



Early Childhood
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS

Early Childhood COVID-19 Updates

4.2.2020



Agenda

General

***NEW* ECE Updates**

Previously Communicated Information:

- Closures
- Licensing
- CCCBC
- CCAP
- LA-4 & NSECD
- Food Services
- Child Care Support Organizations
- Academic Resources
- Accountability
- Workforce
- Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

Next Steps

Proclamation Update

Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020

The Governor issued [Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020](#) on March 22, 2020.

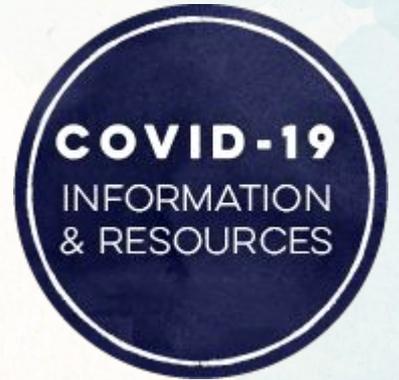
- All individuals within the state of Louisiana are under a general stay-at-home order and are directed to stay home unless performing an essential activity.
- All state office buildings are closed to the public. However, essential state functions shall continue.
- All gatherings of 10 people or more shall be postponed or cancelled.
- In addition to businesses that are closed to the public pursuant to Proclamation Number 30 JBE 2020, nonessential businesses shall be closed to the public and members
- Early learning centers and child care facilities adhering to guidance issued by the LDOE and LDH may continue to operate.
- The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is directed to ensure compliance with this order.
- These provisions are effective from 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020 to Monday, April 13, 2020, unless terminated sooner.

COVID-19 Resources for Early Childhood

The Department has prepared a host of resources and materials to support lead agencies, schools, and child care providers during this uncertain time.

COVID-19 Resources

- Recent [webinar](#) from March 23
- [COVID-19](#) landing page on www.LouisianaBelieves.com
- COVID-19 [FAQ](#) for early childhood
- [LDH guidance](#) for early learning centers
- Expansion of [CCAP for critical personnel](#)
- Local public health [contact map and directory](#)
- With any questions for LDOE regarding COVID-19, contact LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov



Updated Guidance Child Care Centers

Memo from LDH

LDH released an [updated memo](#) noting that child care facilities and programs can continue to operate unless otherwise informed as the situation progresses, but are requiring that adherence to the following guidance for all privately administered Daycare Programs and Early Learning Centers:

- Encourage children who can stay home to do so.
- Children and staff should be encouraged to wash their hands frequently.
- **Limit groups to fewer than 10.** This means that no classroom can have more than 10 individuals, including children and adults. Group sizes for infants should be limited to 5 or less. Applies to naptime.
- Encourage frequent environmental cleaning.
- Any child with fever or cold symptoms should not participate in these programs for the duration of their illness. Only well children should attend.
- Staff members in high-risk (elderly, those with medical conditions) should be encouraged to stay home.

See the previous [memorandum from the Louisiana Department of Health](#).

Updated Guidance Child Care Centers

Supplemental Guidance from CDC for Open Centers

CDC released [updated guidance](#) for child care programs that remain open and you are encouraged to read it in its entirety. In addition to the items listed in the previous slide, centers should consider the following guidance:

- Social Distancing Practices
 - If possible, classes should include the same group with the same teacher each day.
 - Consider creating a separate classroom or group for the children of healthcare workers and other first responders.
 - If possible, at nap time, ensure that naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart and place children head to toe to further reduce the potential for spread.
- Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up
 - If possible, set up handy hygiene stations at the entrance of the facility so children can clean their hands before they enter.
 - Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and/or plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible such as having child care providers greet children outside when they arrive.

ECE Updates

Introduction

Louisiana's early childhood workforce has been and continues to be a critical support to the state during this public health crisis.

- Louisiana is currently under a [shelter at home](#) order from the Governor to prevent further spread of COVID-19
- LDH recommends groups sizes be limited to ten to mitigate against risks of spread
- As of April 2, over 60% of child care centers statewide have temporarily closed due to COVID-19, and this number continues to rise
- Yet many people still work in essential jobs that are required to go to work daily, and are in need of child care during this public health crisis
- To support the early learning workforce, provide essential care for the workforce, and adhere to LDH and CDC guidance, the Department is continually releasing guidance, including on how early learning teachers and providers can become home-based providers.

NEW Map of Open Child Care Providers

The Department is maintaining a list of all open child care providers (Type I, II, and III centers, as well as family child care and in-home providers) on the Department's website.

The [parish-level list](#) of open child care providers includes:

- License number
- Facility/provider name
- Contact information and hours of operation
- License type (note: only Type III, in-home, and family child care providers are available to enroll kids through CCAP)
- Age range
- If a center's information is incorrect, please contact LDOECOV19Support@la.gov

The Department also has a [flyer](#) that critical businesses can use to help staff find child care.



