Temporary Closures

Policy Number: FO-26-03

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Effective Date: May 6, 2026

Applicability: Group and School Age and Funded Programs

BACKGROUND

On occasion, a Group and School Age (GSA) or Funded program may need to close temporarily. Through this policy, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) establishes a Temporary Closure option for programs that elect to remain licensed or approved while temporarily pausing child care services (not including routine summer closures).

AUTHORITY

- 606 CMR 7.04(15): Notifications to the Department

POLICY STATEMENT

GSA and Funded programs that need to close child care operations temporarily for a period of more than three weeks, but less than six months, may submit a Temporary Closure transaction in the Licensing Education Analytic Database (LEAD) portal. Programs may need to close for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Damage due to fire, flooding, or other natural disasters when no other temporary location is available;
- Relocating to a new space that is not yet ready; or
- Renovations.

Programs that routinely cease operations during the summer months do not need to complete a Temporary Closure transaction.

If circumstances arise requiring a temporarily closed program to remain closed for a period longer than six months, but no more than 12 months, a program may seek an extension by contacting the assigned EEC licensor. EEC may, at its discretion, approve the requested extended temporary closure on a case-by-case basis and with Regional Director approval. Programs may only be considered temporarily closed for a maximum of 12 months. Programs that need to remain closed longer than 12 months must submit a transaction in the LEAD portal to close the program. Programs may reapply for licensure or approval when ready to reopen[1].

Please note that programs under a Temporary Closure cannot apply for or recertify C3 grants while closed, as only programs that are open to serve children are eligible for these grants. Additionally, a Temporary Closure does not meet the definition of Emergency Closure as established in Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) policy. Therefore, EEC will not provide child care assistance payments to a GSA or Funded program that is temporarily closed.

NOTIFICATIONS

- Notification to EEC: Pursuant to 606 CMR 7.04(15)(n), programs must notify EEC by providing written notice to the assigned licensor at least 30 days prior to a temporary closure, when possible. If a program needs to close due to unforeseen circumstances, the program must notify its licensor as soon as possible upon recognizing the need to close. All programs requesting temporary closure must also submit a Temporary Closure transaction in the LEAD portal.

- Notification to Families: The program must notify families at least 30 days prior to a temporary closure, when possible. If a program needs to close due to unforeseen circumstances, the program must notify families as soon as possible upon recognizing the need to close. Such notification must include the anticipated duration of the temporary closure, if known. If the family receives child care financial assistance, the program must provide the family with

[1] EEC will work with these programs to approve the application to reopen as quickly as possible.

instructions on who to contact at the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency for assistance with finding alternative care in accordance with CCFA policy. If any children are in a contracted seat, the organization may support transitioning families to another location within the contract, if desired.

- Notification to CCRR: Programs serving children receiving EEC child care financial assistance must send notification to the CCRR as soon as possible upon recognizing the need to temporarily close. Programs must work with CCRRs to connect with families to ensure a smooth transition into a new placement, if requested.

REOPENING FOLLOWING A TEMPORARY CLOSURE

When a GSA or Funded program is ready to reopen after a temporary closure, the licensee must notify EEC by submitting a Remove Temporary Closure transaction in the LEAD portal at least 30 days in advance of the anticipated opening date. As part of this transaction, all programs will be required to submit a current Staff Record Checklist and Staff Schedule. Additionally, programs that temporarily close due to renovations or damage may be required to submit updated building, fire, and health inspections.

Within 15 business days of notification, the program's licensor will visit the program to confirm compliance with all relevant health and safety requirements. A compliance plan, if required, must be accepted by EEC before the program is permitted to reopen. Upon determination that the program is fully compliant, the licensor will notify the program in writing that it may resume caring for children.

Temporary closure shall not change the dates of the license or approval renewal or any other regulatory obligations, including, but not limited to, those related to renewal, fees, or annual professional development. If the program's license or approval has expired during the closure, the program must submit a renewal transaction in the LEAD portal prior to approval to resume active operations. In addition to the health and safety visit required to reopen, EEC will conduct a renewal visit no later than 30 days after the program resumes caring for children.

If the program has moved during the temporary closure, the program shall submit a Move transaction in LEAD. The Move visit shall satisfy the health and safety visit requirement detailed above.

COMPLIANCE

Programs entering a temporary closure status are ceasing operations of the child care program and are not permitted to resume care for children until approved to reopen. Operating while temporarily closed would constitute a serious regulatory non-compliance that may negatively impact the program's license or approval.