

Home daycare providers say mandatory subscription to Place 0-5 is unfair ^[1]

Home daycares are hoping for changes to one-stop system for signing up now that Premier François Legault has appointed Mathieu Lacombe as family minister

Author: Canadian Press

Source: Montreal Gazette

Format: Article

Publication Date: 20 Oct 2018

AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

People who run home daycares demonstrated in front of the Quebec National Assembly on Sunday, calling on the new minister for families, Mathieu Lacombe, to bring in changes to the centralized system under which families sign up for daycare.

The daycare providers, who are affiliated with the Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec (FIPEQ-CSQ) say they should not have to pay fees for the government's so-called one-stop shopping website for daycare and should not be forced to sign up on the site, called Place 0-5.

Since September, people who run home daycares, known as RSEs (Responsables en services éducatifs en milieu familial), have been required to register on the site and to pay a fee for using it, which is unfair because the fee is not provided for in their collective agreement, Valérie Grenon, president of the FIPEQ-CSQ, said in a telephone interview.

The former Liberal government imposed the rule in May. Before that, only early childhood centres (CPEs) and private subsidized and unsubsidized daycares were required to register on the site.

The provincial government said the measure would "increase access to child care spaces by giving parents the possibility, through a single approach, to register their child with child-care providers that interest them."

But the union said the measure would cost its members, known as RSGs, approximately \$2 million for the first year, and \$1 million the following year.

"Our RSEs are self-employed. In their collective agreement, they can use the means they want to get their customers," Grenon said, adding the union is not contesting the principle of a one-stop registry, which is useful to parents, but it should be voluntary for daycares.

The organization has gone to court to challenge the implementation and costs of the program. The cases are all before the courts.

Grenon welcomed the naming of Mathieu Lacombe as the new minister for families by Premier François Legault.

"Mr. Legault told his ministers to govern in a spirit of proximity and openness to the people, so we expect with Mr. Lacombe to have someone who will listen to the requests of daycare providers and reconsider the Liberal government's decision," she said.

Grenon had a telephone conversation with Lacombe on Saturday afternoon, according to Grenon's press attaché, Isabelle Lewis. The conversation was cordial, Lewis said, and the two agreed to meet in person at a later date.

She added that Lacombe reiterated to the union leader that the priority of the CAQ government was to improve services to families, and he promised to review the Place 0-5 system to ensure it is efficient.

Lacombe declined an interview request, saying he did not want to comment on the matter at this time, given that he was just appointed.

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