March 15, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Governor Sununu issued executive orders on Friday, March 13 and Sunday, March 15, found here: https://www.governor.nh.gov. The executive orders include the immediate closure of all public and non-public schools through April 3, 2020. They also include the ability for the Child Care Licensing Unit to waive certain licensing requirements in order to expand the necessary services you provide. The department encourages childcare and after school programs to remain open, if you feel you can safely do so, and we will work with you through this difficult time.

If you are able to safely increase the number of children you serve, the Department plans to expedite these requests. Please send them to the CCLU Office email: ccluoffice@dhhs.nh.gov or call our main office at 271-9025. Please include specific information, such as:

- The number of additional children you wish to accept.
- What classrooms will be over capacity.
- Whether the additional children will exceed the program’s overall capacity.
- Whether the child to staff ratio will be maintained or not.

Any waivers granted will be on a case by case basis, in consultation with the State Fire Marshall, and will be for the 3-week period ending April 3, 2020.

It is extremely important that you prevent the spread of illness in your childcare program by ensuring proper hygiene, cleaning practices, and hand washing. In addition, we encourage programs to screen children and staff for illness every day on arrival. Attached is a screening tool the department provided to long-term care facilities which can easily be adapted to screen children and staff, along with a sign for the entrance of your program.

Do not allow children or employees showing signs and symptoms of illness to enter the childcare center. If a child or employee shows signs and symptoms of illness, please send them home immediately and contact 211 for guidance. In addition, follow recommendations from the CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html

We understand that this is a difficult time for you and many others throughout the state. Thank you so much for the work that you do, and I appreciate your patience as we work through how to support you and the children and families your serve during this state of emergency.

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