

MEMORANDUM

TO: Families

FROM: Denise Stone, Executive Director, Early Learning and Child Care

DATE: June 2, 2020

SUBJECT: Support for Licensed Child Care Centres

As you know, under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Robert Strang, the Province's licensed child care centres and licensed family daycare homes were closed up until June 15, 2020, to help flatten the curve and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Leaders in the child care sector have consulted with child care operators/agencies and early childhood educators over the last few weeks to develop a re-opening plan. The results of that consultation have led to the development of a COVID-19 Guideline for Child Care Centre document created by Public Health experts and with input from paediatrics and infection control specialists at the IWK. Each child care centre will be required to follow the Public Health directives in the plan. A copy of the document can be found here: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/education/>

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) licenses, inspects and funds your centre/agency to support wages and operations. Since the mandated closure, EECD has provided funding to your centre/agency to continue to pay wages and operational expenses, while protecting your child care spot and ensuring you were not charged parent fees.

The Province of Nova Scotia recognizes that this is a difficult time for many families in Nova Scotia and for a variety of reasons, families may not be ready to send their child back to child care at this time. During this time, your provider will receive funding on a sliding scale until September, as they increase their capacity from 50% in accordance with Public Health Guidelines. You are encouraged to talk to your provider regarding timing of re-enrolling your child in licensed child care. You will not be charged parent fees if your child is not attending child care at this time.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind families about our Child Care Subsidy Program. The Child Care Subsidy Program helps eligible families, with children 12 years and under, pay for a portion of child care fees at licensed child care facilities and regulated family home care agencies. Families who are experiencing a loss or reduction of income at this time, are encouraged to apply. For more information on subsidy, visit <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/families/childcaresubsidy.shtml>

Over the next few weeks as centres welcome your families back to care, we ask you to be patient and supportive, as they are all working hard to keep your child safe, while continuing to delivery a high quality early learning program. Information on COVID-19 can be found at NovaScotia.ca/CoronaVirus. If you have any questions, please contact the Department by emailing inquiries to ECDServices@novascotia.ca.