

April 7, 2020

COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care and Early Learning Programs Following the Extension of Governor Pritzker's Stay at Home Executive Order

Building on the State's efforts to flatten the curve of new COVID-19 cases in Illinois and following careful consultation with experts in Illinois and across the nation, on April 1, 2020, Governor Pritzker signed a 30-day extension of the State's disaster proclamation. Child care centers who have been licensed to operate as Emergency Child Care to provide care to the children of [essential workers](#) may remain open, as may legally license exempt centers, and home-based child care programs serving six or fewer children; all other child care programs that have either decided to close or have not been licensed to provide Emergency Child Care to the children of essential workers will remain closed until the Stay at Home Order has been lifted.

Where possible, children should still be kept at home. However, [essential workers](#) may seek child care at license-exempt child care homes (all currently operating as licensed-exempt homes), certain license-exempt child care centers, and centers operating with an Emergency Child Care License during this COVID-19 State of Emergency. Visit the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) [Emergency Child Care for Communities & Providers](#) webpage for information and resources for child care providers who already are offering (or who wish to offer) emergency care to essential workers.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC's\) Supplemental Guidance for Programs that Remain Open](#), child care programs that remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic should address these additional considerations:

- Implement [social distancing strategies](#)
- Intensify [cleaning and disinfection efforts](#)
- Modify [drop off and pick up procedures](#)
- Maintain an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety
 - Plan ahead and recruit those with child care experience to ensure you have a roster of substitute caregivers who can be available if your staff members are sick or stay home to care for sick family members.

If you re-purpose your school or service facility as an Emergency Child Care Center, please follow [CDC guidance for administrators of child care programs and K-12 schools](#). Be sure to follow State and local child care [licensing policies and regulations](#). Specifically, all facilities should continue to adhere to State and local licensing policies unless otherwise notified. Guidance may also be provided by the department of education and/or department of health in the State, your city, or locality.

Early Childhood Block Grant

Per the extension of the Stay at Home Order, K-12 schools, including prekindergarten programs operated by a public school district or non-public school, will transition from Act of God Days to Remote Learning Days, with days counting toward the school year. Each school district will create and implement a Remote Learning Day Plan to ensure all students, including students with disabilities and English

Learners, receive instructional materials and can communicate with their teachers. Any community-based Preschool for All or Preschool for All Expansion provider may create and implement a Remote Learning Day Plan for its students.

Early Childhood Block Grant programs, including Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative, that have chosen to provide Emergency Child Care now have added flexibility to use their grant funding to serve children beyond those typically enrolled in their programs. Grantees should consult with their Principal Consultant at ISBE to discuss any modifications to their budget that they may need.