

Accelerated Approval of a Satellite Location for an Existing Licensed or Certified Child Care Center

The challenges presented by COVID-19 continue to impact Minnesotans in ways once thought unimaginable. Currently Minnesota’s public and non-public schools are making determinations about onsite, hybrid or distance learning for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result of the choices being made by some schools, many families need to make arrangements to engage their children in distance learning or otherwise provide support to their school-age children during the typical hours of school.

The Commissioner of Human Services is creating an accelerated approval process for licensed and certified centers that want to temporarily operate an additional program at a currently unlicensed new location, (a “satellite” location), to serve school-age children age 5 and older who are enrolled in a public or nonpublic school. Rather than apply for a new license or certification to meet this temporary space need, the license or certification holder may request approval to temporarily provide services for school-age children at a satellite location when the following conditions are met:

1. The provider must request approval to expand the operation of its licensed or certified program at a satellite location using a form provided by the Commissioner. Any application fee under 245A.10 is waived.
 - DHS Child Care Licensing Unit is finalizing the request form the week of August 31-September 4, 2020. If you are interested in learning more about this new process for a temporary satellite location to serve school-age children, contact your licensor.
2. The provider must attest that the satellite location: is being requested to respond to the peacetime emergency, will only serve school-age children ages 5 and older who are enrolled in a public or nonpublic school, and that no construction or renovation to the satellite location is needed in order to operate there.
3. A licensed child care center must provide documentation of compliance with applicable fire and safety codes and health rules, and verification of compliance with the local zoning authority for the new location prior to the commissioner approving the satellite location. A certified center must provide documentation of compliance with applicable fire and safety codes.
4. For licensed child care centers requesting to operate a satellite location, the license holder must provide documentation that the premises was previously inspected for compliance with the building code or that no inspection was deemed warranted.
5. The provider may not operate at the satellite location until the commissioner approves the satellite location to operate under the primary license or certification number.

6. Once approved, the commissioner will issue a letter to the provider approving the satellite location. The provider must post the letter in a place that is conspicuous to the people receiving services and all visitors to the location.
7. A license or certification holder who is subject to or appealing a conditional license, a license revocation, an immediate suspension, or a decertification is not eligible for a satellite location.
8. All services for school-age children provided at the satellite location must comply with standards and regulations under Minnesota Statutes, Chapters 245A and 245H and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 9503, as applicable, and will be enforced in accordance with Chapters 245A and 245H.
9. The satellite location will operate under the primary location's license or certification number, which means that background studies for staff and CCAP authorizations will remain in effect for the satellite location.

The approval to operate an additional program at a satellite location is valid for the duration of the peacetime emergency or until June 30, 2021, whichever occurs first.