Care for Critical Services Personnel

Louisiana's Approach

The LDOE is working with CCR&Rs and providers around the state to support the child care needs of essential workers who must continue working during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- 1. Emergency CCAP expansion:** Effective March 23, 2020, families of “essential critical infrastructure workers” working in response to the COVID-19 outbreak are eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Families who cannot afford care will be prioritized. For more information, please click [here](#).
- 2. Certifying new family home and in-home providers:** The LDOE has expedited the approval of new in-home and family child care providers certified to care for children of essential workers through CCAP. For more information, please click [here](#).
- 3. CCR&R contracts for respite care:** The LDOE is working with CCR&Rs around the state to establish hospital/child care center partnerships in cases where a large number of hospital staff require child care.

LDOE Opening CCAP Eligibility to Critical Personnel Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

Families of essential critical infrastructure employees will be made eligible for 30 days. The LDOE will reevaluate eligibility at that time.

- **There are limited federal funds available to support these personnel, and CDC guidelines recommend social distancing for all families.**
 - Families who can keep their children at home should
 - Families who can afford to pay for their own care should
- Families must complete an [application](#) and submit it to:

Email: LDOECOVID19support@la.gov

Fax: 225-376-6049

If email is not available, application can be mailed:

CCAP Household Eligibility

P.O. Box 260037

Baton Rouge, LA 70826

NEW CCAP Payment

Family and In-Home Provider Increase

Family and in-home child care providers can now be qualified to receive the same subsidy amount as Type III early learning centers for all children funded through CCAP. All providers will be funded at the same rate through April with the possibility of extension if feasible and necessary.

Providers are paid a daily rate for their services, based on the number and age of CCAP-eligible children children they care for. If the provider's rate is higher than the state rate, families must pay the difference.

Provider Type	Age 3 and up	Age 1-2 (Toddler)	Age 0 (Infant)	Special Needs Age 3 and up	Special Needs Age 1-2 (Toddlers)	Special Needs Age 0 (Infant)
Type III Center	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50
Family Child Care Provider	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50
In-Home Child Care	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50

Becoming registered and certified for CCAP

2 Easy Steps

Step 1 (Registration): Complete and submit the following to ldelicensing@la.gov:

- Signed CCAP Provider agreement for [Family Child Care Providers](#) or [In-Home Providers](#)
- Copy of a valid driver's license or government issued photo ID AND copy of social security card
- [Pre-service Orientation](#) Certificate AND completed [Emergency Plan](#)
- CCCBC – State whether you are eligible, provisional, or in progress. If you do not have a CCCBC you can apply at <https://cccbldoe.la.gov/> and many fees are waived.
- CPR & Pediatric First Aid Certificate. Certificate can be obtained [online](#) (\$14.95)

Step 2 (Certification): Complete and submit the following to providercertification@la.gov:

- [Provider rate agreement](#) - Verification of rates charged (notice to parents such as newsletter, memo, etc)
- [Completed W-9](#), [completed direct deposit form](#) AND voided imprinted check
- Residence verification of physical address

More information is provided [here](#).

NEW Care for Critical Services Personnel

Progress To Date

By working in partnership with CCR&Rs, LDH, and child care providers around the state, the Department has made progress toward establishing child care options for essential workers.

Emergency CCAP	New In-Home & FCC Providers	Respite Care Contracts
<p>Since expanding CCAP eligibility to accommodate essential workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 1,100 families and over 1,600 children have been approved for emergency CCAP• Several Type II providers have converted to Type III to support these families	<p>Since streamlining the process to become an in-home or FCC provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three individuals have become newly certified as in-home or family child care providers, and several more are in process• LDOE & CCR&Rs are continuing to think about how to best support and encourage in-home providers	<p>Since working with CCR&Rs to identify child care centers for respite care contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eleven child care centers are currently contracting with the LDOE to provide respite care• Each center is serving an average of 17 children per day

NEW Respite Care

Questions and Answers

Q: What is a respite care center?

A: Centers providing respite care are funded via short-term emergency contracts through local [Child Care Resource & Referral organizations](#) or directly with the State to provide services ONLY to children of [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers](#). Centers are being contracted with based on need/demand of hospitals in the area, quality and capacity of center, and ability to report required information.

Q: If my center is still open, but I choose to provide services only to the children of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers that are either already enrolled at my center or are new attendees, am I considered a respite care center?

A: No, unless you are contracted either through your local CCR&R or directly with the State to provide respite care services only, you are not a respite care center as defined by the State (see question above). However, you may choose to accept, enroll, or provide services to children at your center according to the needs of your local community. Families can be qualified for [emergency CCAP](#), so you can receive funding to serve them.

NEW CARES Act

Supports for Early Learning Centers

The \$2T CARES Act includes relief and assistance for child care businesses, families, and communities, with EIDL funds available now.

[SBA funding for Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Grants \(EIDL\)](#)

Loan applicants may request that SBA provide an advance on the loan of up to \$10,000, distributed within three days. First come, first serve. **Per SBA, if you previously applied for the EIDL and did not request the \$10,000 advance, you should reapply.**

[Learn about CARES funding for the Child Care Marketplace](#)

Funding is being added to other federal sources to support respite care, Head Start, and expanded CCAP eligibility, as well as small business supports.

