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# NEWSLETTER

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## News for Early Childhood Educators

December 10, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

In May, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health (OPH) issued Child Care Guidelines addressing concerns specific to the spread of COVID-19. During the current public health emergency, it is essential that all centers comply with the OPH Guidelines in order to ensure the health, safety and well-being of children in care. Moreover, if a center cannot comply with these Guidelines, then owners and directors should consider not remaining open for the health and safety of children, their families, and staff.

Additionally, compliance with the OPH Guidelines is essential to ensure a safe environment for children and staff in centers. Bulletin 137, §1301(4) requires centers to take steps or actions necessary to ensure the health, safety and well-being of children in care. Please complete this [survey](#) to help the Department learn more about your continued personal protective equipment (PPE) needs.

In addition to the OPH Guidelines, and in accordance with the Governor's Proclamation Number 89 JBE 2020 issued July 11, 2020 and extended November 24, 2020 in 168 JBE 2020, all persons, including all children ages 8 years and older, are required to wear a mask unless they have a health condition that prevents wearing a mask.

- [OPH Guidelines](#) – Revised 11/20/2020 - REQUIRED TO BE FOLLOWED
- [FAQ – Revised](#) – Revised 11/19/2020
- [Child Care/School \(Re\)Opening Decision Tree](#)
- [Health and Safety Resource Guide](#) - Revised 7/10/2020
- [Office of Public Health Contacts](#)

We all want to keep the children in care safe as well as family and staff. If you need assistance in order to comply with the OPH Guidelines, please contact the Division of Licensing by phone at 225-342-9905 or by email at [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov).

Thank you for all you do in this stressful time. You keep our Louisiana families working and educate our youngest learners to be ready for kindergarten.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

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## Upcoming Deadlines

- December 15 - PPE [survey](#) due
- December 18 - No Kid Hungry Grant [applications](#) due
- December 31 - Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate deadline
- January 6 - Deadline for session applications for Teacher Leader Summit

## Upcoming Events

- December 18 - [Webinar](#) for Early Childhood Providers
- January 8 - [Shared Services Webinar](#)
- January 8 - Registration for Teacher Leader Summit opens
- January 21 - [ECCE Commission meeting](#)

## More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#).

## Mental Health Tip of the Month

### Self-Care Tip for Providers

Acknowledge moments of gratitude or joy. Look for moments of joy and connection and share them with your colleagues.

### Reminder: TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Tulane offers TIKES Mental Health Consultation via telephone or secure video platform to Louisiana caregivers in need during the COVID-19 crisis. Type I, II, & III child care centers, parents, respite care center caregivers, and others caring for young children can request a consultation by completing a [request form](#). For more information visit: <https://medicine.tulane.edu/departments/clinical-sciences/psychiatry/research/tikes>.

## Updates for COVID-19

### NEW: Webinar for Early Childhood Providers

On December 18, the Department will host a webinar for early childhood providers from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. This webinar will include general updates in addition to information about COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

Meeting Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/9198036620>

Meeting ID: 919 803 6620

Dial In: +1 346-248-7799

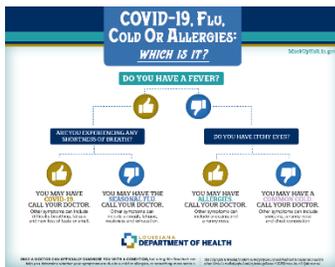
### NEW: Update on Quarantine Guidelines

The Louisiana Department of Health has adopted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recently updated guidance that allows people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 to shorten their quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days, or as few as 7 days with a negative test. The Louisiana Department of Education is working with the Louisiana Department of Health and other medical professionals to update guidance.

For additional information, visit the [Louisiana Department of Health](https://www.louisianadepartmentofhealth.gov/) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/) websites. You can also email [LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov).

