

Subject: Emergency School Closing Rule - Licensed Programs Only

Date: Monday, May 4, 2020

Dear Child Care Provider,

In March, based on the statewide school closings in response to COVID-19, SCCR advised licensed programs that the emergency school closing rules could be used to allow programs to accommodate enrolled school-age children. As all schools will remain closed for the remainder of the school year, SCCR has received questions about whether licensed programs can continue to use these rules.

Based on the uncertainty of the availability of programs for school-age children this summer, all licensed programs may continue to use the emergency school closing rules during the time the state of emergency is in effect, currently until June 15, unless extended.

Points to remember:

- Child care programs utilizing this rule are expected to comply with any local stay-at-home orders, including those that restrict the number of children in a group.
- All licensed programs utilizing this rule are expected to adhere to the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC's guidance includes information about social distancing strategies, parent drop off and pick up, screening children upon arrival, caring for infants and toddlers, food preparation and meal service, etc. You can find the CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>
- The rules allow a provider to exceed the licensed capacity of the facility by 1/3. This 1/3 excess attendance for emergency school closings is not in addition to the 1/3 excess attendance that is allowed for overlap.
- The total number of children in care should not be more than 1/3 above the license capacity at any point in the day.
- Group child care homes and child care centers must maintain staff/child ratios during the time of the emergency school closing.
- The provider is required to maintain a written record including the dates of the emergency school closing, the reason for the closing (i.e. school closed due to COVID-19), and the number of children in care on each day of the emergency school closing.
- SCCR encourages each provider to ensure they have adequate square footage available to practice social distancing, while also practicing good hand hygiene, increased cleaning and sanitizing practices, having a policy to ensure no one who is ill is at the facility, and a daily screening process for children and staff. All these measures are important to decrease the spread of COVID-19.

If you have any questions about this issue, please contact your child care facility specialist. Thank you.