

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES CIRCULAR**

**Date:** December 30, 2021 (update of 2021-09 from February 11, 2021)

**CIRCULAR NUMBER:** **COVID-19 2021-09**

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**To:** Early learning and child care facilities

**Subject:** Prioritization of Critical Services Workers

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**Type:**  Information only

**Effective Date:** Immediately

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This circular is a reminder that Manitoba's child care facilities play an important role in ensuring essential/critical services workers can continue to provide much needed supports, such as health and social services, education, first response, and essential retail.

Throughout the pandemic, ELCC facilities have been strongly encouraged to prioritize access to available or vacant child care spaces for the children of critical services workers through emergency, interim or newly amended enrolment policies.

With the increasing prevalence of COVID 19 across the province, Boards of Directors and owner operators of child care organizations are being asked to consider making formal policy decisions on enrolment to ensure critical service workers in your parent and immediate community are supported. This may be particularly important when facilities may be challenged by availability of staff.

The Departments of Education and Families are using the same definition of critical service workers, which includes:

1. Health and health services providers
2. Child care workers (early childhood educators, child care assistants, centre administrators and support staff)
3. Kindergarten-to-Grade 12 education providers (teachers, administrators and support staff)
4. Law enforcement
5. Corrections workers
6. Fire and paramedic first responders
7. Direct social services and child protection workers

After these priority groups, facilities may wish to consider others who provide essential services, such as:

- front-line natural resource workers
- gas station attendants
- essential supply chain staff (e.g., truck drivers delivering food, medications and other essential goods; food industry staff working in food processing plants)
- grocery store staff

Examples of frontline “direct social services workers” that would be considered CSWs are:

- Child and Youth Care Practitioners working in group/residential care settings
- Staff working in Child and Family Services (CFS) group homes
- Community Living disABILITY Services (CLDS) direct service workers
- CLDS and Children’s disABILITY Services (CDS) direct support providers and respite providers
- Community service workers, behavioral specialists, resource assistants and clinical professionals who support CFS, CLDS and CDS families and children
- Staff who process Child and Adult Abuse Registry Checks
- CLDS and CFS licensing specialists and provincial investigators
- StreetReach staff
- Adoption staff
- CFS Agency and Authority staff
- Child development and autism outreach staff
- Employment and Income Assistance front-line staff

If your facility requires clarification or more information regarding providing care to the families of Critical Services Workers, questions can be directed to your child care coordinator or emailed to [cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca), or call 204-945-0776 or 1-888-213-4754.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to support Manitoba families, and to prevent the spread of COVID-19.