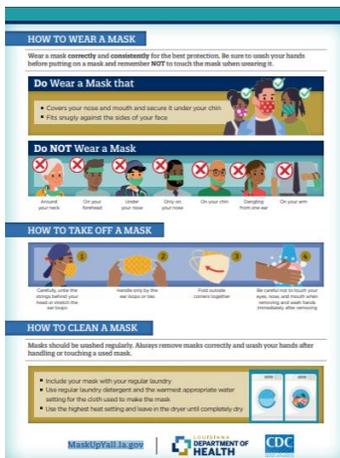
### NEW: COVID-19, Flu, Cold or Allergies Flow Chart

The Louisiana Department of Health has developed a flowchart to help determine whether symptoms of illness are due to a cold or allergies or something more serious. This [document](#) can be downloaded from the [Louisiana Department of Health](https://www.louisianadepartmentofhealth.gov/) website.



### NEW: Mask Up for Louisiana

The Louisiana Department of Health has created an infographic flyer titled “[Mask Up for Louisiana](#)” that includes information related to selecting, wearing, removing and cleaning masks. This flyer can be downloaded from the [Louisiana Department of Health](https://www.louisianadepartmentofhealth.gov/) website.



Reminder: November 19 Webinar for Early Childhood Providers

On November 19, the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers featuring Dr. Tina Stefanki from the Louisiana Department of Health. [Presentation slides](#) from this webinar are available online.

## **Updates for Teaching and Learning**

### **NEW: Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Deadline**

To qualify for the 2020 SRTC tax credits all ECAC initial applications and renewals should utilize the [following guidance from Certification](#) to submit requests for certification no later than December 31, 2020. Submit the application and supporting documentation through [Teach LA Live!](#) Please allow 4-6 weeks processing time.

Once an application is submitted, please check the email on file regularly for replies from the LDOE. Application submissions can be verified or check for any new messages using the History option on [Teach LA Live!](#) If an application is submitted by the director, please follow-up with them to check for [updates](#) sent to their email or [Teach LA Live!](#) history.

Once an application is processed, additional feedback is provided or the certificate issued. Case feedback and certificate information can be reviewed on [TeachLouisiana.net](#). On the right side, choose *Status of a Certification Application or Verify a Certificate or Teaching Authorization*. Any questions regarding the processing of an application should be submitted using *Ask a Question* at the top of [Teach LA Live!](#)

### **NEW: ECAC Transcript Submission**

Beginning January 1, 2021, college or university transcripts submitted for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate must be official transcripts reflecting the degree awarded or conferred. Official transcripts should be mailed or emailed directly to the applicant or the employing early childhood center and then uploaded to [TeachLALive!](#) with the application. The Certification office will no longer accept unofficial transcripts with applications submitted after 12/31/2020. Please direct any question to [certification@la.gov](mailto:certification@la.gov).

### **NEW: Developmental Screening Guidebook Webinar**

The Department has developed a [Developmental Screening Guidebook Webinar](#) to accompany the updated [Developmental Screening Guidebook](#), which can be found on the [Young Children with Disabilities Landing Page](#).

This recorded webinar provides an in-depth review of the guidebook, including a four-step framework for implementing an early identification system and key action steps with accompanying resources that are specific to the following support roles: educators and providers, families and community entities.

Questions can be directed to [brittany.braun@la.gov](mailto:brittany.braun@la.gov).

### **Reminder: Apply to Lead a Session at Teacher Leader Summit 2021**

Louisiana teachers and leaders are invited to share their expertise with educators statewide by [applying to facilitate a session](#) at Teacher Leader Summit 2021. Applications are due by January 6, 2021.

The Teacher Leader Summit will take place from Tuesday, May 25 through Thursday, May 27, 2021, in New Orleans. Registration will open on January 8, 2021.

Look out for more information in the Teacher Leader Library and upcoming newsletters.

Please contact [ldoeevents@la.gov](mailto:ldoeevents@la.gov) with questions.

