



# Minnesota's Children's Cabinet

Dear Family Child Care and Center-Based Child Care Providers:

We are cautiously celebrating the good news of more access to vaccines and returning to beloved activities as we move into the spring and we still have work to do to keep ourselves, the families we serve and our communities safe. With COVID-19 cases, positivity rates and hospitalizations rising and variants spreading, we are not out of the woods yet and we cannot let our guard down. The Walz-Flanagan Administration and public health officials urge Minnesotans to remain vigilant and continue following critical safety measures of social distancing, masking, washing hands, and getting tested when needed.

## Minnesotans 16 and up Eligible for COVID-19 Vaccines on March 30th

Governor Walz announced on Friday March 26 that all Minnesotans 16 years of age and older will be eligible for COVID-19 vaccination beginning Tuesday, March 30. Last week Minnesota was ranked number one in the country for the percentage of vaccine doses administered to Minnesotans. The state has vaccinated 80% of our seniors, outperforming the nation, and has also vaccinated at least two-thirds of our school and child care staff.

If you or others are still in need of a vaccine:

- The first step is getting everyone (16 and older) registered in the [Vaccine Connector](#) so they can get contacted when it's their turn for a shot.
- You can also search [Vaccine Locations / COVID-19 Updates and Information - State of Minnesota](#) and make an appointment on your own (some vaccine providers are not yet serving all eligible populations).
- If you prefer, the state call center can be reached at 833-431-2053. They are open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. The call center can also help you update your Vaccine Connector profile (if your situation has changed).

**Administration for Children and Families – Office of Child Care: COVID-19 Vaccination Survey for Child Care Providers**

On March 2, 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services directed states and territories to get all teachers, school personnel, child care program educators, and other child care program staff members their first coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccination by the end of the month. To help monitor progress toward this goal, we are helping the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conduct a survey to learn about your attitudes and behaviors regarding COVID-19 vaccination. The survey should take only 5–10 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary. No personally identifying information will be collected, and your responses will be kept confidential.

If you agree to participate, please complete [this National COVID-19 Vaccination Survey](#). If you receive the link multiple times, please complete the survey just once. The survey closes on March 31.

### March Public Health Support Funds

The March Applications will be available for completion starting March 31st! Applications for COVID-19 Public Health Support Funds for Child Care will now be completed on a monthly basis. This means a program who is ineligible one month, may be eligible to apply to receive funding the following month. Emails with application information and a link to a personalized application will be sent to eligible providers on the following schedule:

Funding Period	Email sent to providers with Application Link to Apply	Application Opens	Application Closes at 4:00 pm
March 1 – 31, 2021	March 31, 2021	March 31, 2021	April 9, 2021
April 1 -30, 2021	April 30, 2021	April 30, 2021	May 10, 2021
May 1 – 31, 2021	May 31, 2021	May 31, 2021	June 9, 2021

An important update to the [FAQ](#) will be launching today, all eligible providers will receive an email alerting them to the coming application and the new version of the FAQ. All providers should review the FAQ before completing the application and carefully read the Application and Attestation. There are some modifications to the requirements, specifically that programs must agree to use all or a portion of these funds to continue to pay for responsibilities/tasks related to public health guidance implementation, as well as the salaries and wages of staff. This includes incentives; overtime or additional pay for the licensed provider and/or staff working in the program, including a self-employed family child care provider; and/or to pay staff that may be furloughed or on reduced work hours due to reduced operating capacity or reasons related to COVID-19. To reiterate, at least a portion of the funds

must be used for wages, incentives or overtime for staff and/or the licensed provider.

### Monthly Provider Call

The next provider call is on Monday, April 12 at 7 p.m.

- View a [recording](#) of the March call.
- Submit a question for the April 12 call: email the [Children's Cabinet](#).
- [Login](#) to the Monday, April 12 call or join by phone: 415-655-0003; access code 187 839 4945

### Regularly Review the Public Health Guidance

Licensed and certified child care programs are [required by state law](#) to report lab confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in children and staff in their setting following this [guidance](#). Please note that the [RedCap survey link](#) has changed.

Find links to public health guidance and other important information on the state's COVID-19 website for child care providers:  
<https://mn.gov/mmb/childcare/providers/>.

### COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 testing is an important part of the mitigation strategy. If your program is not participating in the optional onsite screening testing program for centers, continue to use the following testing options to meet your testing needs:

- **[Community Testing Sites](#)**: All COVID-19 testing is free at a Minnesota Department of Health testing site. You won't need to show identification and insurance is not required. While walk-ins are welcome, **appointments are strongly recommended to limit wait times. Visit [mn.gov/covid19](https://mn.gov/covid19).**
- **[At-home COVID-19 saliva testing](#)**: Minnesota offers free, at-home COVID-19 saliva testing, and these kits can be ordered individually at any time.

### Paycheck Protection Program Deadline Anticipated to be Extended to May 31, 2021

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is a [forgivable loan](#) program to help very small businesses, such as child care programs, with much needed financial support during these unprecedented times. *From Feb. 24 to March 10, 2021, only businesses with fewer than 20 employees could apply for a PPP loan.* This exclusive application period allowed for [participating lenders](#) to focus on serving very small businesses, such as family child care (FCC) educators and early care and education (ECE) programs. While this special application period has ended, currently applications can still be submitted for the PPP until March 31, 2021, for all

businesses but program funding can run out before then. Last week, Congress extended the PPP application deadline to May 31 and it is anticipated the President will sign this extension into law. Child care providers and other small businesses can get local assistance with the PPP and other business supports by reaching out directly to the [Small Business Administration's Resource Partners](#) or their [PPP lender](#).

For more information about PPP and other financial business supports, please visit the Office of Child Care's (OCC) webpage: [Early Care and Education Providers: Taking Advantage of the New Small Business Administration Loan and Grant Programs](#), which includes the following information:

- Two national webinar videos to help you understand and access PPP — one video for *FCC educators* and one video for *ECE programs*
- Several [resources for small businesses](#) to help FCC educators and ECE programs learn more about PPP and navigate the challenges created by the pandemic.

### Update Your Capacity

Updating your capacity through this [survey](#) and the [Provider Business Update](#) helps those with young children working in health care and other critical sectors be connected to your programs. Data from the capacity survey on [mn.gov/childcare](http://mn.gov/childcare) is being used to address immediate needs related to the pandemic, and we are sharing this map and survey with hospitals and critical sectors. Additionally, the Department of Education is regularly connecting with school districts that may be challenged to provide the required school-age care for Tier 1 essential workers to encourage them partner with child care in their community. If you have questions about your license and availability to serve additional school-age children, call the DHS hotline at 1-888-234-1268.

### Contact Us

If you have any questions, please send to [childrenscabinet.mmb@state.mn.us](mailto:childrenscabinet.mmb@state.mn.us) or call us at 651-259-3636.

Thank you,

Jenny Moses, Governor's Children's Cabinet

On behalf of participating agency leaders and staff



## Contact Us.

Website: [www.mn.gov/childrencabinet](http://www.mn.gov/childrencabinet)

Email: [childrencabinet.MMB@state.mn.us](mailto:childrencabinet.MMB@state.mn.us)