Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and now as the Commonwealth begins to reopen, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) recognizes the uncertainty and anxiety for child care providers, staff, and families.

On June 1, EEC released Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety, with the goal to reengage the child care system in a way that prioritizes health and safety. They have been updated as of June 8. They were released in advance to help providers prepare for reopening.

EEC understands that additional guidance and clear process steps are needed for providers to consider how and when to reopen. EEC will work with the field to support implementation. EEC encourages providers to use their best judgment, balancing children’s social and emotional health with their physical safety.

EEC is relying on the expertise of the professionals in the field to redesign their approaches to early education and care and chart new ways to nurture and develop children’s growth.

To read the complete Massachusetts Child and Youth Serving Programs Reopen Approach, please visit https://eeclead.force.com/apex/EEC_ChildCareEmergencyReopenInfo.

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### Steps to Reopen and Anticipated Timeline

Child care reopening preparation will begin in Phase 2. EEC will ensure programs have the information they need to prepare for reopening early in Phase 2 and will make processes clear and easy to follow so providers may plan accordingly.

#### INTENT TO REOPEN:

Beginning Monday, June 8, EEC will distribute an “Intent to Reopen” form to capture the intent of each provider to reopen under the Minimum Health and Safety Requirements.

#### APPLYING TO REOPEN:

- **Week of June 8:** EEC will provide plan templates, guidance, and self-attestation forms for providers to review and prepare.
- **Week of June 15:** EEC will invite providers to submit their reopening plans for review and approval by EEC.

#### APPROVAL TO REOPEN:

- **Conditional Approval:** EEC will immediately review plans and attestations to ensure completion; providers will be allowed to conditionally reopen for services to children based on their chosen timeline.
- **Final Approval:** EEC will perform thorough review of plans and address any support needs for ongoing operations within 60 days.