

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

INFORMATION BULLETIN, NOVEMBER 18, 2020

FOR EDUCATIONAL CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

1. Periodic portrait of the child's development: amendment of the Regulation

An amendment has been made to the *Educational Childcare Regulation* (RSGEE) owing to the consequences of the public health emergency for the childcare services network.

Given the urgency of the situation, the *Regulation to amend the Educational Childcare Regulation* was adopted without prior publication in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*. It will come into force on the date of its publication, that is, 19 November 2020.

Therefore, effective 19 November 2020, the RSGEE will stipulate that childcare providers **are not obligated to prepare a period portrait** of each child's development in November 2020 or to send it to the parent at the latest by 15 December 2020.

The **next periodic portrait** of the child's development will have to be prepared in May 2021 and sent to the parent **at the latest by 15 June 2021**.

This amendment is intended to alleviate the burden on childcare providers. It also aims to allow childcare staff to devote the necessary time to applying the required health measures and providing children with a reassuring presence, particularly in today's environment that is so severely impacted by COVID-19.

2. Extension of the offer of training sessions on the *Accueillir la petite enfance* educational program and the child's education record

The ministère de la Famille (Ministère) wishes to inform you that the Cégep de Sainte-Foy has extended its offer of training sessions on the *Accueillir la petite enfance* educational program and the child's education record, until March 31, 2021. These training sessions are free and given in French.

Online training sessions (asynchronous mode):

- *Accueillir la petite enfance* educational program (5 h);
- the child's education record (2 h).

Webinars (synchronous mode):

- Communication with parents through an approach fostering respect and collaboration (1 h);
- Use of different types of reference books on child development to support preparation of the periodic portraits (1 h);
- The *Accueillir la petite enfance* educational program (2 half-days – 2 x 3.5 hours): this is a new formula that replaces the in-person training session initially offered.

For more information, visit the following link:

<https://dfc.cegep-ste-foy.qc.ca/services-aux-entreprises/petite-enfance-et-sante/accueillir-la-petite-enfance/>

Please note that the reservation site is constantly changing and that new dates for the webinars will be added.

3. ATTENTION: Rapid COVID-19 tests not approved

Childcare facilities have received advertisements for individual COVID-19 tests. These tests have not been approved by Health Canada. They appear to give positive results only several days after the onset of the disease. This means that people could do the test when they present symptoms, receive a false negative result and thus infect a number of other people.

If you receive advertisements for such tests, it is important to report them. For more information, visit: <https://healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2020/73003a-eng.php>.

4. Transparent masks: follow-up

Following up on the text in the Ministère's November 12th Bulletin, the CNESST has updated its FAQs on transparent masks (or masks with windows): <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/salle-de-presse/covid-19/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>.

5. Measure to assess and improve educational quality

The quality of educational childcare services is a government priority. All childcare facilities are required to participate in the measure to assess and improve educational quality, which is being implemented gradually. However, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of legally prescribed activities were put on hold this spring, notably, the quality assessments. In fact, approximately 200 assessments could not be carried out by the firm Servirplus during that period.

Assessments resumed again this fall. During these difficult times for us all, it is particularly important to offer children the best possible educational quality in all childcare facilities and all regions of Québec. By continuing the assessments, we are able to ensure this and to give children a sense of well-being and emotional security. Both the assessment process and tools adhere to the same scientific standards, and can therefore be used with no significant impact on the results obtained, despite the current context.

Servirplus has teams throughout Québec, which minimizes interregional travel. The firm has also implemented a work protocol based on the recommendations of the Direction générale de la santé publique. All employees follow all the health measures (wearing a mask, physical distancing, handwashing, disinfecting surfaces, watching out for signs/symptoms, etc.). We must remind all childcare facilities of the vital importance of adhering to all these health measures, particularly on the day of the quality assessment.

The MFA's aim is to continue the assessments, which are essential to improving the educational quality offered to children, **while also minimizing the impacts for childcare establishments**. The MFA is therefore announcing the implementation of **temporary easing measures**, effective today, for an indefinite period.

A. Longer time limit for scheduling the assessment appointment

At present, Servirplus contacts childcare facilities to propose an assessment date within the next two weeks (apart from exceptions) and is obliged to show flexibility and understanding in scheduling these appointments.

From now on, when Servirplus calls to schedule these appointments, it will propose dates that are from two to four weeks later. If none of the proposed dates are convenient owing to a particular, serious or temporary situation (such as a reorganization of the premises, a sale of assets or an interim administration), Servirplus will call the childcare facility again a few weeks later to arrange another appointment.

B. Addition of another valid reason for requesting to postpone the assessment

At present, a childcare facility may postpone an assessment to another time and agree to another date if it is experiencing a particular, serious or temporary situation (such as a reorganization of the premises, a sale of assets or an interim administration).

To take the current circumstances into account, the following reason has therefore been added to the list of valid reasons for requesting to postpone the assessment: a case of COVID-19 confirmed by the Direction générale de la santé publique or the closing of a group or childcare facility for this reason.

C. Interrater assessments on a voluntary basis

A minimum of two groups and a maximum of three groups must be evaluated for an assessment to be scientifically valid. The number is established on the basis of the size of the facility. Currently, when there are only two groups to assess (for example, in a small centre), a third person from Servirplus goes to the premises to carry out what is called an interrater assessment, which means that two assessors evaluate the same group. The Servirplus auditor also carries out interrater assessments to ensure the quality of the assessments performed. Interrater assessments will continue, but voluntarily on the part of the childcare facility. When the appointment is scheduled, it will therefore be asked whether it is willing to participate on a voluntary basis.

It is important to note that even though there will be fewer interrater assessments, they must be carried out occasionally to validate the data and results obtained.

D. Possibility of conducting virtual interviews with facility directors

The assessment process involves conducting semi-structured interviews in the afternoon with each of the educators whose group was observed in the morning, as well as an interview with the director.

The interviews with the educators will continue to be carried out in person on the same day as the assessment to ensure valid results and confidentiality.

Adjustments are possible, however, regarding the interviews with the facility director. Upon request (to be agreed to when the appointment is being scheduled) or in the event of the director's unforeseen absence on assessment day, these interviews may be conducted remotely, using recognized platforms such as Zoom, Teams, or Skype.

The interview with the director must be conducted on the same day as the assessment, in the afternoon. The questionnaire on his or her interactions with the parents will also be completed remotely.

E. Temporary suspension of assessment follow-up procedures

Again to alleviate the burden on childcare establishments, the Ministère is temporarily suspending their obligation to submit and implement their action plan, submit their action plan implementation report and participate in the follow-up assessment.

You may rest assured that the Ministère is monitoring the situation closely and will make the necessary adjustments, as the case may be.

To learn more about the Measure to Assess and Improve Educational Quality, visit:

Web page: <https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/services-de-garde/cpe-garderies/qualite-educative/Pages/evaluation-amelioration-qualite.aspx>

Guide explicatif in French: <https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/Guide-explicatif-qual-educ.pdf>

Explanatory Guide in English: <https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/Guide-explicatif-qual-educ-ANG.PDF>

The Information Bulletin from the Ministère de la Famille is a publication that provides periodic information updates for educational childcare providers during the pandemic. Be sure to always consult the latest version of the Bulletin because the information on a given topic will most likely be updated as the situation evolves.

If you do not find the answers to your questions, please call the Centre des services à la clientèle et des plaintes of the Ministère at the toll-free number 1-855-336-8568, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.