

**From:** [DCF BWF Work Programs Help Desk](#)  
**To:** [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency CARES Coordinators](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 Agency Directors](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF TJ TMJ](#)  
**Cc:** [DCF DL DFES BWF W-2 REGIONAL STAFF](#); [DCF DL DFES BWF Supervisors](#); [DCF DL DFES PTT W-2 Staff](#)  
**Subject:** COVID-19 Child Care Taskforce Information  
**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2020 10:29:55 AM  
**Attachments:** [cc-taskforce-efforts.pdf](#)  
[tips-for-parents.pdf](#)

---

Dear Partners,

Providing child care to the essential workforce is critical to flattening the curve of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. To meet this need, Governor Evers created the Child Care for Essential Workers Taskforce. Led by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the taskforce is working with the Early Childhood Association (WECA) and Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) to connect essential workforce families in need of child care with locally available child care resources.

DCF is excited to launch two new tools to help connect essential workforce families to local, safe child care. Healthcare workers and essential employees are now able to submit a [request for care](#) through the department's updated Child Care Finder or proactively view up-to-date availability across the state using the department's new [child care map](#).

Please see the attached resources for more information regarding the Child Care for Essential Workers Taskforce and relevant information for parents. More information for providers, essential workers and families can be found on the [DCF COVID-19 Child Care webpage](#).

For any questions regarding this effort, please contact [dcfmbcovid19@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dcfmbcovid19@wisconsin.gov).

## Jes Moss

*Human Services Area Coordinator*

*Bureau of Working Families*

*Division of Family and Economic Security*

**Department of Children and Families**

---

201 E Washington Ave, A200

Madison, WI 53703

**T:** 608.422.6311

**F:** 608.261.6376

**E:** [Jessica.moss@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jessica.moss@wisconsin.gov)

# Connecting Essential Workforce Families to Child Care



The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is excited to launch two new tools to help connect essential workforce families to local, safe child care. Healthcare workers and essential employees are now able to submit a [request for care](#) through the department's updated Child Care Finder or proactively view up-to-date availability across the state using the department's new [child care map](#).

Providing child care to the essential workforce is critical to flattening the curve of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. To meet this need, Governor Evers created the Child Care for Essential Workers Taskforce. Led by DCF, the taskforce worked with the Early Childhood Association (WECA) and Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) to connect essential workforce families in need of child care with locally available child care resources. To date, the taskforce has accomplished:

## **An initial assessment of supply and demand**

In partnership with the Wisconsin Hospitals Association, DCF surveyed health providers to identify how many staff needed child care. Additionally, DCF surveyed early childhood providers and individual educators to identify how many centers would remain open and whether individual educators would be willing to continue providing child care.

## **Developed an application to automate the collection of supply and demand information**

DCF launched a rapid acceleration of IT projects to begin automating this system.

- Child care providers can now update their status (open/closed) as well as how many child care slots they have available by updating their page in [Provider Portal](#)
- Essential workforce families can submit their child care requests through [Child Care Finder](#). Additionally, they can proactively search for available child care using DCF's new [Child Care Map](#) which is updated daily.
- Early childhood educators can [submit their availability](#) to serve families in center-based care, in an essential families' home, or at a new emergency child care center.

## **Published guidance to promote the health and well-being of children and the early childhood workforce**

In coordination with the Department of Health Services (DHS), DCF has provided ongoing [guidance to child care providers](#), including templates and suggested policies/procedures to implement during COVID-19.

## **Matching essential workforce families with local child care**

DCF, WECA, and local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies are utilizing these newly updated applications to "match" families with child care. Additionally, texting services, emails, and phone calls are being utilized to identify the urgency of requests and to update families with information on their requests. This process is ongoing, and families will likely experience delays in being matched with available care.

## **Opening emergency child care centers**

DCF is working with health care providers, child care centers, community organizations like YMCAs, schools, and other partners to open emergency child care centers for essential workforce families. New centers will be opened as demand for child care increases. DCF has provided [guidance and resources](#) for organizations interested in opening child care centers.

For any questions regarding this effort, please contact [DCFMBCOVID19@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFMBCOVID19@wisconsin.gov).



Wisconsin Department of  
Children and Families

# Tips for Parents Using Child Care During COVID-19

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) understands that certain families need continued child care during the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the safety of families and child care setting staff, DCF has developed a list of tips for parents to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

## Drop Off and Pick Up

Parents should limit pick up and drop off to one person to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. Additionally, if you meet one of the below criteria you should not visit a child care center:

- Are older than 60 years old
- Are pregnant
- Have underlying health conditions, including those with compromised immune systems or respiratory conditions like severe asthma
- Are showing symptoms of COVID-19
- Have been in contact with someone confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have returned from travel to areas with community spread of COVID-19 in the last 14 days (updated information on travel restrictions can be found on the CDC website).



Upon entering the facility, parents and children should immediately wash or sanitize their hands before entering the classroom or signing their child in.

Some centers may establish a drop off zone or staggered drop off times. Parents should check with their center for any additional guidance.

## Health Screenings

Some child care settings may implement a health screening at entry for both parents and children. This may include a temperature reading and symptom check. It is important that you answer questions honestly and ask for assistance if you do not understand the question or need it translated to another language.

## Illnesses

Most child care centers have an illness policy in place; however, guidance may be more stringent to ensure the safety and wellness of children and program staff. Parents are encouraged to check with the provider on any new guidance and keep their children home who have a fever of 100.4 or higher; have had a fever of 100.4 or higher or other potential symptoms of COVID-19, such as shortness of breath or persistent dry cough, within the last 72 hours; or have come in contact with others who have COVID-19.

## Contact Information

If your child becomes ill or there is a positive COVID-19 case in the facility, your center may ask that you pick he/she up within one hour. Review your enrollment information to ensure they have your current contact information as well as emergency contact information.

## Alternate Care

If there is a case of COVID-19 among children or staff, programs may consider a short-term (less than 1 week) or long-term (two weeks or more) closure to allow for sufficient cleaning and disinfection. Parents are encouraged to find an alternate care option, such as another local child care center or relative, in case this occurs.

