

Emergency Childcare
Summary of Approaches Across NY Counties and States
Prepared at the request of Erie County
by Elizabeth Day and Adam Levine, Cornell University
ead255@cornell.edu; ASL22@cornell.edu
March 20, 2020 @ 9am

Summary of Findings

New York Regulations and OCFS Guidance:

- There is no state mandate for childcare centers to close
- School districts are required to submit a plan for childcare for essential workers
- Background checks recently relaxed (OCFS working on guidance, should have out by 3/20); also working on guidance for hospitals, universities, and colleges
- OCFS spoke with Broome Co. to explore “drop-in” childcare; OCFS working on guidance now
- [Emergency changes in regulations](#) found on the OCFS website

Approaches:

- NY Counties
 - o Varied responses to Governor’s orders to create plans for childcare
 - Keeping existing centers open
 - Opening new centers via community organizations
 - Coordinating with Cooperative Extension
 - o Live-updated news source focused on childcare state announcements:
https://childcarerockland.org/what_we_do/covid-19-updates.html
- States
 - o No consistent approach across states
 - o All approaches are so new (many went into effect 3/18), there is no evidence for effectiveness or comparison as to which approach is best
 - o Approaches include:
 - Governor Executive Orders
 - Lift or waive usual childcare regulations (e.g., staffing, classroom sizes)
 - Mandate school districts provide childcare
 - Rarely provide funding to support the efforts
 - State-funded childcares remain open
 - Locally-lead response
 - YMCA’s are taking the lead in offering services in lieu of usual gym operations
 - Other approaches include community centers, libraries, and faith communities
 - o No approaches explicitly address challenges for parents who work a nightshift or third shift.

Recommendations

- Create an easily-accessible, central website for information for families looking for care or childcare workers looking to help (Colorado’s [example](#)). This may be easier to monitor/collect large amounts of information compared to a phone line, which is another option.
- Encourage childcares that do stay open to apply for waivers from OCFS to remain open 24hrs to support off-shift workers.
- If interested in drop-in centers, consider reaching out to Broome County who have spoken with OCFS on this matter (OCFS currently is working on guidance for this type of care).

Approaches Across Largest NY Counties (focusing on these due to time constraints)

County	Approach	Details	Funding	Source
Broome	Free childcare via County Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free K-5 childcare - County Office for Aging is providing staff - One location currently 	District attorney provided additional resources	NPR Local
Monroe	County Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits offered to families looking for childcare - Extending childcare hours and children in attendance at some facilities 	Unclear; extending subsidies which could be county or state funded	Local news
New York City	Creating regional enrichment centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 sites across the boroughs for children of first responders, health care workers, and transit workers - Children ages 3-18 - Staffed by Education Department and community organization workers - Unclear if workers will be paid - Open 7:30am-6pm 	NYC DOE	Local news
Onondaga	County Executive partnered with Childcare Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - County encouraging families to call Childcare Solutions for help finding childcare - 250 slots made available for healthcare professionals and first responders - Also exploring “surge sites” for more spots - Encouraging high schools to consider offering service hours to teens who offer day care while home from school 	Unclear, likely county-level funding	Childcare Solutions Local news for an overview
Oneida	Child Care Council of Cornell Cooperative Extension leading efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently collecting information to understand the community needs - Central call number to request childcare 	Unknown	Local news

Orange	County website directs individuals to Child Care Council of Orange County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goshen district requesting essential personnel complete a survey - Five other resources listed on their webpage 	Unknown	<p>Goshen list of resources</p> <p>County website referring people to Child Care Council</p>
Rockland	County Executive Emergency Order (no clear plan in place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original order mandated childcare closures - Revised order lets childcares remain open per Governor Cuomo's orders - Child Care Resources of Rockland a resource for childcares and families 	Unknown	<p>Local news</p> <p>Child Care Resources of Rockland</p>
Tompkins	<p>All licensed daycares required to close by County Executive Order (small and independent providers remain open)</p> <p>Grassroots/community-lead response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Development Council offering community resources for essential personnel - Grassroots volunteer childcare list 	None	<p>Daycares closed: Local news</p> <p>Child Development Council</p> <p>Grassroots sign-up</p>

Approaches Across States

Location	Approach	Details	Funding	Source
Alabama	Lead by local organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Birmingham YMCA closed to re-open as emergency childcare - Mountain Brook Jewish Community Center opening "operation care camp" for first responders and medical professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children ages 5-12 - 8am-5pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YMCA closed to members to reallocate resources - Community Center is self-funded 	<p>YMCA: WRBC Local news</p> <p>Center: CBS Local news</p>

