May 7, 2020

Dear Child Care Partner:

RE: Certificate Extensions due to COVID-19

The Early Childhood Educator Registry (Registry) is pleased to provide you with information regarding a recent amendment to the Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR).

As you are aware, the CCLR requires ECEs and ECE Assistants to hold valid certification in order to work in most licensed child care programs. There are five levels of certification in BC: ECE Assistant, ECE-One Year, ECE-Five Year, Infant Toddler Educator (ITE) and Special Needs Educator (SNE).

The Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA) and CCLR outline the legislative requirements for certification in BC. In order to maintain (renew) certification, ECEs, ITEs, SNEs and ECE Assistants must complete professional development and work experience hours and demonstrate that they continue to meet the character and skill requirements outlined in the CCLR. An ECE-One Year Certificate may only be renewed once and to be eligible for renewal the registrant must provide a reason for why they were unable to complete the 500 hours of work experience required to apply for an ECE-Five Year Certificate. These legislative requirements cannot be exempted and must be met by all individuals prior to the renewal of their Certificate.

However, since the onset of COVID-19, British Columbians have been required to practice social/physical distancing and self-isolation and encouraged to stay at home. As a result, many child care facilities and agencies offering professional development have closed or are operating at reduced capacity, making it difficult for ECEs, ITEs, SNEs and ECE Assistants to complete the legislated requirements to maintain their certification.

To support our registrants during the pandemic and provide them with additional time to meet certification requirements, the Ministry of Children and Family Development has amended the CCLR to extend the expiry dates on “2015 Certificate(s)” and to allow “2019 one-year certificate(s)” to be renewed twice. These amendments have been added to the CCLR under section 31.1, Certificate extensions due to COVID-19 emergency. Below are the key details and next steps regarding these amendments:

- Five Year Certificates (ECE Assistant, ECE, ITE and SNE):
  - Certificates issued or renewed between May 7, 2015 and December 31, 2015 will receive a one-year extension to their expiry dates. For example, if a Certificate was issued or renewed on June 1, 2015, the new expiry date will be June 1, 2021.
  - Certificate-holders do not need to apply for this extension, it will happen automatically.
This is a temporary amendment that only applies to five-year certificates that are set to expire between May 7, 2020 and December 31, 2020. Expired Certificates are not eligible for this extension.

The purpose of this extension is to provide registrants with an additional year to complete the professional development and work experience hours required to renew their certification.

- **ECE-One-Year Certificates:**
  
  - Valid ECE-One-Year Certificates that were issued or renewed in 2019 may now be renewed twice. For example:
    - *Certificate issued in 2019:* A Certificate originally issued on June 1, 2019, is eligible for renewal on June 1, 2020 and again on June 1, 2021.
  
  - This is a temporary amendment that only applies valid ECE-One-Year Certificates issued or renewed in 2019. Expired ECE-One-Year Certificates are not eligible for second renewal.
  
  - To renew an ECE-One-Year Certificate, the registrant will need to complete and submit a renewal application to Registry *before their Certificate expires*. Renewal application processes remain the same. For more information, please refer to both the Registry’s website and the CCLR (links above).
  
  - The purpose of this amendment is to provide registrants with an additional year to complete the 500 hours of supervised work experience required to qualify for an ECE-Five-Year Certificate.

- If you are a licensee of a child care facility receiving the ECE Wage Enhancement, please ensure you use staffs’ new expiry date when completing your ECE Monthly Reports. Using an incorrect expiry date may cause delays in processing times.

- The Registry will not be issuing new Certificates to those who had their expiry dates extended. Registrants, licensees, employers and members of the public may continue to validate Certificates on our website.

- To validate a Certificate, the following information is required:
  
    - Registrant’s last name
    - Registration Number (located in the upper right-hand corner of the Certificate)
    - Expiry Date (use new expiry date e.g. Certificate expires on June 1, 2020, enter June 1, 2021)

If you are unable to validate a Certificate using the validation function on the Registry’s website, please contact the ECE Registry at 1-888-338-6622 (toll free) or by email at ECERegistry@gov.bc.ca.
• Section 11(4) of the CCLR requires licensees to display their staffs’ Certificates in a prominent place in the child care facility. In lieu of a new Certificate, licensees are asked to post a copy of the attached Order In Council, outlining these amendments, next to their staffs’ Certificates.

For more information regarding how government is supporting the child care workforce, including licensed child care providers, during the pandemic, please refer to the Child Care Response to COVID-19 website.

The Registry continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation, taking advice from our trusted BC public health officials. Should you have any questions regarding these amendments, please contact the Registry at 1-888-338-6622 (toll free) or by email at ECERegistry@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

Darla Faulkner
Director
Early Childhood Educator Registry