

COVID-19 – Child Care Licensure Frequently Asked Questions

April 14, 2020

This FAQ addresses frequently asked questions that the Division of Public Health Children's Services Licensing and the Division of Children and Family Services Child Care Subsidy Program have received regarding child care licensure during the coronavirus emergency.

Children's Services Licensing has oversight of licensing regulations (Title 391), license issuance for child care programs, annual inspections, and regulatory complaint inspections. The Child Care Subsidy Program administers the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), provides oversight of subsidy regulations (Title 392), determines eligibility and creates child care authorizations for subsidy-eligible families, and monitors license-exempt child care providers.

The FAQ will be updated as new questions are received.

Q: I am a licensed child care center and I received a letter stating I am due to get my staff fingerprinted this month. I have a staff person who is currently in quarantine at her home. Is there an extension period for getting her fingerprints completed?

A: Providers, staff, and household members are encouraged to submit fingerprints during the specified roll-out timeframe indicated in the letter they received if they are able to do so. Providers who have received a letter indicating it is time to fingerprint will have an extension to complete the process outside the 1-month window if they can't complete the process due to the coronavirus emergency. How long this extension will last is contingent upon what happens during the next several months.

Q: I received my letter saying that my center was due to have fingerprints completed next month. We are currently closed. Will there be an extension available?

A: Providers, staff, and household members are encouraged to submit fingerprints during the specified roll-out timeframe indicated in the letter they received if they are able to do so. Providers who have received a letter indicating it is time to fingerprint will have an extension to complete the process outside the 1-month window if they can't complete the process due to the coronavirus emergency. How long this extension will last is contingent upon what happens during the next several months.





Q: The Sheriff's office in my area is no longer doing fingerprinting due to COVID-19. Is there a way to get an updated list of places that are still open?

A: It is recommended that providers, staff, and family members needing fingerprints call ahead to determine if the location they would like to use for fingerprinting is open.

The Nebraska State Patrol [has indicated](#) that fingerprinting for daycare personnel not covered by an executive order is a priority and will be made available between April 6, 2020, and May 26, 2020. Fingerprinting for daycare personnel covered by [Executive Order 20-08](#), who may begin prior to completion of an FBI fingerprint-based background check, will resume after May 26, 2020.

Q: I am a licensed family child care home provider and need to know who counts in the 10-person recommendation. My own children? Only those of a certain age? Other members of my household?

A: All counties in Nebraska are currently under Directed Health Measures, which require that there be no more than "10 customers [children], excluding staff, in a single room or single space at the same time."

This 10-child limit includes Family Child Care Home providers. It is recommended that household members age 8 and older be in separate areas of the home from the children under 8 years of age requiring care. If your children are at home from school, those that are 8 years of age or younger will count in both the Directed Health Measure limit of 10 children and in your Family Child Care Home I or II staff-to-child ratio.

Q: I closed my center and had to lay off all my staff. If I am not able to re-open for a couple of months, my staff will most likely have other jobs. Will I have to start over with fingerprinting and CPR when I reopen?

A: Staff who were laid off will be eligible for re-hire without being fingerprinted if they have been away from child care no more than 180 days. CPR training expires according to the date on the card issued. If the CPR card has not expired, staff will not need to be re-trained.

Q: I have no kids attending so I had to close my child care and let go of my staff. I have no income for the foreseeable future. What services are available to help me during this time?

A: You may qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. For additional information, please refer to: <https://dol.nebraska.gov/UIBenefits>.

You may qualify for DHHS programs such as: SNAP (food assistance), ADC (limited cash assistance), or LIHEAP (energy assistance). Applications are available at: ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov or by calling the Customer Service Center at 800-383-4278.

You may qualify for Disaster Loan Assistance or the Paycheck Protection Program. For additional information, please refer to: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options>.

Q: Are there alternative ways to access wipes and sanitizing products? They are very difficult to find in the stores.

A: Supplies for child care use may not be readily available at this time. We recommend looking into community resources for assistance until the supply of these items increases.

Q: Due to the nature of our work, we are not able to maintain 6 feet of social distancing. What are the recommendations for social distancing while caring for children?

A: Children may not be able to maintain 6 feet of space for social distancing. However, providers are encouraged to create age-appropriate rules for children that will minimize contact with other children. See the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>.

Staff should be required to:

- Wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throw the tissue in the trash, and wash hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces throughout the day.

Staff and children should also be instructed to stay home when sick or if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for coronavirus.

Q: Why are we receiving directions from our local Public Health Department when we are licensed by DHHS?

A: The child care regulations in Title 391 of the Nebraska Administrative Code require that providers follow all directives given to the licensee by a health authority in the event of a communicable disease outbreak. Under Nebraska law, the local health department is the “health authority.”

Q: What resources are available to acquire essential items, such as toilet paper and milk? There are limits on how many of these items people can buy at one time in stores. Child care providers need to be able to buy in bulk to meet the needs of the children in their care.

A: Supplies for child care use may not be readily available at this time. We recommend looking into community resources for assistance until the supply of these items increase.

Q: Will there be extensions for any annual training requirements? With no classes offered in my area, I won't be able to meet these requirements by my deadline.

A: DHHS is working with the Nebraska Department of Education. More guidance will be issued at a later date.

