



What's New in HR Law

Ontario Reopening Child Care Centres Across the Province

June 12, 2020

In its latest move to support the next stage of the province's reopening framework, the Ontario government announced on June 9, 2020 that all child care centres across the Province will be permitted to reopen on Friday, June 12. Effective immediately, staff are permitted to re-enter child care facilities to begin preparations for reopening.

However, all centres will be required to adhere to strict safety and operational requirements, including:

- **Cohorting** - placing children and staff in groups of 10 or less day over day;
- **COVID-19 response plan** - all child care settings will be required to have a plan in place if a child, parent or staff member is exposed to COVID-19;
- **Screening** - all staff and children must be screened prior to entering the child care setting;
- **Daily attendance records** - child care settings must keep daily records of all attendees in order to support contact tracing;
- **Cleaning** - child care settings must be thoroughly cleaned before opening and frequently thereafter;
- **Visitor Limitations** – limitations on visitors must be in place such that only essential visitors are permitted entry into the child care setting; and

This update is for general discussion purposes and does not constitute legal advice or an opinion.

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- **Drop-off and pick-up protocols** – child care settings must implement such protocols in a way that facilitates physical distancing.

Child care facilities that satisfy the above-noted requirements will be permitted to reopen.

[Emergency child care](#) will wind down effective June 26, 2020 as all licensed child care centres are permitted to open province-wide.

Impact on Employers

While the permitted reopening of child care centres will assist some workers in balancing work and child care obligations, working parents may still encounter difficulty finding suitable care in circumstances where:

- Their child care provider has reduced occupancy and is only providing service to a fraction of the children that it previously cared for;
- Their child care provider delays opening in order to meet the requisite response plan requirements;
- Their child care provider is subject to future closures due to actual or suspected COVID-19 infections; and/or
- Their child has special needs or a medical condition that makes it unsafe for them to return.

In addition to the above, some parents may be uncomfortable with sending their children back to a child care provider at this time, even though re-openings are permitted and their child has no underlying medical condition.

With this in mind, employers will likely continue to see accommodation requests in respect of child care obligations. Employers should think proactively about how such accommodation requests will be addressed to ensure that a reasonable and consistent approach is adopted.

Future Updates

Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP continues to closely monitor the developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and will provide additional updates as new information becomes available.

Need more information?

For more information regarding reopening and workplace management during the COVID-19 pandemic, contact [Emily La Mantia](#) at 416-408-5511, or your regular lawyer at the firm.



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