### **NEW: 2021 Teacher Leader Summit T-Shirt Design Contest**

The Department is seeking inspiration for the 2021 Teacher Leader Summit t-shirt design! Educators and students with an artistic flair are encouraged to submit their design for consideration by February 5 to [ldoecommunications@la.gov](mailto:ldoecommunications@la.gov). The winning school will receive \$1 per shirt sold.

The winning design will be announced in the March edition of the Teacher Leader newsletter. Reference the [contest rules](#) for details or contact [ldoeevents@la.gov](mailto:ldoeevents@la.gov) with questions.

### **NEW: Early Childhood Investigations Webinar**

Early Childhood Investigations is hosting a [free webinar series](#), open to all participants. Topics include:

- January 7- [Rebuilding Your Child Care Business: Technology Makes it Possible](#)
- January 13- [Fearless Conversations with Toddlers](#)
- January 27- [Intentionality with Loose Parts: Provoking Children's Inquiry](#)
- February 3- [Virtual Learning Experiences that Engage Adult Learners](#)

[Register](#) for any of these webinars and many more. All webinars are recorded for participants who are unable to attend. If interested, register in order to receive the recording link.

### **NEW: Teachstone Webinar Series**

Teachstone is offering a series of free webinars covering a range of topics including *How to Best Use CLASS in a Family Child Care Program* and *Strategies for Effective Interactions Among Adults Supporting Students with Learning Differences*. Visit [myTeachstone](#) to access recordings and upcoming webinars, guidance documents and other resources.

## **Updates for Funding and Enrollment**

### **Reminder: LaCAP Relief Grants Round 4**

The Department has begun releasing funds for LaCAP Grant 4 to eligible providers. Disbursement of Grant 4 began the 3rd week of November.

### **Reminder: Actively Seeking Employment**

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, many households have lost employment. The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) allows LDOE to offer temporary child care assistance for many of these families. Compliant with BESE Bulletin 139, if the head of household or any legal custodian is actively seeking employment and/or training (E&T), including enrolling in school, the E&T requirements may be waived for 90 days. The household must meet certification requirements and validate actively seeking employment with the [Louisiana Workforce Commission](#).

### **Reminder: CCAP Provider Payments**

CCAP has extended child care payments to providers based on *enrollment* through March 31, 2021. After March 31, payments to providers will be based on *attendance*.

### **Reminder: CCAP Attendance**

While CCAP has extended payments based on *enrollment* until March 31, providers are still required to use either the Tracking of Time Services (TOTS) Point of Service (POS) device or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to track attendance. Failure to do so may jeopardize provider payments based

on enrollment. For assistance with TOTS, please email [Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov](mailto:Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov) or contact Conduent at 1-888-281-0326.

For questions regarding LaCAP Relief Grant Round 4, Actively Seeking Employment, CCAP Provider Payments and Attendance or any information related to CCAP, please email the Provider Ticket System at <https://provider.supportsystem.com> or call 225-250-7635.

## **Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care and In-Home Providers**

### **NEW: No Kid Hungry Grant Opportunity**

Child Care Centers are encouraged to apply for a grant that is between \$15,000-\$25,000 and [applications](#) are due on December 18, 2020. Please visit the [No Kid Hungry Grant Opportunity](#) webpage for more information about how funds can be used. For questions, please contact Caron at [cgreumont@strength.org](mailto:cgreumont@strength.org).

### **NEW: Supervision of Bottle Warmers**

The Department has seen an increase in incidents in which children have received severe injuries from hot water being spilled from bottle warmers due to a lack of supervision. At the time of these incidents, the children were able to pull the cords causing the water from the bottle warmer to spill onto the child. The Department would like to reiterate that center staff must ensure that the devices used in the classroom for warming bottles are placed in areas that are not accessible to children; this includes the cords attached to the device.

