

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Child Care Facilities Licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

March 19, 2020

This frequently asked questions document is based on what is currently known about the spread and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Please check the [KDHE website](#) periodically for updated information and guidance.

This document is intended for licensed child care facilities licensed by KDHE (day care homes, group day care homes, child care centers, preschools, school age programs, and drop in programs for school age children and youth).

Q. Why are some facilities closed and others open?

A. KDHE is recommending child care facilities remain open at this time. However, depending on the unique and changing situations of each community, local public health officers may implement more restrictive guidance and provisions for child care facilities, up to and including closure within their jurisdiction. Child care licensees may independently decide to temporarily close based on their own unique situation.

Q. Am I required to close my facility?

A. No. In the absence of a recommendation from the state or county public health officer, you are not required to close. However, you may choose to close based on your specific situation. You are encouraged to be in close communication with your local public health department as situations regarding COVID-19 are changing frequently.

Q. When might I need to close?

A. Public health officials may direct you to close in response to an increase in the spread of COVID-19. For additional information, refer to the [Interim Guidance for Child Care Facilities Licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) on the KDHE [COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

Q. If I am temporarily closing my licensed facility, do I need to notify anyone?

A. Yes, please provide this update to your local licensing surveyor. Be sure to notify your local licensing surveyor when you reopen.

Q. If I am temporarily closing and my license is expiring, do I need to submit my renewal application?

A. Yes. A renewal application is still required to be submitted on time. KDHE will continue to process renewal applications and issue licenses.

Q. Our facility is located in a school that is closed. Can we continue to operate?

A. If a facility is located in a school building that is currently closed, you will need approval from the school district and the local public health officer in order to continue operating at that location. Programs are only authorized to operate at the location printed on the license.

Q. Can a facility licensed to operate in a school building be granted an exception to operate in a new, temporary location?

A. There are no waivers or exceptions to processes or regulations in place related to COVID-19 response. This includes issuing temporary licenses for an existing facility to operate in an alternate location.

Q. Do I need to have new employees complete the fingerprint background checks before coming to work? What if there is not a location to get the fingerprinting completed?

A. At this time there is no exception to the background requirements. We await guidance from Federal partners. It is important that you watch for additional guidance pertaining to background checks on the KDHE child care licensing website.

Q. May I continue to enroll new children as long as I don't exceed my license capacity?

A. New enrollment is permitted. However, it is critical that health screening happens prior to entry and ongoing for all new and existing children. See more information about risk and recommendations for quarantine and isolation on the KDHE [COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

Q. Can I get an exception to exceed my license capacity?

A. KDHE will not be granting exceptions to exceed license capacity or eliminate other health and safety requirements related to COVID-19 response.

Q. Can the two school age children currently enrolled in my home-based child care facility attending before and after school and on breaks stay in care for full days until the crisis has ended?

A. Yes. K.A.R. 28-4-114(j)(2)(A) allows two additional children 5 to 11 years of age to be present during emergency school closures.

Q. What if a parent is looking for child care and I do not have any spots?

A. Refer parents to the [Child Care Aware](#) website or toll free number 877.678.2548 for assistance searching for child care in their area. KDHE has an [online information system](#) that serves as a tool to support families in making informed child care choices and can be used to review compliance history of a current or potential child

care provider. The online tool is an important step to verifying that a facility is licensed and provides compliance history for parents and guardians.

Q. How do I contact my local child care licensing surveyor?

A. For more information about local licensing contacts, visit the [KDHE Child Care Licensing](#) website and click on *Local County Contacts*.

Q. I am not currently licensed. Can I get an emergency or temporary license?

A. There are no waivers or exceptions to processes or regulations in place related to COVID-19 response. This includes issuing a temporary license. For more information about applying to become licensed, contact your local licensing surveyor to start the process. See link above to access the local county contacts. Note: a license is not required for 1) children receiving care in their own home; or 2) children cared for by relatives. Additionally, anyone (friend, neighbor, teacher not working) can care for up to 2 children less than 20 hours a week.