[List of CARES funding supports available to centers](#)

A list that reflects funding opportunities as of March 26, 2020.

NEW CARES Act

Unemployment Benefits

Employees whose employment has been impacted by COVID-19 may be eligible for Unemployment Benefits, including expanded supports through the CARES Act.

Unemployment Benefits

Unemployment funding is available for those who have lost work or have reduced hours as a result of COVID-19.

CARES and Unemployment Insurance

An additional \$600/week in temporary Pandemic Unemployment compensation will be added to an individual's weekly benefit amount. Pandemic Unemployment also covers those not eligible for existing state programs, including self-employed individuals.

NEW Department of Labor Employee Paid Leave Rights

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires certain employers with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons. This may not apply to small businesses with less than 50 employees.

Generally, [the Act](#) provides that employees of covered employers are eligible for COVID-related absence:

- *Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because of quarantine and/or COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; or*
- *Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine, or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19, and/or the employee is experiencing a substantially similar condition; and*
- *Up to an additional 10 weeks of **paid expanded family and medical leave** at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee, who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days, is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19.*

NEW CARES Act

Payroll Protection Program (PPP)

The PPP is a relief package that will offer two months funding for payroll, rent, and/or utilities. The application period opens Friday, April 3, and is available on a first-come, first serve basis.

[Payroll Protection Program](#) is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll.

- SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.
- The Paycheck Protection Program will be available through June 30, 2020.
- Gather documentation to apply. A [sample application](#) is available and is subject to change before April 3.
- Apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or through any federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, and Farm Credit System institution that is participating.

***NEW* CARES Act**

Funding Webinar - TUESDAY

You are invited to join two webinars hosted by Louisiana Policy Institute for Children and their partners to learn more about funding opportunities related to the CARES Act.

Topic: Paycheck Protection Program

Hosts: The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, Greater New Orleans, Inc

Date & Time: Tuesday, April 7 at 10:00 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://zoom.us/j/478709109>

Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 478 709 109

One-tap mobile: +13126266799,478709109#

***NEW* CARES Act**

Funding Webinar - WEDNESDAY

You are invited to join two webinars hosted by Louisiana Policy Institute for Children and their partners to learn more about funding opportunities related to the CARES Act.

Topic: SBA Funds for Early Care and Education

Will address Economic Injury Disaster Loans & Paycheck Protection Program

Hosts: The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, Propeller & Mike Ricks of the SBA

Date & Time: Wednesday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://zoom.us/j/396805765>

Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 396 805 765

One-tap mobile: +13126266799,396805765#

NEW State Funding

Louisiana Loan Portfolio Guaranty Program

The Louisiana Loan Portfolio Guaranty Program (LGPG) will offer loans of up to \$100,000 to Louisiana small businesses of fewer than 100 employees that are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

A total loan pool of \$50 million will be quickly disbursed to eligible small businesses across Louisiana. The LGPG, is a partnership of:

- Louisiana Economic Development, which will provide a loan guaranty fund;
- Louisiana Bankers Association, whose membership will provide the loans;
- Louisiana Public Facilities Authority, which will administer the program.

Interested businesses may find loan details at OpportunityLouisiana.com/covid19.

A list of participating bankers will be posted at the site by Friday, April 3 as banks complete their participation agreements.

NEW Academic Resources

CLASS[®] Professional Development Resources

Teachstone is offering free courses with learning resources from the myTeachstone CLASS[®] professional development platform to support educators in a variety of roles.

- **Teachers** - See exemplar videos of real classroom footage featuring high-quality interactions from each CLASS[®] domain.
- **Coaches** - Find tools to support distance coaching and digital learning. Feel free to share access to these resources with teachers.
- **Parents** - Watch exceptional classroom interactions and reflect on how you might try out some of what you're seeing at home.

To Access the Content: Go to <https://dashboard.teachstone.com/>, click the Activate a Product Key button, and enter: **5LMQ6ZQV23FNM56S**

NEW Academic Resources

Online Learning

Teachstone, creator of CLASS®, has resources for early childhood educators and families to promote interactions and support child learning during COVID-19.

With the current coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, all of us are figuring out how to adjust our daily routines and help prevent the spread of the virus. Interactions matter now more than ever for educators, parents, children, and communities.

[Teachstone's Coronavirus Resources for Educators and Parents](#) page features blog posts, webinars, and downloadable resources available for families and educators. Use these resources to learn about the importance of interactions, plan activities for children, and incorporate CLASS® concepts into your daily routines.

[The CLASS® at Home](#) is another great resource for families explaining what domain interactions look like at home and the importance of each.

NEW Academic Approval Renewing for 2020-2021

In an effort to assist publicly funded sites in starting the 2020-2021 school year in the best possible position, the Department wants to help expedite the Academic Assurance renewal process.

Academic Approval is required to receive or maintain a Type III child care license.

The [2020-2021 Academic Approval Assurances](#) can be submitted by **May 1** to ensure that a site's Academic Approval does not expire by the June 30 expiration date. The Department will work with sites closed due to COVID-19 that plan to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year to make sure that a site's Academic Approval does not expire.