California	California DSS waiver; Lead by local organizations;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DSS waiver expedites process for opening new centers - San Francisco recreation centers and libraries opening emergency childcare for people who are working for San Francisco hospitals, people working for the Department of Public Health and city employees who've been activated to be disaster workers - Superior California YMCA opening emergency childcare 	- Unknown; local and city funded or organization funded	<p>Full waiver text: LAist</p> <p>San Francisco: Local news</p> <p>YMCA: Local news</p>
Colorado	Creation of a Colorado Emergency Childcare Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcare for "employees who are most essential to containing and treating the virus and protecting our most vulnerable populations" - Partnering with employers and other partners to assess the needs of this population via surveys and application process - Recruiting staff from closed centers to work, paid at an enhanced rate to work at their original center or another center that remains open 	- State-funded	Emergency Childcare Collaborative
Illinois	State funded childcare remains open; Lead by local organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local YMCA offering emergency childcare - Daytime hours, M-F only 	- State funded remain open	<p>State-funded info, also concerns: Chalkbeat</p> <p>Local YMCA</p>
Maine (statewide)	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directs Maine DHHS to work with health care organizations on standing up childcare centers for their workers - DHHS also temporarily relaxed regulations on the number of children allowed in one center at a time - No limit on school-aged children - Limits for younger children and infants remain - Waives requirements for staff background checks to speed ability to hire staff 	- Governor requested DHHS to pursue federal waivers to help with childcare	<p>NBC News Maine</p> <p>For some push-back on the policy, but also full text for the order: NBC News Maine</p>

Maryland	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) the flexibility to work with regional and local officials to make childcare services available that adhere to public health guidelines - Allows “family and friend childcare providers” to provide in-home care for up to five unrelated kids 	- Unknown, but likely through state education funds	Executive Order Summary and details: Office of the Governor
Massachusetts	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcares must remain open for emergency personnel, medical staff and "other critical to fighting the COVID-19 outbreak" – all others must close - Those that remain open termed “free childcare hubs” 	- State subsidies will remain, even for those childcares that do close	Overview: CBS Boston “Childcare hubs” Boston Globe
Minnesota	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires school districts to provide emergency childcare for emergency personnel, including providers of healthcare and emergency medical services; law enforcement personnel; personnel providing correctional services; public health employees; firefighters and other first responders; and court personnel - School hours only 	- School districts; unclear if the childcare is free	CBS Local
Nevada	Lead by local organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Las Vegas YMCA offering emergency childcare for first responders, military, hospital personnel and other essential staff who must report to work - Children age 3-12 - 8am-6pm 	- YMCA-funded and volunteers	Fox News Las Vegas
Ohio (statewide) Effective: 3/18 until Gov. rescinds the order	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pandemic childcare licenses: short-term licenses to provide childcare services for health and safety professionals - Reduces usual childcare regulations to focus exclusively on the health and safety of children - Existing or new childcares may apply; encourages hospitals, churches, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA organizations and existing providers as possible locations for temporary setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - none included in the Executive Order - provides childcare programs with 21 days paid days if they must close their programs because of the pandemic 	Ohio Department of Job and Family Services abc local news (for a summary)

Oregon	Lead by local organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southern Oregon YMCA offering emergency childcare for medical and healthcare workers, first responders, and vulnerable populations - Location is local schools that have been closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YMCA is suspending their usual after school and day camp program to fund the childcare 	NBC Southern Oregon
Tennessee	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcares will not be subject to inspections - Provides guidance for those wanting to offer emergency childcare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcares receiving state subsidies will continue to receive even if business declines - \$10 million in state emergency grants 	<p>Executive Order: Fox local</p> <p>Guidance for emergency childcare: CBS local</p>
Vermont	Governor Executive Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires school districts to provide childcare for essential service providers - Students K-8 - State-licensed programs must provide care for essential service providers; relaxes or waives licensing rules as necessary to make this happen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education funds (school employees directed to report to work) - Planning to “provide additional funds” underway 	Executive Order
Washington	Governor Executive Order; Lead by local schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relaxing regulations on a case-by-case basis via emergency waivers - Governor requested school districts offer childcare for healthcare providers and emergency/first responders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited group sizes - Daytime hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unknown 	<p>Emergency waivers: Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families</p> <p>School districts: Spokane Hoquiam</p>

U.S. Overview: No federal guidance and Governors hesitant to close daycares <https://www.foxnews.com/us/amid-coronavirus-fears-many-schools-close-but-some-daycares-remain-open>

Concerns about childcares remaining open because of worker safety: <https://nmpoliticalreport.com/2020/03/17/some-question-why-childcare-centers-are-still-open-during-covid-19/>