



November 1, 2018

Dear Provider:

Just as the children in your program are in a constant state of growth and development, the child care community is ever-changing. While change can present new challenges, it also gives us the opportunity to make improvements or implement new things. This letter contains important information regarding changes that will have a significant impact on your child care program. Please read on for further details.

Smoking Restrictions

In August, Governor Cuomo signed legislation amending Public Health Law 1399-o. As you know, child care regulations prohibit smoking in indoor or outdoor areas in use by children and in vehicles when children are occupying the vehicles. What does this amendment mean for you?

- Smoking is prohibited in areas where child care is provided.
- Smoking includes cigarettes, vaping, and e-cigarettes.
- The ban takes effect on November 18, 2018, and is applicable at all times, including outside of operating hours, even when children receiving care are not present.

Exciting New Technology!



OCFS is happy to announce that child care applications will soon be available online. The Facility Application and Management System (FAMS) will transform the way child care applications are processed. Enclosed you will find a fact sheet that outlines the initial phase. Please review it carefully, and contact your regulator if you have any questions.

Wave of the Future

Transitioning to the use of online applications also gives OCFS the opportunity to begin sending email communication to providers, including the Dear Provider Letter. FAMS requires all licensed and registered programs to have a valid email account. In the future, once you have created a FAMS account, the Dear Provider letter will be sent to the email address that you use to access FAMS. If you haven't already done so, please be sure your regulator has your current email address on file. We will continue to post Dear Provider letters on our website <https://ocfs.ny.gov>.

The "Blue Card" Gets a Makeover

OCFS has updated the Blue Card ([OCFS-LDSS-0792 Day Care Registration](#)) to make it more user friendly. Existing information has been reformatted and new categories have been added to capture important child-specific details. While use of the Blue Card remains optional, programs are encouraged to check out the changes. The form provides a convenient place to organize required information. LDSS-0792 can be printed from our website, or you may call the Forms Hotline at 518-473-0971 to place an order.

Paid Family Leave

Millions of New Yorkers are now eligible for **job-protected, paid time off** to care for their families under Paid Family Leave, a new state law that took effect Jan. 1, 2018. As a child care provider who regularly interacts with families, you and your staff are in a unique position to raise awareness of this landmark benefit. Complete details are available at PaidFamilyLeave.ny.gov. Additionally, the Helpline at (844) 337-6303 can answer questions in any language, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



Epi-pen Shortage

In May 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) declared a shortage in epinephrine injectors. The NYS Department of Health, the Office of Children and Family Services, and the State Education Department are reminding families who have children who rely on epinephrine to take steps to ensure they are prepared. Child care programs should check expiration dates for epinephrine auto injectors for children in care. If the injectors are due to expire, notify families so they can get a refill, or find an alternative. If families find an alternative, you will need training from

the parent, health care provider, or health care consultant on its use. To reduce the impact on consumers, the FDA has extended the expiration date of certain lots of 0.3 milligram autoinjectors that have expiration dates between April 2018 and December 2018. The full list of products can be found at: <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/DrugShortages/ucm563360.htm>. If a parent chooses, they can give the program written permission to use the expired epinephrine auto injector if it is not discolored or cloudy, and does not contain solid particles. Providers must maintain a copy of the written permission on file. For more information, please visit https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/view_article.asp?ID=1750.

Flu Season Has Arrived

Seasonal flu can be dangerous for children. An influenza vaccination is the best method for preventing flu and its potentially severe complications in children. The New York State Department of Health recommends that all children aged 6 months and older get a flu vaccine. Child care programs are required to post influenza educational material in plain view in their facilities. Flu season begins early Fall and can last through May. Printable resources can be found at:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/child_care_and_schools/

Helpful Ideas

Recently, DCCS created several child care tip sheets. Topics include (but are not limited to): playground supervision, transportation, and field trips. The tip sheets can be found on our website:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/infoforproviders.asp>

If you have any questions about the information in this letter, please contact your regulator for assistance.

Thank you for all you do for children. Best wishes for a safe and colorful fall season,

JANICE M. MUNNAN, Ph.D.

Deputy Commissioner Division of Child Care Services

Si necesita leer esta carta en español, visite el portal de la División de Servicios de Cuidado Infantil: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/letters.asp>. Si no tiene acceso a la Red o Internet, contacte al encargado de licencias o registros para recibir ayuda.