These [assurances](#) should be signed and submitted electronically.

Email questions to ECAssurances@la.gov.

NEW Events

Teacher Leader Summit

In light of ongoing COVID-19 health concerns and at the direction of local and national authorities, the 2020 Teacher Leader Summit will not occur this May, as scheduled.

- The Department will shift to a virtual session presentation platform for as many sessions as possible. Additional details, including the list and schedule of these sessions, will be announced in the coming weeks via upcoming newsletters.
- All registrants will automatically be unregistered from the event. Those who paid for a ticket will automatically receive a refund, minus processing fees, by the end of April to the card on file. Confirmation of the cancelation will be sent to the purchaser's email address.
- The Department will cancel all hotel rooming blocks listed in the [Overview Document](#). However, individuals should contact the hotel directly if they require proof of cancellation. Please contact ldoevents@la.gov with questions.

Food Services

School Meal Sites

We are aware that as a result of the governor's proclamation, some school systems are closing feeding sites, and are working with multiple partners to identify possible solutions.

- The [School Meal Sites During COVID-19 Closures Interactive Map](#) provides the most current listing of schools providing meals for children 18 years of age and younger during the closure. Parishes have stepped up to fill this vital need in creative ways, such as grab-n-go, curbside pickup, and even meal delivery services.
- Additionally, Hoonuit has a mobile friendly nationally updated resource that families can search by address: schoolmealfinder.hoonuit.com
- For questions related to food and nutrition programs and options to serve children meals should a center close, contact the LDOE Division of Nutrition Support: childnutritionprogams@la.gov.



Rationed Supplies

Authorization Letter

Early learning centers have expressed a need to purchase essential supplies (e.g., food, cleaning supplies, and paper products) that might exceed what stores allow individuals to purchase.

- The Department provided an [authorized letter](#) requesting Louisiana retailers to consider allowing early learning centers to purchase basic supplies that exceed the rationed amounts.
- To verify the role of early learning centers, purchasers may be asked, in addition to the letter, to provide a copy of their state license from the LDOE and a copy of a Louisiana's driver's license.
- If a store does not accept the [authorized letter](#), email LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov providing the store's name and location. A Department staff member will work with our contacts to help to see if the store can accept the letter.

Next Steps

Next Steps

Guidance and Communications

- All guidance will be linked here, including these slides:
<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/covid-19>
- Email any questions to LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov
- Check the [ECE FAQ](#) and the [School System FAQ](#), which are updated in the afternoon each day
- **Please email any closures as soon as possible to the support inbox.**

Previously Communicated Information

Proclamation Update

The Governor issued [Proclamation JBE 2020-27](#) on March 13, 2020.

- All public schools in the State of Louisiana shall close facilities to students until April 13, 2020.
- Schools may offer complete distance learning, as capabilities exist.
- With appropriate social distancing measures, schools shall, if able, continue to provide meals or other essential services with applicable staff.
- Instructional minute requirements shall be temporarily suspended for distance education courses and for curriculum delivery.
- The required 63,720 instructional minute requirement per year shall also be suspended.
- **NOTE:** the prohibition against all gatherings of 250 people or more (who are in a single space at the same time where individuals will be in close proximity to one another) does not apply to licensed centers.

Updated Guidance Child Care Centers Recommendations

Early learning centers make individual decisions about whether or not to close their businesses.

Licensed child care centers should take all mitigating precautions if continuing to serve children. Examples include:

- Take the temperature of staff and children, and check for illness when children arrive.
- **Limit group sizes to 10 or fewer children and adults.**
- Accommodate older or medically at-risk employees.
- When possible, have children eat in individual classrooms.
- Clean high-touch surfaces ideally every 30 minutes, but at least 1-2 times during the day.
- Minimize visitors inside the center, as possible.

Child care centers are **not** required to contact the local public health unit to authorize closure. They only need to do so if consultation regarding closure is needed. When a center closes, notify LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov and note the center name, license number, location, & details of the closure.

Closures

Closures

Decision-making

Early learning centers make individual decisions about whether or not to close their businesses

- Louisiana Department of Health has recommended the first step in determining to close an early childhood center is to consult [the Office of Public Health Regional Contacts](#).
- When center closures are necessary, notify LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov and note the center name, license number, location, and details of the closure.
- When planning to reopen, notify LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov and note the center name, license number, location, and date of reopening.
- Review the [LDOE's webpage on COVID-19](#).
- Communicate clearly to staff and families regarding your plan for handling tuition and payroll during any closure.

Licensing Updates

Licensing Updates

Deciding to Stay Open

Should you decide to stay open, there is guidance to prepare you to operate in these conditions.

[The Center for Disease Control](#) has guidelines for businesses to consider:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and teach children to do the same.
- Emphasize staying home when sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily

There is a nationwide shortage of supplies, including cleaning solutions. Centers should follow [CDC guidance on cleaning and hygiene](#). Please track expenditures and keep all receipts related to COVID-19 in the event funds become available to support these costs.

Licensing Updates

Deciding to Stay Open

Should you decide to stay open, there is guidance to prepare you to operate in these conditions.

