



COVID-19 Provider Update 03/23/20

Dear Providers:

The health and safety of the children and families in our School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) programs along with the childcare teachers and directors is of utmost importance to the Early Learning Coalition of Indian River, Martin & Okeechobee Counties, the Department of Education (DOE) and the Office of Early Learning (OEL).

Child care providers have flexibility to make the business decision to stay open or temporarily close based on the needs of their community. Providers that choose to remain open are Child care providers who choose to remain open, we strongly recommend their adherence to the [CDC's March 15, 2020 Interim Guidance](#) by limiting students and employees to no more than 10 people in a single occupied space. These providers should also continue to implement health and safety routines and proper hygiene within their programs and adhere to CDC guidance which includes but is not limited to:

- Encouraging staff and parents to protect their personal health.
- Posting signs and symptoms of COVID-19: fever, cough, shortness of breath.
- Encouraging parents to stay home and keep children home when sick.
- Creating and maintaining heightened cleaning and sanitation procedures is of the utmost important; Clean surfaces that are frequently touched – things such as shared desks, toys, countertops, kitchen areas, electronics and doorknobs.
- Postponing or canceling field trips and meetings that require close contact.
- Staying up to date on developments in your community.
- Creating an emergency plan for possible outbreak.

In collaboration with DOE and OEL, we are committed to minimizing the fiscal impact to providers and families. These efforts include:

- Ensuring that all SR and VPK providers receive their funding – which means we will pay/reimburse for additional child absences when the provider is open and for those that occur during temporary closures.
- Eliminating the requirement for the remaining child screenings/assessments or provider program assessments for the 2019-20 program year.
- Extending timelines for provider improvement plans, reports and VPK calendars.

For families, we are:

- Suspending termination of SR eligibility.
- Extending the timelines for redetermination of SR eligibility.
- Waiving parent co-pays/fees for SR families with incomes above 100% of the poverty level.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us.

Early Learning Coalition of Indian River, Martin & Okeechobee Counties



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