



## Department of Education

Mike DeWine, Governor  
Paolo DeMaria, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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To: All Ohio Department of Education-Licensed Preschool and School-Age Child Care Providers

From: Wendy Grove, PhD, Director, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness

Date: May 31, 2020

RE: Reopening of Ohio Department of Education Preschool and School Age Child Care Programs

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This letter serves as notification of the option to reopen Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool and school age child care programs. Governor DeWine recently announced that an Executive Order will allow childcare programs to reopen, with new health and safety guidelines, as of May 31, 2020. Consistent with that order, a [May 22, 2020 amendment](#) to the March 14, 2020 [school building closure order](#) from Dr. Amy Acton included an exception for any Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool or school age child care program.

On May 29, 2020, a [Director of Health order was signed allowing programs providing childcare services to reopen](#), with exceptions. The order specifies that Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool and school age child care programs may reopen once the Ohio Department of Education has in effect rules that meet or exceed the newly adopted Ohio Department of Job and Family Services rules governing child care facilities and so long as all safety standards are met. The decision to re-open an Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool or School Age Child Care program is now a local one and does not require local health department pre-approval.

The rest of this letter outlines the requirements to re-open and operate a program which is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. Please note that this is a fluid situation and it is possible that reopening dates may change for Department licensed programs based on the timing of the rules. As additional guidance and information are finalized, we will communicate it as soon as we are able.

Preschool and school age child care programs are required to follow rules that meet or exceed rules set forth by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. To that end, the Ohio Department of Education is in process of preparing emergency rule updates to the Ohio Administrative Code. In each of these rules, language has been added directing Ohio Department of Education licensed programs to also follow the Director of Health's Order regarding facilities that provide child care services signed May 29, 2020 and the Department of Job and Family Services Emergency Rule on transitional child care centers (Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-12-02.2). The rule, when posted, will be [here](#). For more information about what will be required in the emergency rules (e.g., ratio and group size, cleaning, and dividers), go to the [Transitional Pandemic child care](#) page.

If you are currently operating under a [Temporary Pandemic Child Care License](#), and you were previously licensed by the Ohio Department of Education, you may continue

to operate under Pandemic licensure for ten days past May 31, 2020 or until the Department has adopted emergency rules, anticipated on June 9, 2020.

For Ohio Department of Education licensed programs who closed and were not operating under a Temporary Pandemic Child Care License, you may reopen no earlier than when the Department has adopted emergency rules, anticipated on June 9, 2020.

Programs with a Provider Agreement for [Publicly Funded Child Care](#) in place prior to March 25, 2020 will begin operating under that agreement on May 31, 2020.

For schools or other educational settings considering opening a preschool or school age child care program for the first time, you must follow the [steps required](#) to become licensed by the Department.

[Resources](#) from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services have been created to help ease the transition into re-opening and include information for program administrators trying to make the decision to reopen or not, teacher health and safety, and information to share with families. The Department has also published [resources for early learning programs](#) during the school-building closure.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in considering re-opening. Please reach out to our team of [Licensing Specialists](#) with any questions you may have.