

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF LAKE COUNTY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Should I close my program?

This is an independent business decision. Any closures currently are voluntary. You would be notified by the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) or Department of Children and Families (DCF) in the event closures were mandated. In the meantime, please keep in mind that many families are still depending on childcare in order to work. Especially consider your families who work in health care, first responders, etc.

Q. Will I still be paid if we close?

1. You will be paid for active enrollments in SR and VPK unless a child transfers to a different provider. As long as the child remains enrolled at your site, you will be paid.
2. The Temporary Closure Rules are being waived to allow for longer closures
3. Parents do not need to sign in/out if you are closed
4. All SR parent fees will be waived, effective April 1.

Q. Will I still be paid if a child has an excessive number of absences?

1. You will be paid for active enrollments in SR and VPK regardless of attendance.
2. First, communicate with your coalition to inform them of any temporary closures that occurred in March before attendance is submitted.
3. The absence rules for SR and VPK have been temporarily waived. That means you don't have to worry about the 10 days for SR and 20% for VPK.
4. You will not be required to collect documentation for absences.
5. If children are absent, you do not need sign-in/out
6. All SR parent fees will be waived, effective April 1.

Q. What do I mark on the attendance?

School Readiness

1. If you are open and the child is absent, mark absences in the Provider Services Portal per usual. Indicate A with reason "Absence due to Disaster"; comments and a documentation are not required. The system will allow you to mark more than 10 absences.

2. If you are closed due to COVID-19, you should report closures to Joy Flynn at jflynn@elclc.org. ELC staff will enter the closure into the system. COVID closure days will be indicated with an *.
3. When your attendance rosters are correct, submit the completed attendance roster to the coalition in April. Note: It may take some time for ELC to enter closure days.
4. Also submit any completed sign-in/out sheets for children who attended. Please upload your sign-in/out sheets to the ELCLC Provider Portal.

VPK

1. If you are open and the child is absent, mark absences for open days in the Provider Services Portal per usual
2. If you are closed due to COVID-19, you should report closures to Joy Flynn at jflynn@elclc.org. ELC staff will enter the closure into the system. COVID closure days will be indicated with an *.
3. When your attendance rosters are correct, submit the completed attendance roster to the coalition in April. Note: It may take some time for ELC to enter closure days.

Q. Should I update my VPK Calendar?

NO, not yet. Please don't change your 2019 VPK Provider Application class calendar due to COVID-19 at this time. All absences and temporary closures in March 2020 will be paid.

Q. Can I implement travel restrictions?

This is an individual business decision. CDC recommendations are as follows:

1. Anyone (students/faculty/staff/etc.) who go on foreign travel, to any country, must self-isolate for 14 days upon return.
2. Anyone (students/faculty/staff/etc.) who go on a cruise, anywhere, must self-isolate for 14 days upon return.

Q. How can I limit exposure at my site?

1. Make sure all parents and families know that they should remain home if they are ill. It is flu season, so every fever is not a sign of COVID-19. If someone reports they "have been tested positive for coronavirus," please verify. There are many strains of coronavirus. Only a test result that shows a positive result for COVID-19 is associated with the strain you are hearing about. These results must be verified through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
2. Childcare must be carried out in stable groups of 10 or fewer (inclusive of childcare providers for the group); children and childcare providers shall not change from one

group to another; if more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room.

3. Groups shall not mix or interact with each other, or have access to or use the same objects, materials, or surfaces without sanitation.
4. All play equipment used by one group of children must be cleaned and sanitized before use by another group of children.
5. Any child or employee exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 illness shall not be allowed to stay in the childcare facility.
6. Screen children up on arrival for fevers and throughout the day to ensure children are fever free.
7. Be sure you are stressing the importance of handwashing. Everyone that comes through your doors should be washing their hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available. Encourage coughing and sneezing into the crook of the elbow, or a tissue that can be discarded.
8. Clean and sanitize door knobs, computer keyboards, touch screens, tabletops, toys and other surfaces that are touched often. Clean all eating surfaces before and after use. Ensure play space is cleaned thoroughly upon closing every night in preparation for the next day of business.

Q. Can we close to students, but require out teachers and staff to work?

That is an individual business decision. Several providers have indicated that they are closing to students but staff will be reporting to work. They are planning to do extensive cleaning & sanitizing, lesson planning and professional development.

Q. Will ELC staff be doing site visits for CLASS Assessments, Coaching and Supportive Interventions?

Not at this time. In order to limit exposure to our providers, children and staff, we have suspended all site visits. However, we continue to be available for online and telephone consultation. We will do our best to assist in any way we can.

Q. If I close my center, do I have to pay my staff?

While we can't mandate this, we would hope that they continue to pay their teachers to the greatest extent that they can. The rule waivers and continued payment for SR and VPK are intended to support providers in retaining their workforce. However, we realize that in the case of private-pay parents they may be unable to pay tuition during closures. We ask the providers do the best they can to continue supporting our early learning workforce.

Q. Are the Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) for providers still required to be completed in 12 months?

No. Timelines will be extended.

Q. Is there an incentive for providers that remain open or open their child care facility to serve the children of first responders or healthcare workers?

Yes. Providers will receive a monthly bonus/incentive of \$500 per child for a maximum of \$4,000 per month per provider or \$12,000 for three months per provider. This bonus only applies to children in the BG1-ESS funding category. The incentive is in addition to the School Readiness reimbursement rate the contracted provider receives.

Q. Who will notify the child care providers of first responders and healthcare workers needing child care services?

The early learning coalition will offer a listing of available providers to the parent/caregiver and notify the selected provider through the Provider Portal.