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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Beth Bye
Commissioner

DATE: July 6, 2020

TO: Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes and Family Child Care Homes

FROM: Debra L. Johnson, Director, Division of Licensing

RE: Coronavirus Memo #25
Inspections of Licensed Child Care Programs and License Exempt Programs

The OEC has not been performing inspections of licensed child care programs on a routine basis during the COVID-19 emergency. A waiver of this requirement was granted to postpone these inspections during the declared state of emergency. The OEC has however continued to perform inspections related to complaints involving serious health and safety concerns, inspections of programs seeking initial licensure and other necessary inspections.

As you know there have been enhanced requirements placed on child care programs pursuant to executive orders issued by the Governor in order to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These requirements are necessary to protect the health and safety of children and staff in these facilities. These efforts also support community health.

The purpose of this memo is to inform child care programs, under the oversight of the OEC, that licensing staff will begin conducting shortened inspections in the very near future. The focus of these inspections will be to ensure programs are complying with the enhanced requirements put in place by executive orders, subsequent OEC memos, and those licensing requirements that help to limit the spread of the COVID virus. These inspections will not be full inspections unless significant concerns are identified that warrant a review of all requirements. Prior to the visit, a licensing specialist will reach out to you to verify your open status and answer any questions you have regarding the enhanced requirements or anticipated visit. They will also review the safety precautions they are taking. These visits will not be scheduled.

Licensing staff will wear a face covering for the entire visit and will be wearing gloves or will wash their hands or sanitize with alcohol-based hand sanitizer before the visit begins. Licensing staff will take all efforts to keep a six foot distance from others in the facility and minimize the length of the visit.

The enhanced requirements that will be the focus of the visit include the following:

- Health screening
- Group sizes no greater than 14
- Face masks or cloth coverings worn by all staff both inside and outside (unless they can maintain 6 ft distancing while outside)
- Social distancing (e.g. groups of children are not coming within six feet of other groups even on the playground, consistent staff, staggered lunches, staggered arrival and departure times)

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- Regular hand washing by staff and children with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at key times
- All staff cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow and children are encouraged when appropriate to cover coughs and sneezes in the same manner
- Soiled tissues are disposed immediately after use
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices (e.g. between groups of children using common areas or equipment)
- Entry into program is limited

This list of enhanced requirements may be increased or relaxed over time due to the fluid nature of this pandemic and on site monitoring will change accordingly. Please visit the OEC website regularly to keep updated on the current requirements.

The inspection will also review the capacity, ratios and group size for centers/groups and the infant toddler restriction for family providers, reportable disease reports, procedures in case of illness and diapering. Any other serious concerns identified during the visit will be addressed.

We recognize the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presents for programs. We hope that our continued contact with providers is supportive so that programs may continue to provide critical services to children and families in a safe manner during this especially difficult time. Your ongoing cooperation is greatly appreciated.