Try using one or several of the following tips to remind staff of the importance and potential danger that these devices can cause:

- Post a sign near the placement of the warming device reminding staff to check water temperature and placement.
- Create a safety/hazard log with designated times that the room should be scanned daily.
- Remind staff that desired temperature can be achieved by rotating bottles under a faucet of warm running water rather than of using warming devices.

Make sure to download the latest issues of the [Safety Box](#) posted on the Louisiana Attorney General's website regarding product recall and safety information.

Questions can be directed to a [Licensing Consultant](#) at 225-342-9905 or [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov).

### **NEW: Changing License Type**

In recent months, many centers elected to change their license type from a Type I or II to Type III in an effort to assist essential workers, to assist CCAP families, and to receive funding from the Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grant. If a center would like to revert back to their original type after December 31, 2020, you must submit a request via email to the [Licensing Consultant](#) assigned to the center, by December 18, 2020. Lack of written notification to the Department requesting the change to the center's original license type will result in the center remaining a Type III. If you would like to remain a Type III, but need additional support or are curious about being a Type III center, please contact [Tella.Henderson@la.gov](mailto:Tella.Henderson@la.gov) for technical assistance.

Questions can be directed to a [Licensing Consultant](#) at 225-342-9905 or [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov).

### Reminder: Type I Child to Staff Ratios and Maximum Group Size

As stated in Bulletin 137, effective July 1, 2020, there was a revision in child to staff ratio for children ages 3 and above. Please see below and section 1711.F. Minimum Child-to-Staff Ratios—Type I Centers and N.2. Maximum Group Sizes-Type I Centers.

Please reference the Child Care COVID-19 Guidelines for Licensed Centers for ratios based on reopening phase.

Minimum Child-to-Staff Ratios Type I		Maximum Group Sizes Type I	
Infants under 1 year	6:1	Infants under 1 year	18
1 year	8:1	1 year	24
2 years	12:1	2 years	24
3 years	13:1	3 years	26
4 years	15:1	4 years	30
5 years	19:1	5 years	38
6 years and up	23:1	6 years and up	46

Questions can be directed to a [Licensing Consultant](#) at 225-342-9905 or [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov).

### Updates for Directors

#### NEW: PPE Survey

The Department is collecting information from early learning centers about what personal protective equipment (PPE) is in the most demand. Please complete this short [survey](#) by December 15, 2020.

Contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov) with any questions.

#### NEW: New Staff Training

It is sometimes hard to prioritize new staff and director orientation. Now, there are [three online modules](#) that will make it easier to ensure that staff receives the basic information to begin work with young children. Find it in the [Director's Support Toolbox](#) under "[Access Key Orientation Training Modules](#)."

Contact [emmy.odwyer@la.gov](mailto:emmy.odwyer@la.gov) with any questions.

#### NEW: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Guidebook

For those who are curious about CACFP or want to better implement the program, the LDOE has developed a new guidebook to provide support related to:

- Applying for the program,
- Assessing readiness to implement the program, and
- Preparing for an audit.

The [guidebook](#) has printable checklists for ease of use. Contact [emmy.odwyer@la.gov](mailto:emmy.odwyer@la.gov) with any questions.

### **NEW: Shared Services Webinar**

Learn about saving time, money, and headaches through stronger early learning center operations. The Department is offering a webinar to discuss:

- Sharing staff and resources with other early learning sites
- Using Child Care Management Software (CCMS) like Procure, SmartCare and Brightwheel
- The Iron Triangle of early childhood finance
- The Department's plans for shared services in 2021.

**Date and time:** January 8, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

**Location:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97067801717>

**Meeting ID:** 970 6780 1717

**Contact** [shallan.jones@la.gov](mailto:shallan.jones@la.gov) with questions.

### **NEW: Shared Services Feature - Child Care Management Software (CCMS)**

Child Care Management Software (CCMS) is specifically designed to help child care providers automate their day-to-day operations. Platforms like Brightwheel, ProCare and SmartCare are designed to support attendance collection, tuition payments, and record keeping.

