 5th floor
Oakville ON L6k 3X9

June 12, 2020

RE: Important Information Regarding the Reopening of Licensed Child Care Centres in Halton

Dear Child Care Operators;

This is a follow up to the memo sent on June 10, 2020 regarding the reopening of child care in Halton. We understand that operators are eager to reopen. We are writing to share important information and resources to help operators safely reopen licensed child care in Halton.

As mentioned yesterday, we are working closely with our colleagues in Halton Region Public Health to support the safe reopening of child care in Halton. At this time, a formal Public Health inspection is not required prior to reopening. However, please be advised that Public Health will be resuming their routine child care inspections shortly. Inspections will include the usual food safety and infection prevention and control components as well as the enhanced health and safety requirements associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Notification to Reopen

As per the email on June 10 from Sue Ewen, Manager, Licensing and Compliance, Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing, operators are required to submit an attestation form to their Ministry of Education Program Advisor confirming that they have developed and reviewed the enhanced safety protocols with staff, home care providers and visitors and that the policy has been made available to parents. Operators must provide the Ministry a minimum of two days' notice of their opening. When you submit your attestation form, **please copy Halton Region at childcareservices@halton.ca** If you have already submitted your attestation form, please forward it as soon as possible.

Ministry of Environment

[The Ministry of the Environment](#) is reminding all operators of child care centres to **ensure that water flushing occurs prior to re-opening** so that the water quality in the building is restored. Flushing reduces potential exposure to lead in drinking water because it prevents water from standing in the plumbing for too long, which reduces its contact time with pipes and plumbing.

Resources and Supports

To support you in reopening and understanding the various roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, attached you will also find a Roles and Responsibilities chart. This chart has been designed for use in conjunction with the *Operational Guidance During COVID-19*, Child Care Centre Licensing Manual, the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, and its regulations.

As you are aware, operators are required to develop written policies and procedures outlining the licensee's health and safety protocols. To support operators in developing policies and

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procedures we have attached samples from Halton Regional Child Care Centres. These policies and protocols have been reviewed and include feedback from Public Health. Attached you will find:

- Health Screening Procedure
- Entrance Screen
- Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedures
- Sanitary Health and Safety Protocols During COVID-19
- COVID-19 Exclusion Policy

All reference documents provided to the sector to date will be located in a special tab for child care on Halton.ca for easy reference. Materials will be updated regularly.

Together with The Halton Resource Connection, we will be hosting a webinar on **Wednesday June 17, from 7-9 PM** to share experiences and learnings from emergency child care in Halton that are highly applicable to centres planning to re-open. The webinar will have a panel of emergency child care operators with an opportunity for questions. A formal invitation and link to the event will be provided shortly. Please save the date and time.

We are working with Public Health and The Halton Resource Connection on additional training and resource support. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.

Access to Care

With reduced capacity restrictions due to COVID-19, the Region recognizes that all families that require child care may not be able to access care. The Ministry has provided some guidance on the prioritization of families who wish to return to child care.

The Region encourages child care providers to consider prioritizing care for the following:

- Returning children, served through emergency child care, to their original placement so that there is a continuity of service for these families.
- Families where parents must return to work and that work outside of the home.
- Families with special circumstances (e.g. children with special needs) that would benefit from children returning to care.
- Families that receive fee subsidy.

Fee Subsidy

With the re-opening of your child care centre you may have families returning who are in receipt of fee subsidy. Please remind families to contact their Halton Region Child Care Representative within two weeks upon returning to care to review their file. You will receive a confirmation email from a Child Care Representative reconfirming eligibility for families attending your centre. Should a family be unsure of who their Child Care Representative is, they can contact Kristina Turk, Supervisor of Intake and Child Care Services at Kristina.turk@halton.ca.

Emergency Child Care

As you are aware, emergency child care ends effective June 26, 2020. The Region will be reaching out to families receiving emergency child care to support their ongoing need for child care once emergency child care ends on **June 26, 2020**.

We will be following up with the Ministry of Education on a number of areas to receive clarification and are committed to sharing updates as further information becomes available.

We thank you for your continued commitment to families and children in Halton.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Palinski".

Sandy Palinski
Director, Children's Services

C: Satinder Klair
Roxanne Young
Cindy Morin