



1-188 Bunting Road
St. Catharines, ON L2M 3Y1
1.800.567.7075
admin@adco-o.on.ca

EMERGENCY ORDER RIGHT MOVE FOR FAMILIES, SAY DAY CARE OPERATORS

For Immediate Release

ONTARIO—April 10, 2020—Today, Ontario Premier Doug Ford issued an Emergency Order, prohibiting licensed child care centres from charging parent fees during the period centres are closed due to COVID-19. The Order also helps ensure that parents will not lose their child care space when they are not paying fees.

“In terms of supporting Ontario families, today’s Emergency Order is certainly the right choice and reflects the position that many licensed child care centres have already taken on their own,” says Andrea Hannen, Executive Director of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO).

The charging of fees during the time when services can’t be provided is something that some other provinces moved very quickly to prevent. On March 20, BC announced that licensed child care centres that remained closed would be receiving provincial support to help them cover fixed costs like rent, lease and mortgage payments, so they’ll be able to re-open when it is safe to do so. On March 22, Newfoundland announced a support plan for all regulated child care programs. Quebec has also announced that even non-subsidized day cares will be supported during the COVID-19 crisis.

“On March 18, ADCO alerted the Premier, the Minister of Education and a number of other provincial officials about the urgent need for communication with child care licensees about how funding might be provided during the COVID-19 emergency closure period,” says Hannen. “One of our goals in raising this issue was to eliminate any potential ethical dilemma child care centres might face. Our hope is that on the heels of this new Emergency Order the provincial government will officially recognize the unique challenges facing Ontario’s licensed child care centres and announce a plan to ensure that every licensed centre that has had to close survives long enough to re-open. Ontario families need this kind of certainty right now.”

Nearly a third of Ontario’s licensed child care centres are small businesses and stand-alone not-for-profits. The unique nature of these enterprises means that many do not qualify for the various financial supports that have been announced by the federal government. ADCO has reached out to the Province to offer its help in addressing these challenges.

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ADCO is the industry association for Ontario’s independent licensed child care centres. Independent licensed child care centres are those that are not run by public sector entities such as municipalities or school boards, or by large multi-service agencies such as YMCAs. While independent licensed child care centres may be run as businesses, not-for-profits or co-ops, their core business is licensed child care. Independent licensed child care centres account for more than a third of Ontario’s licensed child care spaces. Many are run as small businesses, owned and operated by women.

For further information, please contact:
Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO)
admin@adco-o.on.ca or 1-800-567-7075