



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

TEMPORARY POLICY	
Opening a Temporary Emergency Residential Site	Field Operations – Residential and Placement
Effective Date: April 16, 2020	

Policy Statement

In order for EEC to continue to provide the flexibility needed during the State of Emergency, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order on April 16, 2020 allowing EEC to create emergency residential programs that address the needs of the children and youth being served at child/adolescent residential programs for effective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This Executive Order also permits EEC, in consultation with the Department of Public Health, to change regulatory requirements for existing residential and congregate care providers to ensure that programs operate under protocols that prevent the spread of COVID-19 while maintaining the health and safety of children and staff.

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is authorizing temporary emergency residential programming to accommodate the needs of COVID-19 positive or exposed youth who cannot stay in their current residential placement. To support providers who are interested in providing these critical services, EEC is setting forth this policy for the opening of Temporary Emergency Residential Sites. **All proposed Temporary Emergency Residential Sites are required to apply in accordance with this policy in order to open and operate, even if the proposed site is currently licensed by EEC for a different purpose or population.**

Step 1: Apply to Operate an Approved Temporary Emergency Residential Site

Any program or provider that is interested and believes they are prepared to open and operate a Temporary Emergency Residential Site during the COVID-19 State of Emergency must apply to EEC through the process outlined in this policy.

A proposed Temporary Emergency Residential Site may be either:

- A site that is not currently licensed by EEC; or
- A currently licensed site that will be used for a different population than currently licensed for.

Prospective programs shall submit a complete application to EEC, including the following documents:

1. Application to Operate Temporary Emergency Residential Site; and
2. Minimum Requirements Checklist with a certification that the program meets all the requirements.

Applications shall be submitted to EEC at eec.emergency.residential@mass.gov

Step 2: Review and Contact by EEC

Upon receipt of a complete application, EEC staff will evaluate the request using all available information to ensure that the proposed site is an appropriate candidate. In some cases, including

whenever an approval is requested for a site that is not currently licensed by EEC, an in-person or virtual tour of the program will also be requested prior to approval. Applicants requesting approval for a site that is not currently licensed by EEC will be contacted by an EEC licensor and should be prepared to discuss the following:

- current capacities at each site, if applicable;
- programs' ability to provide quarantine/isolation, including resident capacity at any given time; and
- how the program will adhere to state and federal guidelines to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, including but not limited to preventing the spread of illness, maintaining consistent hand hygiene practices, daily screening to identify and isolate children and staff who may become sick.

Step 3: Determination of Suitability to Operate a Temporary Emergency Residential Site

In determining the suitability of the site as an Approved Temporary Emergency Residential Site, EEC will consider all information gathered through inquiry and follow up communications, and will apply a set of standards¹ separate and apart from EEC's licensing regulations at 606 C.M.R. 3.00.

Based on a review of the physical space and the certification that a program will comply with minimum requirements that have been defined for these programs, an approval letter acknowledging that the program has legal authority to operate a Temporary Emergency Residential Site during the COVID-19 State of Emergency will be issued via email to the program's point of contact, including:

- Name of the program;
- Name of program contact;
- Location and street address of the program;
- Number of beds;
- Any conditions or restrictions on the program; and
- Anticipated referral sources

Once the Approved Temporary Emergency Residential Site is operating, EEC staff has the discretion to conduct follow up visits (either in person or virtually) to the site to ensure the health and safety of children, to provide support and resources to the program, and to help field questions.

Once an approval letter has been issued, the program is approved to operate as a Temporary Emergency Residential Site during, and only during, the current State of Emergency. Temporary Emergency Residential Sites with children in care and without a license after the state of emergency ends shall contact EEC and the funding agency(ies) for assistance with ensuring that children can be properly returned to their home residence and/or placed in appropriate settings.

If you are not sure whether you are prepared to begin the process of opening a Temporary Emergency Residential Site, please feel free to contact your EEC Licensor who can assist you and answer questions.

¹ These standards will be issued pursuant to a separate policy statement