

Child care and early learning updates e-newsletter

January 16, 2024

Welcome to The Regional Municipality of Durham's child care and early learning updates e-newsletter. These e-newsletters provide licensed child care operators in Durham Region with updated information related to child care.

This edition includes the following topics:

- Forgiveness repayment date for eligible Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan holders
- Durham College stacked micro-credential for Early Childhood Educators
- 2023-2027 Children's Services Division Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan
- Enhanced staffing funding reporting
- Access to Universal Equipment
- New: "Foundations of the Durham Region Operating Criteria (DROC)" pre-recorded training

The forgiveness repayment date for eligible Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan holders

Loan holders in good standing who repay their CEBA load before **Thursday, January 18, 2024**, will have a portion of their loan forgiven. Any CEBA loans with outstanding balances not repaid by this date will be converted to non-amortizing term loans at five per cent interest. These loans must be repaid by December 31, 2026. Visit the [Government of Canada CEBA page](#) for more information.

Durham College Stacked Micro-Credential for Early Childhood Educators

Durham College is offering a supervisor and leadership in early childhood education stacked micro-credential. This micro-credential focuses on developing the critical financial management and leadership skills required of a child care supervisor. If you are a Registered Early Childhood Educator in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators in Ontario, you meet the program admission requirements. The micro-credential is offered fully online and provides the flexibility needed to fit into a busy schedule. Click [here](#) for more information or to apply.

2023-2027 Children's Services Division Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan

In December 2023, Durham Region Council approved the Children's Services Division's [2023-2027 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan](#). Mandated by the Ministry of Education and informed through consultations with the early learning and child care community, this document outlines four priorities for the Children's Services Division to support the early learning and child care community over this five-year period. The [Directed Growth Plan](#) has also been developed as an appendix to the plan. This document outlines the Durham Region's Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) expansion priorities based on expansion targets given by the Ministry of Education. Both documents are available for review on Durham Region's [website](#).

Enhanced staffing funding reporting

Reporting templates for approved enhanced staffing funding will be made available on the Operator Portal the first week of February 2024. Child care centres are required to report the number of approved hours used each month along with the number of children supported through enhanced staffing funding. Payments will be issued to operators in the second half of the month following a submitted report. For example: when a January report is due and submitted mid-February, a review will be completed and payment will follow by the end of February. Detailed instructions will be included with the reporting templates.

Access to universal equipment

Effective March 2024, Grandview Kids will no longer provide child care centres with universal equipment. Instead, child care centres will be responsible for purchasing universal equipment when needed. Universal equipment (also known as tier-one support equipment, and/or "good for all" equipment) includes items like chewlery, pencil grips, fidget toys, noise-cancelling headphones, suction cup bowls, and more. They can be used with little to no risk to the individual and do not require a referral. To support this, child care centres will receive a sample set of universal equipment through their assigned Early Learning Inclusion Consultant (ELI) in the coming weeks. Educators can reach out to their ELI or other special needs resourcing staff for more information on how and when universal equipment should be used. For any future purchases of universal equipment, centres may be eligible for Special Purpose Funding. The Special Purpose Funding [application guide](#) and [application form](#) can be found on the [Children's Services website](#).

The “Foundations of the Durham Region Operating Criteria (DROC)” pre-recorded training is available on the Children’s Services Website

The Quality and Contract Compliance Advisor team is excited to share a pre-recorded training that is available on the [Children’s Services website](#). The “Foundations of the Durham Region Operating Criteria (DROC)” session was developed to support educators, supervisors and operators and is a pre-requisite to individuals attending any of the Intro to DROC sessions. The workshop includes a descriptive overview of the DROC-AQI, as well as what to expect before, during, and after an assessment. As stated, this recording is to be viewed in advance of attending any of the Intro to DROC sessions (Infant, Toddler, Preschool and/or Before and After). This is also a useful tool for refreshing the knowledge of individuals already working in child care settings across the Region of Durham, as well as a unique opportunity for capacity building and to create a foundation for individuals who have recently joined the early learning sector.