

Guidance on child care facilities and schools

Texas Health and Human Services – 3/20/20

On March 19, Gov. Greg Abbott issued an executive order ordering that all schools shall temporarily close. This executive order does NOT apply to child care facilities including a day care center, group day care home, or family home. All child care facilities should continue to follow the guidance from HHSC Child Care Licensing (see [COVID-19 Guidance to Child Care Providers](#)), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

For up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the CDC and DSHS websites.

Texas Health and Human Services – 3/16/20

Dear Child Care Provider:

Based on state law, federal guidance, and Governor Abbott's disaster declaration, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is updating requirements for day care operations to assist them in protecting children in their care from COVID-19.

HHSC Child Care Licensing (CCL) urges all current providers to immediately implement the following guidance, which is consistent with the new requirements:

- Prohibit any person except the following from accessing an operation: operation staff; persons with legal authority to enter, including law enforcement officers, HHSC Child Care Licensing staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services staff; professionals providing services to children; children enrolled at the operation; and parents who have children enrolled and present at the operation.
- Before allowing entry into the operation, screen all of the individuals listed above, including taking the temperature of each person upon arrival at the operation each day, and deny entry to any person who meets any of the following criteria:
 - A temperature of 100.4°F or above;
 - Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and low-grade fever;
 - In the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19; is under investigation for COVID-19; or is ill with a respiratory illness; or
 - In the previous 14 days has travelled internationally to countries with widespread, sustained community transmission. For updated information on affected countries, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/travelers/index.html>.
- Require pick up and drop off of children outside of the operation, unless you determine that there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter an operation.
- Ensure that each child is provided individual meals and snacks. Do not serve family style meals.

CCL also will be issuing Frequently Asked Questions as early as possible next week. In the meantime, you can send any questions you may have to the licensing standards comments mailbox at MSC@hsc.state.tx.us.

Please remember to sanitize your operations, wash hands diligently, and have staff members stay home if they are sick. We also are encouraging providers to contact CCL with *any* questions you might have or technical assistance you might need. We recognize the extraordinary challenge this situation poses to your operations and pledge to offer our support, including any necessary regulatory flexibility, to help you protect the health and safety of the children in your care.

Sincerely,

Jean Shaw
Associate Commissioner
HHSC Child Care Regulation