

FOR ECD CENTRES

During COVID-19

FAQs



We, at the Centre for Early Childhood Development, have received countless questions regarding the opening of ECD centres and aftercare services. We are concerned that centres may be misinterpreting government directives and so we wrote to the Department of Social Development to get guidelines directly from them, to distribute to ECD centres in the province, and across South Africa. This is directly from The Director of Early Childhood Development and Partial Care at the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape.

1. Are ECD centres that have a Grade R, and are thus also linked to the Department of Education, allowed to return to work as per the plan issued by the Department of Education (that is, staff to return to prepare on 18th May)?

I have been informed by the WCED that Grade R will be the last phase of the Basic Education Sector Plan to return to school. However ECD centres are guided by the national directive of the national Department of Social Development, and we do not have a date for opening of ECD centres yet. The two provincial departments are in communication with each other, and we would like to synchronise the process, but it would be dependent on the two factors mentioned.

2. When schools open, for Grade 7 and Grade 12 (at this point), will aftercare services be allowed to resume at ECD centres for these primary school children?

We have requested our national DSD for a response on this matter, and will communicate the answer once we receive national directive.

3. ECD centres are asking if it is possible - or will be possible - for children of essential service workers who have returned to work, to be cared for at their centres?

As a department we are bound by the regulations to the declaration of national disaster declared by the President of our country. This in all practicality means that as soon as the national Department of Social Development declares that ECD facilities can re-open, we will implement this instruction. Unfortunately, there is no room to deviate.

4. Is there any update as to which level of lockdown ECD centres will be allowed to resume?

The National Minister has indicated that ECD remains closed but did not provide an end date. We understand the gravity of the situation and are in contact with our national DSD and will communicate widely as soon as we receive a response.

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5. Are there guidelines from DSD on how ECD centres must prepare and operate when they are allowed to open?

We have had discussions around it, and a communication/ guidelines/ circular will (most likely) accompany the announcement to re-open partial care facilities.

6. When will teachers and staff be allowed to return to their ECD centre to prepare these hygiene and safety procedures?

Please see previous response.

7. Will DSD provide financial assistance in order for ECD centres to put necessary safety precautions and procedures in place (such as sanitisers and cleaning products)?

Please see previous response.

8. We have received questions from private ECD centres. Some are of the belief that they fall under independent schools. Please could you clarify - our understanding is that both private and NPO ECD centres are under DSD and are bound by same rules?

Both private and ECD centres registered as NPOs are under DSD and are bound by same rules.



For more COVID-19 resources for ECD centres,
caregivers and children, please visit
www.cecd.org.za/news/covid19resources/