



Exempt Child Services – COVID-19 Guidance

Purpose

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, there are many community based organizations and entities that have expressed an interest to meet the emergent child care needs in their respective locations. Community members are encouraged to reach out to Child Care Aware (CCA) and school districts to see who might already be offering care in their area. If needs are not currently being met within communities, this resource is intended to guide Exempt Child Services to safely care for children, keep staff employed and critical services to continue. The current pandemic has resulted in the need for safe and protective services for the children of our community's first responders and essential workers.

Legal Exemptions

RCW 43.216.010(2)(a)-(m) clarifies programs which are exempt from licensing. Some examples of child services that may be exempt from licensing:

- **RCW 43.216.010(2)(d):** Parents on a mutually cooperative basis exchange care of one another's children.
 - I will watch my neighbor's three children while he works his graveyard shift, and he watches my two children when he gets home from work at 7:30 a.m. until noon.
- **RCW 43.216.010(2)(e):** Nursery schools that are engaged primarily in early childhood education with preschool age children (ages 30 months to 5 years) and in which no child is enrolled on a regular basis for more than four hours per day.
 - I run a 3.5-hour preschool group from my home.
- **RCW 43.216.010(2)(f):** Schools, including boarding schools, that are engaged primarily in education, operate on a definite school year schedule, follow a stated academic curriculum, and accept only school age children.
 - Local elementary school operates full day, multi-age curriculum in their gymnasium.
- **RCW 43.216.010(2)(g):** Seasonal camps of three months' or less duration engaged primarily in recreational or educational activities.
 - A 2-month long Art Club that meets at in my local community center.
 - An 8-week long Children's Fitness Club housed at my church gymnasium.
 - A 3-month long Wilderness Camp operated from local parks.
- **RCW 43.216.010(2)(j):** A program operated by any unit of local, state or federal government.
 - A camp or program operated by County Parks and Recreation services.
 - A service operated by the City Police Department or Washington State Patrol

Process

- Recommendation to contact your local city building code inspectors and fire district to ensure you are meeting local ordinance requirements
- Consult with your legal and insurance representatives to discuss your plans
- Email dcyf.best4kids@dcyf.wa.gov for consultation and support referrals
- Contact Imagine at subpool@imaginewa.org and cc Marie Keller marie@imaginewa.org for staffing supports
- Consider assessing the program needs by reviewing [COVID-19 Exempt Child Services Assessment](#)

- Consider a virtual tour videography to keep contact with others at a minimum. Recommendations may be found in the [COVID-19 Virtual Tour Videography List](#)
- Recommendation to utilize COVID-19 screening and interview process, see [COVID-19 Visitor Screening Checklist](#)
- Encourage participants involved in direct care of children to enroll in Health and Safety trainings. Participants can also access the DCYF WAC 110-300 modules via the training portal once an account has been set up and a STARS ID created
 - The participant will need to have a STARS ID – this can be created when a MERIT account is registered. To register, visit MERIT at apps.dcyf.wa.gov/MERIT/Home/SignInRegister
 - Once a STARS ID is assigned, the participant will create a user account in the DCYF Student Portal at dcyftraining.com
 - In the Student Portal, a list of courses is organized into categories alphabetically. The categories can be expanded by selecting the red + (or -) symbol to access the course titles.
- Recommendation to utilize the emergency licensing regulations for program guidance found at dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/rules/Emergency.Child.Care.Licenses.pdf
- Recommendation to review the emergency license process for consideration and additional program supports by emailing emergencychildcare@dcyf.wa.gov

Resources

- DOH: COVID-19 [Guidance on health, cleaning and safety for childcare settings](#)
- DCYF: [Guidance on early learning, ECEAP, health and safety and other topics](#)
- CCA is equipped to assist families in finding child care nearby your home or workplace. Visit childcareawarewa.org/families/#whotocall or call **1-800-446-1114** and their team will help you search for alternative child care
- School's Out Washington (SOWA): schoolsoutwashington.org
- Utilize the Family, Friends and Neighbor (FFN) program. Visit dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/ffn or call 1-866-482-4325
- Use your natural supports to help provide temporary care for your children
- Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus: npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus
- Helping Children Cope with Emergencies: cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html