



## Message from the Early Learning Coalition

**This notice is about:**

- Important Deadline
- Free Resource(s)
- School Readiness, VPK or other Contract Compliance
- Compliance with State Requirement
- Professional Development Opportunity
- Informational

### Provider Attendance and Reimbursement during a Temporary Closure

Dear Early Education Partner:

Governor Rick Scott signed an Executive Order declaring a state of emergency for every Florida County due to the potential severity and magnitude of Hurricane Irma. In order to assist you with completing your attendance documentation during this declared state of emergency, we are resending the below information.

**For Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) students:**

1. A student is considered to have attended all VPK program hours offered during a temporary closure caused by emergency circumstances for a combined total of five (5) instructional days for each VPK class if the private provider or school district submits notification in writing to the coalition the dates which the provider was closed.
  - a. A closure is temporary if the provider resumes instruction following the closure.
  - b. A closure is caused by emergency circumstances when a state of emergency is declared by federal, state or local officials for the area in which the provider is located.
2. A temporary closure caused by emergency circumstances is not payable for any student who does not attend a VPK instructional day following the closure.
3. A private provider or school district shall revise its class schedule to restore VPK instructional days which are lost due to temporary closures caused by emergency circumstances in excess of a total of five (5) instructional days for a VPK class.
4. A private provider or school district may revise its class schedule to restore the instructional days lost as a result of a temporary closure caused by emergency circumstances instead of accepting payment for a temporary closure.

**For School Readiness students:**

- (1) Each coalition shall maintain a Continuation of Operations Plan (C.O.O.P.) to be used in the event of emergency closings due to catastrophic events. Providers shall be reimbursed at the rate normally received during non-emergency hours when a coalition activates its Continuation of Operations Plan (C.O.O.P.).
- (2) The coalition may consider reimbursement, in accordance with Federal and State law, for circumstances of temporary closure for individual providers when closure is beyond the control of the provider or the closure is caused by emergency circumstances, including but not limited to the declaration of a state of emergency by federal, state, or local officials, or the closure of public schools in the area in which the provider is located. In no circumstances may a coalition reimburse in excess of the pre-existing approved hours for an individual child during the temporary closure.

Providers who close their programs as a result of the state of emergency and providers who are unable to resume the operation of their programs due to circumstances beyond their control will receive reimbursement for those days as indicated in the above guidance.

It will be necessary for providers to submit their September attendance rosters with the code "D" for disaster, reflecting the days that the program was closed. The provider portal is in the process of being updated to allow for the code to be selected for September attendance.

All providers should remember that programs are funded with state and federal dollars and ensure all documentation that is submitted is accurate and correctly reflects the services that were provided and the children who were served.

Once the emergency has passed and our offices have reopened, payment staff will be available to assist providers with any questions or concerns regarding the completion of September attendance documents.



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