

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES CIRCULAR

Date: June 3, 2021

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID-19: 2021-27r(2) *Revised information is in bold*

To: Early Learning and Child Care Facilities

Subject: Parent Fee Support for Licensed Centres and Child Care Homes

Type: Policy

Procedure

Effective Date: Immediately

The Department of Families has been regularly communicating with the early learning and child care sector and listening to the pandemic-related challenges and concerns you have shared.

The Department of Education recently announced that kindergarten and school-aged children in Winnipeg and Brandon **as well as the Red River Valley and Garden Valley school divisions will be remote learning until the end of the school year**, in Dauphin until June 9 and **in the Western School Division from June 8 to 18**. Service providers have advised that this announcement, combined with the directive by public health that children who are remote learning at home may not attend child care facilities, will cause increased financial pressures on licensed centres and child care homes due to the loss of parent fees.

In response to these pressures, effective Wednesday, May 12th, licensed centres and child care homes will be able to apply for additional funding support to offset the loss of parent fees for kindergarten and school-age children.

Eligibility

All licensed centres and family/group child care homes.

Application

Facilities must send an invoice to ELCCFinance@gov.mb.ca identifying the spaces where parent fees were lost and at what rate (actuals). This information will be compared against the number of licensed spaces in the facility. In addition, each facility must sign the attached declaration form to certify that:

- The information provided is true and accurate for the facilities spaces, taking into consideration their utilization.

- The facility has not received parent fees and if they have, that they have reimbursed the parent fees for the period for which they are applying for additional funding support.

Please note that the declaration includes a provision that states that any information to be found untrue will result in a recovery of the funding support.

In order to provide the most recent information for families on available spaces, facilities are encouraged to update their information on the Manitoba Child Care Search tool at: www.eswchildcare.ca

For the latest provincial public health information on COVID-19, visit: www.manitoba.ca/covid19

The Early Learning and Child Care Program continues to monitor and update resources related to COVID-19 and child care in Manitoba. For operational updates and directives, visit: Manitoba Families COVID-19 Notices and Circulars: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/covid-circulars.html>.

Thank you again for the ongoing commitment of the child care sector to providing quality care, while also ensuring that precautions are taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This is a challenging time and we greatly appreciate your efforts.

If you have any questions, please email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca or call 204-945-0776 or 1-888-213-4754.

Thank you,

Christy Holnbeck
Assistant Deputy Minister
Child and Youth Services Division

Michelle Stephen-Wiens
Director
Early Learning and Child Care Program

Attachments

Early Learning Child Care

3-777 Portage Ave
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N3

**Declaration of Child Care Services
for the Parent Fee Reimbursement Payment**

We continue to appreciate the ongoing commitment of the child care sector to providing quality care, while ensuring that precautions are taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We would like to extend our sincere thanks for your efforts throughout this difficult time by providing a parent fee reimbursement payment for loss of revenue during the remote learning period at schools.

Re: Facility Name:

I certify the following information to be true and accurate:

- Has been available to provide child care services for school age children during the remote learning period for schools in my community (no earlier than May 12)
- Reimbursement requested is based on the actual child attendance for revenue not received (actual utilization)
- Information provided on the attached invoice is true and accurate
- Did not charge parent fees to families not receiving services during this time period
- Will return any parent fees charged to families wherever services was not provided

Printed Name of Authorized signing representative: _____

Signature of Authorized signing representative: _____

Date: _____

Email to ELCCFinance@gov.mb.ca

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES - EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE
FUNDING FOR PARENT FEES FOR BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

GENERAL

Q: What is the purpose of the new Parent Fees Grant?

