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Maryland Child Care Capacities Restored as Part of State's Overall Stage 3 Recovery

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Maryland Child Care Capacities Restored as Part of State's Overall Stage 3 Recovery

Child Care Capacity Limits Lifted;
Nearly 82 Percent of Licensed Child Care Providers Have Reopened;
Family Child Care $1,000 Start-up Grants Continue

BALTIMORE, MD – In tandem with the State of Maryland's advancement into Stage 3 of Governor Hogan's Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery, the Maryland State Department of Education is moving forward as outlined in "Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Child Care" and restoring child care capacities. Child care providers are now able to return to teacher to child ratios and capacities for which they are licensed. To date, more than 6,200, or 82%, of licensed child providers across the state have reopened.

"We are incredibly grateful to Maryland's family child care home and center-based providers for their outstanding efforts to provide working parents and guardians with access to licensed settings in these historic and unprecedented times," said State Superintendent of Schools Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. "I am also thankful for our many licensing specialists, regional managers, and supervisors across the state for their hard work in helping to bring our supply of child care from 29 percent of licensed providers in April to nearly 82 percent in just six months."

Since April, child care provider capacity has been restricted to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. Child care programs were limited first to no more than 10 persons per room and then later, to no more than 15, based on Governor Hogan's limits on social gatherings at the height of the pandemic. On August 27, 2020, as a result of improved COVID-19 health metrics across the state, Governor Hogan announced that every county school system in Maryland was now fully authorized to begin safely reopening.

Beginning today, child care programs can resume serving the allowable group size by age as referenced in licensing regulations. Today's announcement means that child care centers can now serve up to 20 three- and four-year olds in a room with a ratio of 1 teacher to 10 students and up to 30 school-age students with a ratio of 1 teacher to 15 students. All programs must continue to adhere to the allowable group size by age in licensing regulations and follow the joint MSDE and Maryland Department of Health's Covid-19 Guidance For Child Care Facilities.

Licensed child care programs interested in reopening may contact their licensing specialist and complete a Child Care Verification of Reopening form. In addition, MSDE continues to provide Family Child Care Start-up Grants of up to $1,000 for new providers starting their small businesses. Eligibility is based upon certain income levels and family size. Parents and guardians in need of child care may contact LOCATE: Child Care at https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/for-parents/locate-child-care or talk to a specialist by calling (877) 261-0060 Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For additional information and guidance on child care in Maryland and regarding COVID-19, please visit the Division of Early Childhood website at https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/.

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