Additionally, centers should take all mitigating precautions when serving children, including:

- Take the temperature of staff and children using a thermometer that does not touch skin, and check for illness when children arrive
 - Note: a temperature of 100.4 typically indicates a fever, but this can vary for young children
 - Follow your center protocol
- Consider activities that mitigate large groups
 - For example, when possible, have children eat in individual classrooms
- Accommodate older or medically at-risk employees
- Limit visitors as possible
- Clean and sanitize high-touch surfaces ideally every 30 minutes, but at least 1-2 times during the day

Licensing Updates

License Renewals

March, April, and May license renewals will be extended.

Licenses will be extended for 90 days for providers whose licenses expire in March, April, and May 2020.

- March renewals will be extended to June.
- April renewals will be extended to July.
- May renewals will be extended to August.

Annual inspections will be postponed or delayed with a focus on complaints and incidents. Delays of annual inspections by the Office of State Fire Marshal and the Office of Public Health will not negatively affect license renewals.

Licensing Updates

Change Requests

Change requests to accommodate out of school children or additional children.

- Early learning centers **do not** need to submit a change request in CAFE to accommodate out of school children or additional children.
- Early learning centers can make change requests to their [Licensing Consultant](#) via email for the following:
 - Age range
 - Hours of operation

Licensing Updates

Allowances to adjust for staffing

Additional allowances to provide flexibility regarding staffing.

The Department will:

- Extend time for approval for license renewals from the Office of State Fire Marshal and Office of Public Health from 90 days of the date of the license expiration to 120 days from the date of the license expiration.
- Adjust the child-to-staff minimum ratio for ages 3 years and older to allow centers to adapt for staffing.
- Decrease the staff age requirement from 18 years or older to include 16 and 17 year olds to be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.
- Waive continuing education requirements (i.e. clock hours) and proof of documentation requirements.

Licensing Updates

Responses to Questions on Employing 16 and 17 Year Olds

The Department will decrease the staff age requirement from 18 years or older to include 16 and 17 year olds if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

BESE has approved a waiver until June 30, 2020 allowing a center to employ staff ages 16 or 17, as long as they are under the direct supervision of a current employee.

These new 16 and 17 year old employees may count for the purposes of ratios.

Licensing Updates

Responses to Questions on Licensing Temporary Spaces

Temporary child care centers can be set up to support emergency response, and the LDOE will work with you to license the space.

Expanded care should only be created to support emergency or critical response personnel, or employees who support necessary services. If emergency care is needed to support response to COVID-19, providers can establish a temporary child care center in a church or other buildings and LDOE will work with you to license this space.

Note that providers should keep in mind the recommendations regarding social distancing and take all mitigating precautions.

Please contact the Division of Licensing by phone at 225.342.9905 or by email at ldelicensing@la.gov for more information.

Licensing Updates

Miscellaneous Licensing Questions

Q: Can centers require that parents sign waivers to ensure centers are not held responsible if a child comes into contact with COVID-19 at the center?

A: Centers should consult their attorneys in consideration of any waivers.

Q: Can centers implement a procedure requiring parents to drop children at the door, allowing staff to sign children in and out?

A: Yes. The center must have staff members signing the children in and out and adequate staff escorting children to and from their classrooms.

Child Care Question

Gatherings of 10 or more and ratios

Q: If the Federal government has recommended gatherings of 10 or fewer to prevent COVID-19 spread, why are child care centers allowed to remain open?

A: Child care centers are remaining open in order to provide care for first responders and critical services personnel. Parents are being asked to not take their children to a child care center if they don't have to. Owners and directors are encouraged to make decisions based on the needs of the families, the children attending their centers and center's staff. Centers are also being asked to contact local health offices to help them make the decision on whether to remain open or not.

Q: The Federal government has recommended gatherings of 10 or fewer to prevent COVID-19 spread, yet our licensed child care ratios are above this recommendation. Which ratio do we follow?

A: Based on the governor's proclamation and LDH's guidelines, child care centers must adhere to the group size requirement of 10 or fewer, including all adults and children, in order to remain in operation.

Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)

Fees Waived

The CCCBC staff will continue to process background checks and provide updates of fingerprint services as the situation requires.

BESE has temporarily waived the following:

- Requirement of documentation of CCCBC eligibility determinations
- The LDOE \$15.00 CCCBC admin fee
- The LDOE \$15.00 out of state fee
- The DCFS \$25.00 fee

Importantly, those individuals that have previously been determined ineligible or for whom you receive notice of ineligibility are prohibited from being on the premises.

CCCBC questions should be sent directly to valerie.black@la.gov.

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)

Fingerprint Locations

There are a few fingerprint locations that have closed. Please check this [list](#) and contact the location ahead of time. The Department's staff will be diligently processing CCCBC applications.

- If a fingerprint location has closed in your area, please notify valerie.black@la.gov.

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)

Responses to Questions on CCCBC documentation

- Prior to starting work a new employee must apply and be fingerprinted for a CCCBC.
- The requirement to provide proof to the Division of Licensing has been waived until April 30, 2020.

