MIOSHA's Ambassador Program expands to cover child care centers

MIOSHA and NSF International's successful collaboration is expanding to include non-home-based child care centers.

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Child care centers in Michigan can now schedule **free COVID-19 workplace safety consultations** as part the Ambassador Program, an ongoing collaboration between Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) and NSF International to educate heightened community transmission risk businesses about COVID-19 workplace safety requirements.

"The State is focused on providing workplace safety resources to employers of at-risk workplaces to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and we're pleased our Ambassador Program has expanded to help protect children and workers at Michigan child care centers," said Sean Egan, Michigan COVID-19 Workplace Director. "Our Ambassadors will work with child care center owners and operators to fully implement safety regulations, so they can stay open and safe, while providing reassurance to parents."

Under the program, workplace safety Ambassadors visit businesses statewide to offer education and support, with a focus on workplaces with a higher risk of community transmission. This includes bars, restaurants, retail stores, gas stations, convenience stores, bowling alleys and gyms and now child care centers.

"I appreciate the collaboration with LEO and MIOSHA to provide a program for our licensed child care centers and operators as a way to help them understand and maintain the COVID-19 safety protocols," said Orlene Hawks, director of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). "We are entrusting our child care providers to care for our children and so having this opportunity to partner with them by providing this training resource on the safety standards is tremendous."

All Michigan child care centers must operate in compliance with the current **MIOSHA Emergency Rules**, MDHHS orders and federal guidelines. Further **guidelines can be found through LARA.**

Ambassadors will work with child care owners and operators to best implement safety regulations to help ensure a safe workplace for employees, which also protects children and families. Ambassadors will utilize the **Ambassador Assessment** to evaluate required safety precautions and then provide a toolkit of resources for additional ongoing support.

Child care centers completing the Ambassador Program receive the window decal to reassure parents that they are implementing the precautions in accordance with MIOSHA's emergency rules. Ambassadors will not propose citations or issue penalties. They are there to work with businesses to improve conditions and help comply with regulations on workplace safety.

Educational materials in **the Ambassador toolkit** can be found at **Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety**, including:

- **Sample COVID-19 preparedness and response plan**
- **Re-opening checklist**
- **Posters**
- **MIOSHA guidelines**
- Factsheets for **employers** and **employees**

Based in Ann Arbor, Mich., **NSF International** is a global public health organization with a 75-year history of collaboration with businesses, governments and regulatory agencies around the world. The not-for-profit organization protects human health by developing public health and safety standards and providing independent certification and testing services.

"With the Ambassador program, MIOSHA is taking an innovative approach to a critical need among Michigan businesses and now child care centers," said Paul Medeiros, Managing Director of Consulting and Technical Services for NSF's North American operations. "We've found businesses around the world are drowning in COVID-19 guidelines, but what they really need is help operationalizing those guidelines and applying them to their specific locations."

Employers can sign up to participate at **Michigan.gov/COVIDWorkplaceSafety**.

Individuals with specific questions regarding workplace safety and health may contact MIOSHA using the hotline at 855-SAFEC19 (855-723-3219).

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