

MCF ChildcareBC Engagement MCF:EX Aug 7, 2020 Update

Dear Child Care Operators:

Thank you for your dedication to providing safe, affordable, and quality child care in your community during this extraordinary time. We want to acknowledge and thank you for the concerns, recommendations and questions shared by you and the families you care for while we look towards transitioning through Phase 3 of [BC's Restart Plan](#) and into our new normal.

We have worked closely with the child care stakeholders and the Provincial Child Care Council to understand the transitional concerns. As previously communicated, we want to confirm that the Temporary Emergency Funding (TEF) will be discontinued on Aug. 31, 2020 and child care operators should be prepared for K-12 students to return to school in September. We also recognize the difficulties that may arise as facilities revert to pre-pandemic funding levels.

It is our hope that most child care operators will be able to open, or if you are currently open, work towards full capacity over the next few months in order to support families across the province as they return to work. If you are currently closed, the provincial health officer has indicated that you can safely reopen at any time, at your licensed capacity, provided you adhere to the [Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#). Beginning Sept 1, you will no longer need to prioritize spaces for the children of essential service workers, and you can invite your regular families back to their previous space. If you have an essential service worker or other family that needs child care and your centre cannot accommodate them after offering spaces back to previously withdrawn families, we encourage you to inform them of the online [CCRR matching form](#), or suggest they contact their local Child Care Resource and Referral Centre directly.

We are aware that circumstances brought on by this pandemic may have created challenges and uncertainties related to staff availability, making the already challenging issue of recruitment and retention even more difficult. To support your efforts in this area, any surplus TEF for the months of July and August are to be used to provide a temporary wage enhancement or other non-monetary compensation, such as paid professional development, to Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) in your organization. For child care operators who do not employ ECEs, please refer to the [recently updated TEF guidelines](#) for appropriate use of TEF surplus funds.

While we realize that each operator will determine if they wish to open, here are answers to some of the questions and concerns you may have on transitioning through Phase 3 of BC's Restart Plan:

- Until Aug. 31, if you choose to remain closed, TEF will continue at your current rate for closed facilities; if you choose to re-open, you will be eligible for the higher rate of TEF.
- Facilities now open, who close in August as per their usual scheduling, will receive TEF in August at the closed rate of two times your facility's average monthly CCOF base funding.

- All operators who wish to continue receiving TEF until Aug. 31 will need to agree to the updated Modification Agreement in your July TEF sign-up form by July 31, or sign-up for August by Aug. 31. If you are already participating in TEF but you do not accept the updated Modification Agreement terms as required, you will revert to your regular Child Care Operating Funding Agreement effective July 1, 2020.
- As of Sept. 1, all providers in receipt of TEF will revert to their regular CCOF Base Funding.
- Staff to child ratios remain in place and unchanged. However, facilities may request approval for a temporary exemption in certain circumstances from their licensing officer.
- Any surplus TEF during the months of July and August must be used as a temporary wage enhancement or other non-monetary compensation, such as paid professional development, for ECEs, where ECEs are employed in your operations.
- Until Aug. 31, open facilities receiving TEF must continue to prioritize children of [essential service workers](#) (ESW's) and not charge parent fees for children who are temporarily withdrawn.
- Facilities participating in TEF that are at capacity with children of ESW's and cannot accommodate returning families who are not ESW's prior to Sept. 1, should refer these families to your local [CCRR](#) or to the [Child Care Request Form](#) for referral to available space in other facilities.
- Starting Sept. 1, children of ESW's will no longer benefit from priority spaces and facilities must offer spaces back to previously withdrawn families.

As parents of children in your care may have questions and concerns, here are some answers that you can provide during the transition:

Parents:

- If you temporarily withdrew your child from child care, you can choose to return to care at any time, if your there is an open space.
- Temporary Emergency Funding for child care facilities that prioritize spaces for essential service workers will end on Aug. 31.
- If you temporarily withdrew from child care, and our facility is currently at capacity with ESW's, you will regain your space on Sept. 1 or when we return to pre-pandemic enrollment.
- When you return to care, we can charge you the regular parent fee.
- If you choose to delay your return, we can still charge you to hold the spot.

ESW Parents:

- Temporary Emergency Funding for child care facilities will be discontinued on August 31.
- Child care facilities will no longer be able to prioritize children of ESW's beginning on Sept. 1.

- The province continues to work towards universal child care, and are working hard to create more affordable, accessible and quality child care.
- If you need child care, we encourage you to use the CCRR matching form or to contact your local CCRR directly.

Additionally, here are other useful resources:

- [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#)
- [WorkSafe BC Child care and day camps: Protocols for returning to operation](#)
- [TEF Guidelines](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#)
- [Remember to Wash your Hands](#)

All documents are available on the [Child Care Setting Practice Standards](#) and [TEF](#) websites.

If you have questions regarding the TEF program transition, please do not hesitate to call the Child Care Operating Team at 1 888 338-6622, option 2.

Sincerely,

Childcare BC

Stakeholder Engagement Team