Review these [FAQ's](#) to learn more or contact [shallan.jones@la.gov](mailto:shallan.jones@la.gov) for more information.

### **NEW: Louisiana Leader recognized by the Lifetime Channel**

Katie Stewart, an early learning director based in Calcasieu Parish and Louisiana Early Leaders Academy fellow, was recently recognized by the Lifetime channel for their Gift of a Lifetime. Because of her dedication to children and families, and her resilience in navigating the destruction of Hurricane Laura, Katie, her family and center will receive prizes and gifts to support her recovery. Check out the [big reveal!](#) Congratulations, Katie!

## **Updates for Lead Agencies**

### **Reminder: Weekly Webinar**

The Early Childhood Team provides Office Hours every Tuesday for lead agency contacts to provide updates and answer questions for lead agencies. Contact [amanda.colon@la.gov](mailto:amanda.colon@la.gov) with questions.

### **Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies**

- December 15- General information and updates
- December 22 - Cancelled, an email will be sent with updates in lieu of Office Hours webinar
- December 29 - Cancelled, an email will be sent with updates in lieu of Office Hours webinar
- January 9 - General information and updates

### **NEW: Ready Start Network Recognition**

As outlined as a goal in their Ready Start Network [blueprint](#), Rapides Early Childhood Network developed a new [website](#) to serve as a one-stop-shop where families with young children can easily find information for early childhood education programs in the community. This user-friendly site includes

an online coordinated application, an information hub featuring all Type III centers in the network, and links to other family support resources.

### **Reminder: 2021-2022 Super App - Improving Early Childhood Access and Quality**

School systems should work with their early childhood community network lead agency to complete the early childhood components of Super App. Guidance for completing the 2021-2022 Super App is provided can be found in the [Early Childhood Super App Guidance Document](#), [informational webinar deck](#) and [webinar recording](#). Send all questions related to school system planning and Super App to [LDOE.grantshelpdesk@la.gov](mailto:LDOE.grantshelpdesk@la.gov) and include “Super App” in the subject line.

## **Other**

### **Early Childhood Care and Education Commission - January 21**

The next meeting for the [Early Childhood Care and Education Commission](#) will take place on January 21 at 11 a.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. Participants can also [livestream](#) the event. For additional information, please email [devon.camarota@la.gov](mailto:devon.camarota@la.gov).

*NOTICE: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance at this meeting please contact [devon.camarota@la.gov](mailto:devon.camarota@la.gov) at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.*

### **New Louisiana Policy Institute Report**

The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC) recently released a new report, [Struggling to Recover: The Impacts of COVID-19 on Southeast Louisiana Families with Young Children](#). This report includes results from a statewide parent survey that was conducted from September 21 to October 6, 2020.

### **Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council**

The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council met on December 9. [Presentation slides](#) and a [recording](#) of this meeting can be found online. For additional information regarding the [ECCE Advisory Council](#), please email [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov).

### **Subscribe to Our Monthly Newsletter by Completing this [Form](#)**

The Early Childhood Newsletter is released as a monthly edition! To ensure all subscribers are current, please complete this [form](#) in order to receive our next monthly edition, or send it to stakeholders who can register as new subscribers.

## **Early Childhood in the News**

[The ‘Trial and Error’ of Teaching Pre-K Special Education in a Pandemic](#) (New America)

[Kindergartners struggle to learn online. But this mother-daughter duo keeps them glued](#) (Los Angeles Times)

[The Way Forward: Reinventing Early Childhood Education After COVID-19](#) (First 10)



## Contact

For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact [LDOECOVID19@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19@la.gov)

For questions regarding licensing, or child health and safety, please contact [LDElicensing@la.gov](mailto:LDElicensing@la.gov).

For questions regarding lead agencies, please contact [leadagencysupport@la.gov](mailto:leadagencysupport@la.gov).

For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact [LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov](mailto:LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov).

For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).