



Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	May 28, 2020
Subject / Report No:	SSR-CW-04-20
Title:	Emergency Child Care Provision
Prepared by:	Tara Cockerill, Acting Children's Services Manager
Reviewed by:	Barb Fedy, Director
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	County of Grey
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW105-20;

Recommendation

1. That Report **SSR-CW-04-20** regarding the provision of emergency child care for essential services workers working during Covid-19 restrictions be received for information.

Executive Summary

On March 22, 2020, the province of Ontario issued an exemption order to allow selected child care providers to operate during the provincial emergency closure to support eligible families in obtaining child care to allow these essential workers to continue working.

Grey County Children's Services department submitted three scenarios for providing Emergency Child Care programming for review by the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit, prior to submission of plans to the Ministry of Education.

On May 10, 2020, the department received confirmation from the local Medical Office of Health endorsing two of the three scenarios to proceed, recognizing that the third scenario will be revisited in the next phase of the local re-opening plan. The two scenarios approved to proceed are in-home child care and licensed home child care at reduced ratios.

Background and Discussion

To be eligible under the exemption, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) are required to submit plans to their local public health agencies for approval, prior to submitting plans for review by the Ministry of Education. In the initial phase of the closure, the local Medical Officer of Health did not endorse the opening of any child care centre or licensed home child care agency. As the local need evolved, the Children's Services department was approached by Public Health to submit an Emergency Child Care Plan. A copy of the plan is attached.

The provision of Emergency Child Care under the provincial directives is a detailed process to ensure the safety of children, staff and community.

Three options for Emergency Child Care were submitted to Public Health for consideration on May 6, 2020:

- 1) Centre Based Care – Reduced Ratios
- 2) Licensed Home Child Care – Reduced Ratios
- 3) In-Home Child Care Services

On May 10, 2020 the Social Services department received notice from the Public Health Unit that they were endorsing Licensed Home Child Care – Reduced Ratios, and In-Home Child Care Services. Public Health has advised that Centre Based Child Care will be considered for future planning as part of Stage 2 of the re-opening of Grey County.

Grey County directly operates the licensed home child care agency in Grey County. Staff are working with teams from Public Health and the Ministry of Education to ensure policies and agreements meet all COVID-19 related requirements prior to placing children in care.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/child-care-health-care-and-frontline-staff#section-0>

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/150137>

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/COVID-19/Businesses-Employees-and-Organizations>

Corporate services, including legal and risk management have been consulted throughout the development of the Emergency Child Care Plans. Home Child Care Providers will sign revised agreements to ensure compliance with required policy revisions.

Financial and Resource Implications

Staff have identified the need to increase the funding allocation to attract providers offering in-home child care or licensed home child care at reduced ratios. The following allocations for the two scenarios are in line with the funding amounts being reported by neighboring CMSMs.

Scenario 1 – In-Home Services

In-home services would operate under the Grey County Home Child Care Agency license. Current childcare providers would be offered first opportunity to be paired with an eligible family and would be approved to provide service to one family only in that family's home. Individuals would sign an agreement advising that they are a self-employed independent contractor.

Cost Break Down per approved home:

Hourly Rate	Maximum Hours Per Day	Maximum Days per week	Cost Per Week	Maximum Cost Per Month/per home
\$20.00	14	5	\$1400	\$6066.67

While each location could be approved to support up to 6 children that reside in the home (non-residents cannot access this type of care), the current average family size is approximately 2 children.

Scenario 2 – Licensed Home Child Care Premises – Reduced Ratios

In this scenario, eligible parents would bring their child(ren) to the provider's home. Funding would be calculated as a rate per 5-hour block of care to a maximum of 14 hours per day. For example, if the parent was approved for 8 -10 hours of care, provider would be paid for 10 hours. Max hours would continue to be capped at 14 hours to ensure provider has time to clean and rest.

Rate per 5 hours of care (block)	Maximum 14 Per Day (3 blocks)	Maximum Days per week	Cost Per Week/per child	Maximum Cost Per Month/per child
\$40.00	\$120.00	5	\$600.00	\$2600

Provider will be maxed at 3 children per home.

Financial Impacts

CMSM's have been directed to cover the costs of Emergency Child Care from their existing funding allocations for 2020. Staff have identified some challenges as the CMSMs are also directed to support child care operators with fixed costs during the closure period.

Should the CMSM see funding pressures at year end as the result of COVID-19 closures, they have been directed to advise a rationale to the Ministry of Education if there is a funding allocation shortfall.

Staff will be directed to conduct monitoring visits through remote tools such as Skype or Teams. There may be start up IT requirements should a provider not have access to the necessary tools.

Should there be a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) or sanitizing/cleaning equipment, there could be a disruption to service.

Relevant Consultation

Internal (list)

- Legal
- Corporate Services
- Clerks

External (list)

- Ministry of Education
- Grey Bruce Public Health

Appendices and Attachments

[COVID19 Emergency Child Care Plans Grey County May 2020](#)

[List of Eligible Workers for Emergency Child Care](#)