

DCF Guidance Order #4

Frequently Asked Questions on Scaling Down Operations

Issued Wednesday, March 18, 2020

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance on frequently asked questions pursuant to Emergency Order #6 issued by Governor Evers, **we are mandating that centers may not operate with more than 10 staff present at a time and may not operate with more than 50 children present at a time.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Which adults count toward the limit of staff/volunteers per program?

The goal is to limit the number of adults and children that interact, both daily and over time. Staff that interact or work in the same space as the kids count toward the limit. For example, if the Director and cook share the space, then they count. If they work in a discrete space, drop the food off, and don't physically interact with children or staff, then they don't. Part and full-time volunteers, therapists and support staff count toward the limit.

Can I break up my child care program into smaller groups at the same location?

Yes, you can operate multiple child care groups at the same location as long as they are:

- (1) physically separated (i.e. different rooms, separated by a barrier);
- (2) the groups have distinct staff/volunteers and kids who do **not** co-mingle; and
- (3) each group is under the size restrictions.

DCF will treat the separated groups of staff and children as if they are separate programs located in the same building. The key issue is no comingling of kids and staff across groups, including designated separate bathrooms and eating spaces.

Additionally, only count the adults interacting with the child care program. For example, the staff operating in other parts of the building that do not interact with the child care program do not count.

If a facility is licensed for over 50 children, what should the provider do?

If the facility can accommodate physical separation of space (see requirements above), then that facility can adapt by creating multiple groups of children under 50. The size restrictions then apply to each group, which also must meet the current staffing requirements (existing ratios apply for children under 5; ratios are waived for children over 5).

If the existing facility is not able to accommodate physical separation of space but has a need to serve more than 50 children, DCF will assist that program in connecting with other providers and partners to identify ways to continue to provide care. Providers may also run satellite locations in order to create physical separation. Satellite locations would need at least one licensed provider on site and meet building codes.

Will there be any accommodations or waivers made for programs that have more than ten staff or 50 children?

No. The FAQ provides guidance on how programs can adapt to meet the size restrictions.

Does this restriction apply to programs serving special needs or medically fragile children with high staff-to-child ratios?

Those programs are medically necessary and will be addressed individually. They should contact their licensing specialist via email for guidance.