CCCBC Updates

Responses to Questions on Employing Substitutes

- K-12 substitute pools vary by community, so you should contact your local K-12 substitute staffing organization directly to access.
- Additionally, schools may have relationships with regular substitutes who you may be able to partner with, as well as staff from closed centers and others in your community who may be able to serve as additional staff in child care centers.
- Prior to starting work, a new employee must apply and be fingerprinted for a CCCBC if they do not already have one.

CCCBC Updates

Responses to Questions on Volunteers

The child care provider should apply for a CCCBC for the volunteer through the CCCBC System. If there are any hurdles in applying for the CCCBC contact valerie.black@la.gov.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Payments and eligibility

The Department will pay for enrollment versus attendance, and provide flexibility for families regarding redetermination periods and reporting requirements.

The Department will:

- As of March 16, pay all authorized children the full weekly amount regardless of the number of days or hours they attended.
- Waive CCAP copayments for families
- Extend family redeterminations for 3 months
- Extend reporting deadlines for eligibility determinations

A CCAP child's inability to attend a center during this time WILL NOT adversely affect their eligibility. They will continue to be eligible through their redetermination period.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Responses to Questions on Family Determination

Families can continue to apply for CCAP through [CAFE](#), and applications are being expedited.

Families who are interested in utilize the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) can continue to apply in the [CAFE portal](#).

Families can apply for CCAP for their school-aged children in addition to children under the age of five.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Response to Questions Related to Report of Changes

The following changes can be made for children funded through CCAP:

- Change authorization from part time to full time
- Add CCAP authorization for sibling
- Change to a different CCAP authorized center for a child authorized for CCAP

Families should take **one** of the following steps:

- complete a [CCAP 10 Report of Changes form](#)
- email LDECCAP@la.gov with the request to change the authorization
- call 1-877-453-2721 with the request to change the authorization

Child care centers and providers can begin serving these children as full time immediately, but you will not be reimbursed until the parent changes the authorization.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Example of zero copayment

If the family has a copay of \$2, \$3, \$8, or \$10, it will be waived. They will receive the maximum rate for the age of their child according to the 2019 State Maximum Levels chart. An example of how the payment will change for a family that has a \$3 copay is below:

	Daily Rate and Standard Copay	Daily Rate and *NEW* Copay Waived
Provider Charge for Toddlers	\$31.00	\$31.00
State Max CCAP Rate for Toddlers	\$23.75	\$23.75
Required Copay for Family	\$3.00	\$0.00
Total CCAP Payment to Provider	\$20.75	\$23.75
Total Family Payment to Provider	\$10.25	\$7.25

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Responses to Questions on Payments for Closures

The Department will continue CCAP payments for enrolled CCAP children in the event that a center closes as a result of COVID 19.

In the event of a center closure, CCAP payments will continue in order to support centers to pay staff.

Payments will be based on enrollment, meaning centers will be paid for CCAP authorized children the full weekly amount regardless of the number of days or hours they attended.

This means that full-time children will be paid for 22 days or units monthly, and part-time will be paid for 20 hours weekly.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

TOTS machines

If a lead agency closes a building where TOTS machines are located, they must inform LDOE by email at LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov.

- The LDOE will keep the [TOTS locations](#) list updated in the event Heads of Household are looking for a TOTS location.
- If a family is not able to access a location in their area, the Provider must keep manual attendance records until the TOTS location is open again.
- Contact the Provider Help Desk (225-342-1879 or 225-342-7414) or Call Center (1-877-453-2721) for individual questions.

The use of TOTS finger imaging is strongly encouraged to continue to the extent possible but not required.

LDOE Opening CCAP Eligibility to Critical Personnel Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

Effective 3/23/2020, children of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” working with COVID-19 are eligible on a case-by-case basis for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).

Essential critical infrastructure workers belong to the following industries:

- HealthCare/Public Health
- Law Enforcement, Public Safety, First Responders
- Food and Agriculture
- Energy (electrical industry, petroleum, natural and propane gas workers)
- Waste and Wastewater
- Transportation and Logistics
- Public Works
- Communications and Information Technology
- Other Community-Based Government
- Critical Manufacturing
- Hazardous Materials
- Financial Services
- Chemical
- Defense Industrial Base

You can find the link to the this expedited application [here](#).

LA 4 and NSECD

LA 4 and NSECD

Payments and Reporting

- During school closures, LA-4 and NSECD payments will continue based on enrollment. When schools reopen, additional COVID19 related absences are considered excused absences.
- Please submit NSECD and LA-4 invoices by the 10th of each month to ensure prompt payment.
- LA-4 and NSECD attendance tracking should mark the school closures in the same manner used for normal school closures for weather, holiday, etc.
- If your teams are unable to submit invoices for LA-4 and NSECD due to COVID19 hardships, please lindsey.bradford@la.gov .

Food Services

Food Services

Questions and Answers

Q: Can children from public and private schools get meals from child care centers?

A: At this time, centers can only serve enrolled children and cannot serve children above their licensed capacity.

Q: If a center does not participate in CACFP, are they allowed to pick up food at local public schools for the children at their center?

