

March 17, 2020

Important Updates for Parents Regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic and Child Care

AS of this morning, child care programs licensed by The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) can remain open. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, changes in child care rules are being implemented to allow programs to meet the needs of the families impacted by the pandemic and school closings. An Executive Order was signed last week by Governor Mike DeWine that includes changes in Ratios and Group Sizes for Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes.

These are temporary measures to accommodate the need for child care with limited resources and staff. Starting Point recommends that child care providers maintain their current ratios and implement these changes only if it becomes necessary.

Publically Funded Child Care (PFCC)

In addition to child care rule changes, PFCC rules have been amended temporarily. This includes the following changes for children that are enrolled and received PFCC:

1. Increase the number of absent days from ten days per six months to twenty days per six months.
2. Create twenty-one pandemic days per fiscal year. A pandemic day is a day the provider is closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In-home aides may not claim pandemic days.

<http://emanuals.jfs.ohio.gov/ChildCare/ChildCareCenter/CCCMTL/CCCMTL-22.stm>

Trusted News & Updates

Starting Point recommends the following sources of information to keep your family informed:

1. The Ohio Department of Health: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/>
 2. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
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There are so many things you can do during this time at home...you are only limited to your imagination! Check out this checklist for fun activities to do at home:

https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/69817818-5d52-4577-9b04-c7a4ca46d367/Family+Activities+to+Do+During+COVID-19+%281%29.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_M1HGGIK0N0J000QO9DDDDM3000-69817818-5d52-4577-9b04-c7a4ca46d367-n3EGBWd

Talking to Children about Illness and Coronavirus

Keeping information age-appropriate, correcting misinformation and reassuring children they are safe are all ways to help ease the anxiety they may be experiencing right now.

PBS offers this great article about talking with your children about the current pandemic as well as a list of educational videos of their favorite characters to practice healthy habits:

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

Looking for Child Care? STARING POINT CAN STILL HELP!

Child Care options are changing by the minute, but we will do our best to help you find what you need.

Call us directly at: 216-575-0061 or Toll Free 1-800-880-0971

Or visit our website: http://starting-point.org/families_care.html#findchildcare

Need Help?

Get assistance for your social service needs 24 hours a day, by calling 2-1-1 or chat online at:

<https://www.211oh.org/#>

Benefits Assistance/Job and Family Service Updates:

Ashtabula County: Encouraging online applications, visit www.benefits.ohio.gov for more information or reach by phone: (440) 998-1110/ (440) 994-1234

Cuyahoga County: Beginning March 17, 2020, Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS) is encouraging the public to use self-service options, instead of in-person interactions to apply for public benefits and update existing cases to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). This decision is based on guidance from national, state and local officials to discourage public gatherings and encourage “social distancing”. CJFS is encouraging the public to use the [Ohio Benefits Self-Service Portal](#) to apply for **food, medical, cash and childcare assistance** as well as make changes or submit documents on existing food, medical and cash assistance cases.

All CJFS Neighborhood Family Service Center locations have a **Safe and Secure Drop Box** to submit documents such as applications and verifications. To submit applications and documents for the **Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC)** program and childcare application documents, please use the designated drop box the Virgil E. Brown building.

Geauga County: During the COVID-19 pandemic, Geauga Job and Family Services is conducting business via phone, email or online. Phone: (440)-285-9141 / Fax: (440)-286-6654 / Email: info@geaugajfs.org

Lake County: Lake County has issued guidance to access services electronically:

<https://www.lakecountyohio.gov/lcojfs/>

To apply, renew or report changes to food, medical, cash, or childcare assistance:

Online: www.benefits.ohio.gov

By Phone: 1-844-640-OHIO (6446)



Website: <http://www.starting-point.org>

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