- Public health directed that students in remote learning at home, not be allowed to attend child care facilities. This is expected to result in a decrease in the use of before and after school programming. There are 10,400 school age spaces in licensed child care facilities in Brandon and Winnipeg.
- All licensed child care facilities can continue to operate during remote learning. This includes centres, nursery schools and family child care homes. The restriction does not prohibit child care facilities located in schools from operating.
- The funding is to support licensed early learning and child care facilities and their families with school age children, who are affected by the public health directive, to move schools in Brandon, Dauphin, Winnipeg and the Red River Valley, Garden Valley and Western school divisions to remote learning.
- If other regions or schools move to remote learning, facilities in the affected areas can also access this funding.
- The Department of Families will provide licensed facilities with a grant equal to the parent fees for the children who are not allowed to attend their before and after school programs as a result of the move to remote learning during this period.
- Without the grant, parents would be paying for spaces that they are not using. If parent fees were waived, facilities would suffer a loss of revenue that they depend on to deliver early learning and child care services.
- If any regions or schools remain on or move to remote learning, funding will continue to be available.

FOR PROVIDERS

Q: How much is the grant? As a child care provider, how do I apply for the grant?

- Parents pay a daily fee up to \$10.30 for a school age space in ELCC facilities. The department is proposing to cover the parent fees for the vacant spaces during this time (beginning May 12).
- Effective May 12th, all licensed facilities providing kindergarten and school-age child care will be able to apply for additional funding support to offset the loss of parent fees.
- To apply for the grant, facilities must send an invoice to the ELCC program, identifying the spaces that parent fees were lost and at what rate. The department will verify the information and the facility will be asked to sign a declaration form to certify that the information that was provided was true, and that the facility has not received parent fees and if they have, that they have reimbursed the parent fees for the month of May and/or June.

- The declaration will state that any information that is found to be untrue will result in a recovery of the grant.

Q: Will child care facilities still receive their full operating grants, even if the number of children accessing services drops?

- All child care facilities have received their full operating grants until the end of June. This announcement does not change or effect existing operating grants to child care providers.

Q: Will child care facilities still receive subsidy payments for kindergarten and school-age children that are not accessing child care services during the closure?

- Child care subsidies are considered the same as parent fees and will be covered by the grant. Effective May 12th, all licensed facilities providing licensed kindergarten and school-age child care will be able to apply for additional funding support to offset the loss of parent fees, including subsidy.
- The Department of Families will provide facilities with a grant equal to the parent fees for the children who are not allowed to attend their before and after school programs as a result of the move to remote learning at home during this period.

Q: Can child care centres take more kindergarten and school-aged children than for what they are licensed?

- At the onset of COVID-19 to assist families, a condition was placed on every child care centre licence. This condition allows all licensed centres to enroll any age of child even if they are not licensed to care for them.
- Staffing ratios would need to be maintained, but ELCC is exempting some of the staff qualification regulations and natural light requirements to assist in the provision of child care.
- For example, a school age centre may now care for a mixture of up to four infants, preschool and school-age children as long as they do not exceed their licensed spaces or the number of children allowed as per the health orders.

FOR PARENTS

Q: My child attends Kindergarten (1/2 day, full day, and every other day). If they are in remote learning, are they still able to attend their child care facility on the days when they are not in school?

- Public Health has advised that only kindergarten students of critical service workers and other children that are in-school learning can attend child care on the days that they are not in school. Kindergarten students that are remote learning at home cannot attend child care.
- As per previous directives, only children who are receiving in-school learning can attend child care when they are not receiving schooling (e.g. before and after school, alternate days not in class for kindergarten students, in-service days).

Q: My child attends Nursery School within a school division, can they attend a child care facility?

- Nursery Schools operated by a school division are part of the school system and will follow the directives laid out for this sector.

Q: Will I still need to pay my child care facility for a space that I am not using during this closure?

- No, the Department of Families will provide facilities with a grant equal to the parent fees for the children who are not allowed to attend their before and after school programs as a result of the move to remote learning during this period.
- Facilities will apply directly to the Department of Families for these grants.

Q: My child is NOT remote learning, how do I find a school-aged child care space?

- Manitoba families and licensed child care facilities are encouraged to use the Manitoba Child Care Search tool developed to support the COVID-19 response and the provincial approach to restoring safe services.
- The Manitoba Child Care Search is a new user-friendly tool that provides the flexibility and support for direct contact between families and child care facilities, and lists up-to-date information about licensed child care vacancies, hours and locations. The tool encourages direct connections with families to facilities to discuss needs and plan for enrolment. To find and locate licensed child care providers, visit: www.eswchildcare.ca