

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Reopen Approach

Reopening Plan Template for Child Care Programs

June 12, 2020

On May 18, 2020, the Baker-Polito Administration announced Reopening Massachusetts, a comprehensive, phased plan to safely reopen the Massachusetts economy, get people back to work, and ease social restrictions while minimizing the health impacts of COVID-19. Child care and youth serving programs are a critical component in getting the Commonwealth back to work. In reopening, these programs require protocols to ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff. Massachusetts Child and Youth Serving Programs Reopen Approach: Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety applies to all child care programs that are seeking to operate during the phased plan of Reopening Massachusetts. Additional clarifications can be found in the accompanying FAQ and guidance documents.

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) has authorized that child care programs may begin the steps to reopen the week of June 15, 2020, provided they are able to plan to meet the Massachusetts Child and Youth Serving Programs Reopen Approach: Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety. All licensed and approved child care programs, including Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs (EECCPs), are required to submit their Reopening Plan prior to reopening to plan for how they will implement the Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety.

To begin the reopening process, all licensed and approved child care programs are asked to initiate the Reopening Transaction available in LEAD beginning the week of June 15, 2020. This transaction may be completed by a delegate of the licensee. As part of this transaction, programs provide information on their reopening including reopening date, schedule, group sizes, ratios, and square footage.

Within the Reopening Transaction, programs will submit the following documentation:

- **Reopening Plans:** Programs submit their Reopening Plans to share how they will comply with the Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety.
- **Attestation Form:** Programs complete an Attestation Form to attest that they will adopt the Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety as well as any other conditions on their license. The Attestation Form must be completed by the licensee and will be emailed out through LEAD following submission of this transaction.
- **Staff Checklist:** Programs upload their staff checklist to verify that required Health and Safety training has been completed.

EEC has developed the Reopening Plan Template for Child Care Programs to provide child care programs with an easy-to-use format for developing written plans for meeting the Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety.

Programs are encouraged to adjust or adapt the template for their specific use as they identify all the ways reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic might affect the program and develop a plan of action.



EEC asks that programs develop the following sub-plans:

- Program Operations Plan
- Cleaning Plan
- Monitoring and Response Plan
- Medication Administration Plan (If applicable)
- Transportation Plan (If applicable)

Throughout these plans, programs are asked to identify responsible individuals or assume responsibility for program changes to ensure the health and safety of children.

Templates for each sub-plan are included below, tailored to Group and School Age and Family Child Care. Should you have any questions while developing your program's Reopening Plan, please contact your EEC licensor.

About Flexibility in Planning

Please note that EEC intends these plans to help programs be prepared for any potential COVID-19 related emergencies that arise after reopening, ensuring that there are identified point people and protocols in place to address any anticipated concerns. In the review of these plans, EEC will work to identify areas where additional support or guidance is needed for an individual provider. The purpose of the plans is to support programs in the necessary steps to prepare safe, healthy environments for operating child care during the public health recovery.

We recognize that even the best plans require backup plans, and some identified individuals may not be available or require leave, or programs may need to adjust plans as they test practices in daily operation. Programs are encouraged to carry their planning exercises beyond this document and be prepared for other foreseeable challenges not included in this document.

As you form your plans, please remember to consider the leading principles of the Requirements, which are to stem the spread of the virus in the following ways:

1. Minimize the number of individuals with whom any potentially exposed individual is in close contact by limiting contact between groups (e.g., no adults moving in between classrooms or comingling of groups); and
2. Minimize prolonged close contacts between individuals within a group to the degree possible.

Further guidance will be released early next week to support programs in their reopening strategies, including:

- Required trainings for providers and educators – please note that these are very short and focused on key Health and Safety needs
- Guidance on the process to transition from emergency to traditional care
- Guidance on managing subsidies
- Other funding and program support information

Thank you,

Commissioner Sam