

ECE Provider Conference Call #6
June 18, 2020
6:00 pm

The call began at 6:00 p.m. by the conference operator. The operator informed the callers to press *1 if they wished to ask a question and # if they wished to remove their question from the queue.

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Childcare Licensing (OCCL), DSCYF: Betty Gail Timm began the meeting by explaining that Executive Director Kim Krzanowski of the Office of Early Learning, who typically facilitates these calls, was away due to a family emergency and would not be participating in tonight's call. Betty Gail explained that representatives for DOE, OCCL, and DHSS were on the call to provide updates and to answer questions received prior to the call. Also, there will be a question and answer period from callers. One thing that will be different tonight is the way in which we take callers' questions. Tonight the operator will state the last four digits of the caller's phone number so they will know it is their turn to ask their question.

Also, you will have the opportunity to ask one question, and then the operator will mute your line. If you have a follow-up question, you may call back in and we will take calls if time allows. If your question is not answered tonight, you are always welcome to reach out to your licensing specialist. We will be happy to assist you or get back to you with a response.

Kimberly Klein, Director, Director of Finance, DOE: Kim provided the following reminders regarding Enhanced Reimbursement (ER):

- June's application is open as of June 15
- When submitting applications, you are submitting with your status, either open or closed and paying or closed/not paying staff as of June 14
- Use enrollment figures as June 15
- Enrollment figure is any POC authorized children plus any private paying clients as of June 15
- You will be receiving a confirmation call from University of DE (DE Stars) next week for any applications submitted this week
- If you made a mistake or need to make a correction on your application, email enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us or you can correct any mistake during the confirmation call. Also, please do not call the cell phone of someone who is calling you to confirm payment. These are personal cell numbers.
- The State of Delaware accounting system will be down for the close out of the fiscal year (starting June 25) for two weeks and we will not be able to process payments during this time
- Any applications submitted this week will be in the queue for confirmation call and processing
- If you receive your confirmation call on Monday June 22 or Tuesday June 23, please respond quickly so we can confirm and process your payment by June 24, otherwise we will not be able to process payment until July 9
- Only submit one application per month per site, otherwise it could cause a delay in payment processing

The question was asked if ER will be available in July and August. At this point we do not know the status of ER for July and August. However, it is now being paid for June.

OCCL Update

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Childcare Licensing, DSCYF

Betty Gail noted that there has been a lot of information that has come out from OCCL lately. She reminded all providers, whether open the entire time or newly opened, that they have to develop and keep a COVID-19 plan on file. They can use the template OCCL provided or create their own. It does not need to be submitted to OCCL, but providers must have one.

Also, everyone should have received an email late this afternoon about interns being alone with children in certain instances and about provisions made regarding fingerprinting and the inability to walk-in to get fingerprints taken.

- Staff with a valid intern qualifications certificate issued by Delaware First, who are at least 18 years of age, have at least one year of experience at the child care facility at which they are currently working, and have been determined eligible as a result of their comprehensive background check by the Criminal History Unit, **may be alone with children ages three years and older**. Documentation of age, experience, and eligibility must be on site in the employee's file. However, staff qualifications for those working with infants and toddlers remain the same as required by DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers. Aides may not be alone with children at any time. We hope this will make it easier for programs to function.
- A new staff member must have a **scheduled fingerprinting appointment** with Delaware State Police before the start of employment. This information shall be placed in the employee's file. **The staff member with a fingerprinting appointment may begin work while being supervised at all times** by a person who has completed the background check process and been determined eligible and qualified at least as an early childhood assistant teacher or school-age site assistant. No staff member may be alone with children until after DSCYF's Criminal History Unit reviews the comprehensive background check and determines their eligibility.

Betty Gail provided answers to these questions received before the call and noted that the answer to these would be coming out later this week in a FAQ document:

Q. If a child care worker cannot wear a mask for a health reason, do they need a doctor's note and can they still provide care?

A: If a worker states he/she has a medical condition that makes wearing a face covering difficult, the individual does not have to wear a face covering. Details regarding any medical condition are not required nor is documentation from a health care provider required. If they cannot wear a face covering, you may wish to require more frequent temperature checks or other means to ensure the staff person is healthy. Also, perhaps the worker would consider wearing a face shield instead of a mask, as this shouldn't restrict breathing.

Q: Can centers take school-age children on buses to locations that are open and that are practicing social distancing? How can children be safely transported?

A: Field trips are not expressly prohibited. Maintaining social distancing is the issue in taking children to other locations. Unless each family provides their own transportation, maintaining social distancing during the transporting of children is an issue as well as maintaining social distancing while at the site.

Public Health has recommended that when transporting children on a school bus, for example, there should be one child per seat or alternating seats if possible. The proximity when being transported would increase the importance of masks being worn by those children that can wear them.

Drivers and other adults on the bus must be masked, hand sanitizer should be available, and the seats and other contact surfaces should be disinfected between groups. If one group is using the bus for a round trip, then Public Health recommends assigned seats and the bus be cleaned after the round trip is complete.

