

# First phase of Alberta's \$25-per-day daycare pilot ending in June, future funding uncertain <sup>[1]</sup>

More than 7,000 spaces are available around the province at \$25 per day

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

The first phase of a \$25-a-day daycare pilot program launched in 2017 by the previous government will come to an end in June, the province says.

A total of 22 daycares were selected to take part in the \$10-million pilot project, with funding for those centres set to end in March 2020.

That deadline, set by the previous NDP government, will now be extended to June.

"We are extending the program for those 22 centres until June to ensure a smooth transition to childcare subsidies through the summer," Minister of Children's Services Rebecca Schulz said Wednesday in a statement.

Schultz said the UCP government is working with the federal government on a "bilateral funding agreement" for daycare.

Under the NDP program, another 100 daycares were added around the province during phase two. Funding for those centres will continue through 2021.

Rakhi Pancholi, the Official Opposition children services critic, said ending the program for the first 22 daycares will impact access to child care.

Pancholi pointed out that a daycare in Westlock, Alta., notified parents earlier this month that child care costs were expected to rise when the program ends. The NDP said the letter also warned of staffing cuts and possible limitations on hours.

"For a lot of these centres it means that they are going to have to lay off staff," Pancholi said. "It means they are going to have to significantly increase childcare fees."

Pancholi welcomed the news of the three-month funding extension but said that information came too late for some centres and the families they work with.

"That's only a couple months," Pancholi said. "For a lot of families, that's a couple months that they'll be deciding about whether or not they can continue to work. For some educators it will be thinking about whether they will have employment beyond that."

Numbers released in March 2019 show that about 7,000 of the 62,000 daycare spaces in Alberta were available for \$25 per day.

**Related link:**

**Region:** Alberta <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** funding <sup>[4]</sup>

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/01/first-phase-albertas-25-day-daycare-pilot-ending-june-future-funding> <sup>[2]</sup>

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