A: Schools operating open feeding sites serve all children age 18 and under. Centers should contact the local school system to determine schools that are operating open feeding sites and work with the site on food delivery arrangements.

Q: Can school systems bring food to our centers or let us pick food up?

A: Centers should contact their local school systems to make meal service arrangements.

Food Services

CACFP and Centers

Families with children under the age of 18 will be able to go to a designated list of school sites around the state to access free meals.

USDA has provided flexibilities to schools to provide meals to children 18 years and under during the extended closure.

USDA has not provided the same flexibility to serve additional children through CACFP, although the Congressional House bill provides for non-congregant feeding. As additional flexibilities are approved, we will let you know.

The Department will maintain a [list of schools](#) providing feeding programs during the closure. This list will be continually updated with schools and other organizations providing open feeding programs. If a center closes, it should refer families to programs on this list.

With questions related to food and nutrition programs, please contact the LDOE Division of Nutrition Support at ChildNutritionPrograms@la.gov.

Child Care Support Organizations

Child Care Support Organizations

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program Providers may choose to move classes to a virtual (rather than in-person) format. Please email LDOECOVID19support@la.gov if your program moves to online instruction.

If your program chooses to pause instruction, please communicate this to LDOECOVID19support@la.gov

Continue to send tuition invoices on regular timelines.

Job-embedded coaching should be suspended until April 13, 2020.

Child Care Support Organizations

Mental Health Consultation

[TIKES Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#) is providing MHC services via telephone or a telehealth web-based platform for any individual affiliated with Type III centers, family child care providers, individuals working in respite child care centers, and other individuals that have children in their care. Please complete the request form at <https://tinyurl.com/TulaneTIKES> and a consultant will contact you as soon as possible.

They are able to assist individuals, whether or not they have received consultation previously, with issues related to:

- Child behavior and social-emotional concerns
- Supporting children during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Self-care
- Stress and coping
- Director, Teacher, and Parent Concerns
- Other concerns as needed

Academic Resources

Academic Resources

Standards and Development

In the event of school or center closure, families may find the following resources helpful in facilitating learning at home.

- [Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning & Development Standards \(ELDS\)](#) describe the particular skills and abilities that children need to develop to be successful and provide ideas for fostering their development.
- [The National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#) offers research-based resources, tips and ideas for families—from child development to reading, writing, music, math, and more!

Academic Resources

Text Services

Several programs are available to offer tips and resources for families that support early learning through text messages.

- [Bright by Text](#) provides quality information and trusted resources to families of children prenatal to age eight partnering with LPB. Text: LPB to 274448
- [Vroom](#) offers free, easy-to-use learning tips for children 5 and under delivered daily directly to your phone. Sign up for free at <https://www.vroom.org/>.
- [Ready4K](#) is an evidence-based family engagement curriculum delivered via text messages. Text: Readby4th to 70138

** Message & data rates apply.*

Academic Resources

Online Learning

Frog Street's partner, Education technology provider Age of Learning, is offering families at schools and centers affected by closure free at-home access to research-proven learning resources.

- [ABCmouse.com® Early Learning Academy](#) is a comprehensive, research-validated curriculum for children 2-8. Visit www.ABCmouse.com/redeem and redeem your access code.
- [ReadingIQ®](#) is a digital library and literacy platform for children 2-12 designed by reading experts to improve literacy skills. Visit www.ReadingIQ.com/redeem and redeem your access code.

Families can use the redeem code: **SCHOOL3673** to sign up. Questions can be sent to support@aofl.com

Academic Resources

Online Learning

Teaching Strategies, creator of [The Creative Curriculum](#)® and [GOLD](#)®, has developed a free toolkit for supporting families impacted by COVID-19.

The [Healthy at Home](#) toolkit offers a free selection of resources from *The Creative Curriculum*® and *ReadyRosie*™ providing families with information and resources for supporting the children in their care.

Academic Resources

Online Learning

In partnership with **Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)**, the Department will provide distance and home learning tools for educators, students, and caregivers. This will include:

- **An online hub for distance learning supports** set to launch by March 18. It will include:
 - Department-reviewed lessons and resources for math, ELA, social studies, science and early childhood, including links to Tier 1 [curriculum resources](#).
 - Increased access to Tier 1 curriculum digital content, including virtual lessons.
 - Resources to teach young children about COVID-19.
- **Broadcasted educational programming** through LPB and YouTube Channels, which will launch within the next two weeks.

The Department will announce the availability of these resources through all upcoming planning calls and newsletters.

Academic Resources

Special Education

School closure. When the school closure causes educational services for all students to pause within a school or school system, then the school/school system is generally not required to provide services to children with disabilities during the closure. This includes children with disabilities ages 3, 4, and 5 who have an IEP.

After an extended closure, school systems are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services on each child. If the child lost progress, teams will need to reassess services and determine whether the child requires compensatory education.

US Department of Education [Q&A](#) on special education has additional information, including information on Early Steps / IDEA Part C for infants and toddlers, and Distance Education.

