



## **COVID-19 Guidance regarding Emergency Childcare Services for Essential Workers and At-Risk Populations**

The California Department of Education's Management Bulletin (MB) [20-06](#) provides guidance to state-subsidized early learning and care (ELC) programs that continue to provide services to currently-enrolled families or are providing "Emergency Childcare" for essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. These rules will be in effect until June 30, 2020 or until the State of Emergency declaration has ended, whichever comes sooner.

This management bulletin applies to non-CalWORKs ELC programs: Alternative Payment Program (CAPP), California State Preschool Program (CSPP), General Child Care (CCTR), and Family Child Care Home Education Networks (CFCC).

### Enrollment Priorities

- The CDE is encouraging all programs that can safely remain open or reopen to do so in order to serve essential worker families during this State of Emergency.
- Programs may enroll children in the following populations:
  - Children of "essential workers"
  - At risk populations, including:
    - Children in the child welfare system or those at risk of maltreatment
    - Families experiencing homelessness
    - Children of domestic violence survivors
  - Children with special needs whose individualized education programs (IEP) and/or individual family support plans (IFSP) include ELC services.
  - If providers have space in their program after eligible children have been enrolled, they may consider serving the children of private-pay essential workers at their discretion.
- Children of essential workers are eligible if the following criteria are met:
  - Only or both parent(s) in household are essential workers or the other parent is unable to provide care for the child due to incapacitation
  - The family requires childcare to perform their essential work
  - The family is unable to complete their work remotely
  - The family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000
- Families can enroll by submitting an application certifying their eligibility. Childcare centers are not responsible for determining if a parent or guardian's work is "essential" or if a family is part of the "at-risk" population.
- Alternative Payment (AP) contractors may allow new enrollments of children for Emergency Childcare provided their contract funds support the additional enrollment. At this time, there is no additional funding being awarded to contractors for this purpose.

## Ratios

- Infants are considered to be 0-18 months; toddlers 18-36 months; children 3+ years
- For family childcare homes: ratio of 1:4 infants or 1:6 mixed age (2 infants + 4 children)
- For childcare centers: ratio of 1:4 infants; 1:6 toddlers; 1:10 children 3+.
  - Mixed age group ratio of 1:6

## Guidelines for Serving Families During the State of Emergency ([Provider Information Notice 20-06-CPP](#))

These guidelines apply to all childcare facility licensees and providers.

- Maintain small, stable groups
  - Children must be kept in stable groups of no more than 10. Keep groups separate to the greatest extent possible. Group siblings together whenever possible.
  - If a program cannot meet group size due to **current** enrollment they must complete a [temporary waiver](#).
    - These programs may not enroll new families until the group is within group size guidelines.
- Practice Social Distancing
  - Model social distancing when interacting with children, families, and staff.
  - Use carpet squares, mats, or other visuals for spacing. Find creative ways to use yarn, masking tape, or other materials for children to create their own space.
  - Give frequent verbal reminders to children about social distancing.
  - Create and develop a scripted story around social distancing, as well as hand washing, proper etiquette for sneezes, coughs, etc.
  - Open windows to ventilate facilities before and after children arrive.
  - Ask parents or caregivers to enter and exit the room one person at a time to allow for social and physical distancing.
  - During mealtimes, utilize more tables to spread children out or use name cards to ensure adequate spacing of children.
  - Send home a tip sheet for parents and caregivers to also learn about social distancing.
- Screening
  - Follow procedures daily for self-screening for all staff, residents in a family childcare home, and children. This should include taking temperatures before arriving to work or beginning care.
  - Ask caregivers to screen themselves and children daily, prior to coming to your facility. Caregiver must also notify you if children have taken any fever reducing medications in the prior 24 hours.
  - Take children's temperature each morning only if the facility uses a no-touch thermometer that is disinfected after each use.
  - If anyone has a temperature of 100.4°F/38°C or higher they must be excluded from the facility.

- Monitor staff and children throughout the day for any signs of possible illness and isolate any child showing signs of illness until they can be picked up.
- Hygiene for staff and children
  - Implement and enforce strict handwashing guidelines and teach and monitor children to ensure appropriate hand washing.
  - Explain to children why it's not healthy to share drinks or food, particularly when sick.
  - Teach children to use tissues to wipe their nose and to cough inside their elbow.
  - Stop tooth brushing during class. Encourage parents and caregivers to regularly brush teeth at home.
  - Space cots/mats for napping 6 feet apart from each other. Arrange the head of each bed alternately, in opposite directions, to lessen the possible spread of illness between children from coughing or sneezing.
  - Install hand sanitizers, out of the reach of children, near all entry doors and other high traffic areas.
- Frequently clean all touched surfaces
  - Have multiple toys and manipulatives accessible that are easy to clean and sanitize throughout the day.
  - Limit the amount of sharing.
  - Offer more opportunities for individual play and solo activities, such as fine motor activities (i.e., drawing, coloring, cutting, puzzles, and other manipulatives).
  - Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children.
  - Stagger indoor and outdoor play and adjust schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area.
  - Designate a tub for toys that need to be cleaned and wiped after use.