

P.E.I. government announces financial support for child care after Fiona ^[1]

Families who had extra child-care costs Oct. 3-7 can apply for funding

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EXCERPTS

Families who had extra child-care costs during the second week of recovery from post-tropical storm Fiona can now apply for financial support from the province.

On Tuesday, the province announced the Fiona Child Care Allowance Program, which aims to help cover the costs for children who needed alternate care when schools and child-care centres were closed after the storm.

The program covers up to \$20 per day per child for the period from Oct. 3-7.

Doreen Gillis, director of early childhood development on P.E.I., said the program was developed to help reduce the financial burden and unexpected costs faced by many families after Fiona.

"When we were looking at this program, it really was looking at that extended closure and that additional burden to families that they may not have been prepared to go into that second week," she said.

"It was difficult to imagine we would have centres and some schools that remained closed that second week after Fiona. So we really started to look at the impact of that."

Families who found private child care during the period from Oct. 3-7 can apply for funding directly on the government's website. Those whose children attended a licensed child-care centre do not need to apply for the funding, as the province will provide direct reimbursement.

"We're going to be sending applications out to those centres and they'll provide us with their information, the numbers, and we'll pay the centre directly," said Gillis.

"So that will be very easy for those families."

The province will also cover the fees for all families in licensed early learning and child-care centres if the centre couldn't open between Oct. 3-7 due to damages.

Gillis says the program only covers the second week after the storm because of the extent of the damages caused by Fiona.

"Centres were not able to open for a longer period of time than maybe would be typical for another storm," she said.

"This really was an extended closure, so we wanted to be able to provide families with some support around that."

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[3]

Tags: emergency child care ^[4]

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