

Child care for core service workers^[1]

Government will begin reopening select licensed child care centres to provide child care for core service workers.

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EXCERPTED

Children's Services is working with child care providers to open up to 15,000 child care spaces to ensure child care is available for those providing services that Albertans rely on during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"All Albertans are relying on those who are working in core service areas like health care. That's why we want to make sure child care is available for those who need it during this crisis."

Rebecca Schulz, Minister of Children's Services

Child care centres are initially being chosen based on proximity to health-care facilities and will be reopened in a phased approach based on areas of need, starting the week of March 23.

"We are ready and able to contribute to this important effort. We will ensure our staff strictly follow the health guidance we've received and parents can rest assured that while they are at work, their kids are safe and cared for."

Anil Karim, executive director, Kids U

Access will be prioritized to health-care practitioners and critical infrastructure workers. Additional spaces will then be available to first responders (firefighters and police officers) and others.

Parents will be notified this coming week through their employer if they qualify to send their children to newly reopened centres.

Children's Services is contacting the centres directly. The centres will be limited to 30 people, including staff, and will have to adhere to strict sanitization practices based on specific instructions from the chief medical officer of health and Alberta Health. Parents who qualify for subsidy will receive it and centres will charge their typical rate, within reason.

All other licensed child care centres are to remain closed. As previously stated, licensed day homes may remain open but limited to six children, not including the operators' own children.

Finally, as we navigate this pandemic together, the Government of Alberta asks that all Albertans use resources judiciously. Parents who are eligible should only access this child care if it is the only way they'll be able to go to their work in a core service sector.

Media inquiries

Lauren Armstrong - lauren.Armstrong@gov.ab.ca^[3]

780-203-2527

Senior Press Secretary, Children's Services

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