



Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Public Health (Health)
21st Flr, 393 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 2M2

January 15, 2021

Urgent: COVID-19 Vaccination for RECEs Providing Child Care

Dear Dr. Williams,

The College of Early Childhood Educators (the College) recognizes the efforts of the provincial government and public health agencies in the complex task of distributing and administering the COVID-19 vaccine. It is in our collective interest to work together to ensure professionals on the front lines who are providing essential services are prioritized to receive the vaccine for the safety and well-being of our communities.

We are encouraged to see that the list of groups eligible to receive vaccines as part of Phase 2 has been broadened from “teachers” to “education workers.” However, we are deeply concerned that there has been no official confirmation that this will include Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) working in the child care sector.

The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of high-quality child care programs to Ontario families and to the economy. Despite the closure of many other services, licensed child care for young children and emergency child care for school-age children of essential workers continues to be provided. Since the onset of the pandemic, RECEs have risen to every challenge with courage and professionalism.

As professionals responsible for providing safe and healthy learning environments for children, RECEs have adapted to the changing environments and embraced new safety protocols. But in order to ensure the safety of the learning environment, they must themselves be safe and healthy. While caring for Ontario’s youngest learners, RECEs are in daily close contact with children in situations where physical distancing is difficult, if not impossible.

To ensure that Ontario’s families and essential workers can continue to rely on high-quality child care provided in safe environments by qualified caregivers, RECEs and others in child care must be given appropriate priority access to COVID-19 vaccines. We strongly encourage you to confirm as soon as possible that this will be included in Phase 2 vaccine distribution.

Sincerely,

Beth Deazeley
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c.c.: Members of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force; The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education; Phil Graham, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Early Years and Child Care Division; Colleen Geiger, Public Health Ontario, President and Chief Executive Officer (acting); Chief, Strategy and Stakeholder Relations, Research, Information and Knowledge