Q: Can summer youth workers (youth participating in a work program with the City of Wilmington or City of Dover, for example) work in child care this summer? These individuals have a regular schedule and attend the child care facility daily. A rotating series of workers would not participate in the program. Some child care facilities have 1-2 workers and it is the same people each day at the facility.

A: Yes, the individuals must meet the age requirements in DELACARE Regulations, must be the individuals in the same group setting, and daily health screenings must be performed before the youth workers are admitted to the building. It is not permitted if the program wants to supply a series of different youth workers to the program. Consistency is required.

Q: The requirements say no outside contractors. I need an electrical inspection. If I take all the kids outside, will that be okay?

A: The child care area would have to be properly cleaned and disinfected before the children are permitted to return inside the child care facility. If the electrical inspection cannot be conducted outside of child care hours, then OCCL will grant an extension for you to get the inspection later.

Q: Do I need to wear my face covering when I am outside with the children?

A: If you are in close contact with the children, interacting with them, helping them on play equipment, then yes. If you are off to the side, maintaining social distancing while outdoors with children, then you may remove the face covering. However, you must have it with you so you can put it in place when you are close to children.

Q: If the children are napping and the provider is more than 6 feet away (cleaning, sitting, etc.), can they take their face covering off?

A: According to guidance provided by Public Health, yes, in general, if the provider is able to maintain a six foot distance, the mask may be removed. Nap time is a good time for removal or a break from the mask since the children are more stationary, but Public Health would encourage providers to have the mask at the ready to be put on if needed to respond to a child.

Q: I perform the health screening for staff and children each day as required. Do I need to record and keep this information?

A: This can be a verbal screening. No written documentation is needed. There is no expectation that the screening results will be documented in writing in some way, unless the provider wishes to do so.

Q: If a program received an extension to their regular license expiration date (due to the COVID-19 restrictions) and the staff take PD training during the extension period, will the PD be counted as hours toward their "typical" license year that ends in 2021, or will it be wrapped into the PD hours that they were required to take for the license year that just ended & was extended?

A: This year because of the license extensions, a family child care provider or center owner or administrator may choose in which licensing year the training taken during the extension will

count. This decision will apply to all staff in a center—individual staff members may not count the training toward different licensing years. Simply inform your licensing specialist in which year your training taken during the extension should apply.

Q. For children whose physicals/immunizations were due during this time, do we push to have their families complete them before returning? Would this be considered as us having a mandate that could expose the children and their families if they are expected to do to doctors' offices if they are not sick?

A. If convenient for the family, they should get them done. If not, there will be an extension on physicals.

Tiyana Prince, Co-Administrator for Purchase of Care, DHSS:

- Providers who are not receiving listserv emails should request to be added by emailing POCResource@delaware.gov.
 - Please check junk/spam inbox and be sure to allow emails to be received by your server from Delaware.gov email addresses
- June 2020 Billing Instructions will be distributed to all providers via the POC Provider Listserv
 - POC Payments
 - DSS will continue covering the cost of parent co-pays for the month of June
 - Current Emergency Sites and sites that open in June will be being paid 100% of June enrollment. June Enrollment is defined as June POC authorized children at 100% attendance
 - Closed Sites paying full staff – are being paid 100% of February enrollment
 - Closed Sites not paying staff – are being paid at 20% of February enrollment
 - June payments are tentatively scheduled to be issued on July 5, 2020
 - Please allow a few business days for the payment to process
 - Please check with your bank to see if there are any pending transactions that have not posted to your account
- July 2020 Billing Instructions
 - Previously opened sites and sites that open no later than July 6, 2020: paid based on Enrollment (POC authorized children paid at 100% attendance)
 - Sites not opened by July 6, 2020: Providers paid based on actual attendance
 - DSS Pays Copays
- August 2020
 - Providers paid based on attendance
 - Parents responsible for copays
- The names and MCI# of children who are scheduled to expire in June or July should be emailed to the POCResource@delaware.gov for the children to be renewed
- License Exempt Summer Camp Providers
 - Beginning on June 15, 2020 with Phase II of the state's re-opening plan, Summer Camps may begin operating. Please refer to your POC summer camp packet for a checklist of requirements for participation in the POC program
 - Any staff members who took the required health and safety training last year will only need to take the refresher training

- Providers have been able to access the refresher course on The Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood website at <https://dieecpd.org/> since June 9th
- All new staff members, will need to complete all required health and safety trainings that are on the check list in the packet. These trainings can be accessed on the Delaware PD Now website at <https://depdnow.com/> or The Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood website at <https://dieecpd.org/>
- Also, at least one member of your staff must be certified to administer medication and must be on site at all times during operating hours
 - Training can be accessed on the American Academy of Pediatrics website at, <https://shop.aap.org/medication-administration-in-early-care-and-education-settings/> (Note: The link provided here is not the training for licensed providers. The online training link for providers will be available soon)
- ***Please note that the content provided in these trainings does not reflect the additional health and safety requirements as set forth by the Department of Public Health due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We strongly encourage you to continue to consult with the POC team and other state resources, such as the COVID-19 State Website, for the most up-to-date information.

Tiyana noted that anyone with any questions can contact their office or send an email to the POCResource@delaware.gov mailbox.