NEW Academic Resources

Special Education

Early Intervention and Home Visiting. Services will continue with added consideration to the health and safety of families and early interventionists to include:

- a telephone screening process for home visits to support limiting visitors in child care centers; and
- alternate locations for services and teletherapy if onsite services are not an option.

If a child cannot undergo evaluation using teletherapy or alternate locations, an interim IFSP can be developed using presumptive eligibility, then re-determined, or eligibility determination can be postponed with parent consent and documentation.

Part C to Part B Transition Conferences. Family Service Coordinators will continue to schedule transition conferences and provide notification to the LEA contact(s) for the school system. If the LEA representative is unavailable, all documentation will be shared.

Academic Resources

Family Guidance during Emergencies

Closures will result in changes in routine and some anxiety for children. Share these resources with families to support their conversations with young children.

[Parent and Caretaker guide for helping families cope with COVID 19](#)

[Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus](#)

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) - A Parent Resource \(English Resource\)](#)

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) - A Parent Resource \(Spanish Resource\)](#)

Accountability

Accountability

Local and Third Party Observations

The Department is suspending all local and third party CLASS observations until April 13.

Out of an abundance of caution, the Department is suspending CLASS[®] observations from taking place in schools and centers until school systems reopen on April 13, 2020.

BESE has approved a [Bulletin 140](#) waiver to extend the deadline for the spring observation period until May 31, 2020.

If observations are unable to occur in centers and schools by this deadline, the Department will work with programs and lead agencies to determine how to calculate performance ratings.

Accountability

Issuing Performance Profiles & Star Ratings

The Department will work with BESE to request a Bulletin 140 waiver to extend performance profiles for severely impacted sites.

The Department will request a [Bulletin 140](#) waiver to extend performance profile ratings for an additional year if any sites do not receive the required observations due to COVID-19 interruptions in order to ensure School Readiness Tax Credits for 2021 are not impacted.

Workforce

Small Business Supports

Resources for Impacted Businesses

Louisiana Economic Development (LED) has compiled a list of resources to support business continuity.

The LED's new [COVID-19 webpage](#) links to:

- The Governor's Proclamations and other information related to this crisis.
- Business assistance resources
- Regional information
- Relief funds

LDOE will continue to link to related supports like these through our page on Louisiana Believes to help centralize the resources available to you.

Business Interruption Documentation

Federal, state, local, and private funding will likely continue to roll out, and your record-keeping may be important to filing claims or supporting employees' claims.

Businesses are recommended to document the following, though this should not be considered a complete list:

Business closure: Document if/when your business closed, and communications to staff and families related to pay, tuition, rent or mortgage, etc.

Financial loss & Bad debt: Capture any losses (unused food, lost tuition, refunds made to families, etc.).

Employee-specific data: Document details of individual employment decisions made by you and/or your employees, and copy any support provided for unemployment claims.

Record the date, and financial impact of any decisions that you are making.

Small Business Administration (SBA) loans Disaster Assistance

*On Thursday, March 19, [Louisiana became eligible](#) for qualifying organizations to help with economic injury caused by COVID-19. **Any previous attempts to apply might not have been successful, but Louisiana is listed now.***

Affected and interested businesses should apply [here](#) for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

- Up to \$2 million in assistance per small business and can provide economic support to help overcome temporary loss of revenue.
- Loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact.
- The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses without credit available elsewhere; businesses with credit available elsewhere are not eligible. The interest rate for non-profits is 2.75%.

For additional information, please contact the SBA disaster assistance customer service center. Call 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or e-mail disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

Workforce

Eligibility for Unemployment due to CV-19

Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) will do all they can to ensure impacted workers receive the benefits for which they are eligible.

A number of factors determine eligibility for COVID-19 benefits. The LWC reviews each case separately. Workers may be eligible if they can answer ‘yes’ to any of the following:

- Your work hours have been reduced because of lack of work due to Coronavirus.
- Your workplace closes temporarily, and you are not being compensated.
- You have been instructed not to go to work, and you are not being paid while at home.

If your work hours have been reduced, partial benefits could be available to you up to a maximum of \$247 a week.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As per the Governor’s proclamation, for individuals whose employment has been impacted due to COVID-19:

- Work search requirements are waived.
- Week of waiting is waived.

Workforce

Filing for & Receiving Unemployment

Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) will do all they can to ensure impacted workers receive the benefits for which they are eligible. It is important to understand the guidelines for these benefits.

- Applicants can apply [online](#) or via the LWC call center at 866-783-5567 until 7:00 pm. for [Unemployment Insurance benefits for reasons related to COVID-19](#) (Coronavirus). **There is no deadline to apply.**
- The federal requirement for payment of unemployment funds is 21 days, but for now LWC is processing claims within 3-5 days, until the volume of applicants increases
- The maximum number of weeks that unemployment benefits can be paid per claim is 26 weeks in a 12-month period. **New employees may not be eligible if they have worked less an a quarter.**
- Wages and vacation pay (received or will receive) **MUST** be reported when you file your unemployment claim. Sick leave and PTO do not need to be reported.

Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

- BESE has approved an initial round of waivers: [BESE Emergency Waiver Memo](#) (updated March 24)
- Additional regulation may be requested as necessary.