

Child care programs are crucial to healthcare workers, first responders and other essential workers who are unable to work remotely during this time. Below is supplementary guidance for providers regarding COVID-19. We have also included supports to help early learning providers continue with operations during this difficult time.

Disinfecting and Sanitation Recommendations

For providers continuing their operations, current evidence from the CDC suggests COVID-19 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces of a variety of materials. Additional cleaning and disinfecting of your environment and materials is best practice for prevention of COVID-19. For more recommendations, visit the [Department of Health's web page for child care providers](#).

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is fundamental to children's growth and development. Providers should continue to take children outdoors as part of their daily schedule. Any outdoor equipment, activities and toys touched by children may need additional cleaning and disinfecting during this time.

Early Achievers

As of March 17, 2020, Early Achievers data collection visits are suspended. Once programming returns to typical operation, the data collection team will work with early learning programs to ensure a smooth rescheduling process. Participants can email [Child Care Aware](#) for on-going coaching supports.

State Substitute Pool

DCYF has a substitute pool for licensed providers offered by The Imagine Institute and will be expanding services. If you would like support from the substitute pool, please email subpool@imaginewa.org.

Additional Resources for Current Child Care Providers

For continuous agency guidance, visit our [COVID-19 webpage updated regularly](#). DCYF recognizes this is a difficult time for small businesses like child care programs. Fortunately, Washington counties are now eligible for disaster loans from the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#). This can also be a stressful time for children in your care as well. [Visit this useful resource](#) for discussing COVID-19 with children.

Closing Your Program

Decisions such as voluntary closure during a health outbreak is a choice each child care program makes on their own. If you close your program, please contact your licensor.

Child Care Needs and Status

For parents in need of child care, providers who need to update their child care openings or providers who may need assistance for staffing or supports, please call the Child Care Aware Family Center at 1-800-446-1114.

Emergency Child Care and Waivers

DCYF is temporarily granting emergency child care licenses to support the urgent need of child care. If anyone in your area is willing to provide emergency child care, please have them email: emergencychildcare@dcyf.wa.gov. If you need to request a waiver to respond more effectively to the COVID-19 situation, please use [this Emergency Child Care Waiver/Exception Request form](#) and send it to your local [DCYF Licensing Field Office](#) to go through the approval process.