Jamie Mack, Environmental Health Director, Division of Public Health, DHSS: Jamie noted he was happy to work with childcare and other businesses during these challenging times. He was happy to answer any questions related to public health.

Questions and Answers

(Some questions edited for ease of reading; apologies for any wrong name)

Q. Coco – When doing a verbal health screening with parents, if they answer yes to cough, fever, etc., does that mean they can't attend that day?

A. Betty Gail – It depends on the answer they are giving you. I suggest you see [guidance](#) that has been provided. Sometimes they would need a doctor's note that it is not related to COVID-19.

Jamie – The questions are a verbal screening tool, but the provider must dig deeper. Providers may recommend further investigation by a health provider.

Betty Gail added that once it is determined what it is (allergy, etc.), then you don't have to refer them to the doctor each time.

Q. Tammy – If a coworker of a parent tests positive for COVID-19, and the parent is asymptomatic, would she have to quarantine her son for two weeks?

A. Jamie – No. The parent's employer would look at those who have been in close contact with the positive person. Therefore, the parent may have been exposed, but the child was not. The child is not recommended for further investigation or any quarantine.

Q. Tecola – If an intern was able to be in all rooms in Phase I, then why can't they be in Phase II? This would help us a lot if they could be.

A. Betty Gail – Initially interns were able to be with children because we were unsure how many staff would be available. Since learning that staff is returning to work, we want less experienced individuals working with older children and more experienced staff working with younger children.

Q. Crystal and Angela – Are parents not allowed to enter the building in Phase II?

A. Jamie – If there is a foyer area or common hallway not physically a part of the child care area, it is acceptable to have parents there. The transfer of children can occur in this area. This is a reasonable accommodation. This area must be cleaned per DPH guidelines.

Q. Carrette – How many cases are active in child care centers and family child care homes?

A. Jamie – We do not have that specific data, but we are working to keep the number low. It does not appear that there are any spikes in cases in childcare centers at this time.

Q. Caller – For licensed facilities, are summer camp programs allowed?

A. Betty Gail – Licensed facilities with summer camps must meet licensing standards. Contact OCCL for further guidance.

Q. Caller – Is pool use allowed?

A. Jamie – DPH has issued guidance on this, and with social distancing and proper cleaning, this is acceptable. Jamie to provide to Betty Gail who will send out to listservs.

Q. Caller – Note: There was a question that did not appear to get recorded – it appears to be about ER.

A. Kim – When payment is made it is for entire month of June. The State of Delaware’s accounting system will be down for two weeks for the end of fiscal year close out. The system gives us a report on Mondays for the previous week’s applications. University of Delaware will make confirmation calls. At the end of each day, those complete applications are given to DOE and payments are processed. The last day to process payments will be June 25. Any application submitted by midnight on Saturday, June 20, 2020 will be in the queue to receive payment. Any application not received by June 20 will have payment slightly delayed.

Q. Dr. Vincent – What are the requirements in place for mixed age groups?

A. Betty Gail – You cannot mix infants and toddlers with older children. However, if you maintain a stable group (of 3-4 year olds), you could have that. This cannot change from day to day. The goal is to maintain a stable group of children. She encouraged him to contact the licensing specialist to further discuss the question.

Q. Tammy – Are we allowed to consolidate our two 4-year old classrooms at the end of the day, if maintaining proper teacher/child ratios?

A. Betty Gail – Groups are not to be combined even at end of day.

Q. Caller – For planning purposes, do we have any idea when ER will be ending?

A. Kim – We continue to have discussions at the state level, but we do not have a final decision at this is time. Additional info will be coming out in near future.

Q. Caller – When starting as an emergency care site, we were told that if we had a staff member tested positive, we were to notify all staff and families with children who had been in contact with that staff member. Is this still the directive?

A. Jamie – You should notify employees who may be working with the staff member who tested positive, as well as the families of any children within the positive employee’s classroom. It would be your choice to notify others in the center.

Q. Janet – With an in-home child care consisting of an infant, 2 yr. old, 3 yr. old and 4 yr. old, can the children be combined in one classroom?

A. Betty Gail – Yes, you can. An in-home child care is different from a center child care.

Q. Tammy – While we are currently working under new ratios, when will it change back?

A. Betty Gail – We do not have any information when ratios will be changing. If you have a valid reason to request a change in group size, you can contact OCCL to request a waiver.

Q. Christina – There is an issue with POC. School-age children with half day authorizations need to be changed to full-day. Parents are being told by caseworkers that that is not the case. The reality is that when kids are absent they are only being paid for half day not a full day.

A. Jackie – The system will automatically update these children on June 22 for July. Jackie will check on the status for June.

Q. Christina - Can a center who has a staff member who tested positive for COVID-19, be able to staff using interns with less than one year experience if requested through a variance, to ensure adequate staffing?

A. Betty Gail – I encourage you to contact the OCCL office so we can gather additional information and answer your question.

As there were no additional questions, Betty Gail closed the meeting by thanking providers for the work they are doing in keeping children safe and keeping our state open and operating. Please reach out to your licensing specialist or any of the agencies on the call this evening with questions. We are all here to support you. Thank you.