

PRESS RELEASE



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs

Covid-19: Emergency Childcare service for Essential Healthcare Workers from 18 May

Friday 1st May 2020

- Existing registered childcare services will be invited to participate in the provision of childcare in the homes of essential healthcare workers from May 18

Today the Taoiseach has outlined a 'roadmap' to lifting restrictions.

Government has asked the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to oversee the provision of childcare in the homes of essential healthcare workers from May 18. This outreach childcare model has also been supported by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) as part of the first phase of easing restrictions.

Existing registered childcare services will be invited to participate in this initiative. Participation in the service will be voluntary for both service providers and for childcare professionals. The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and her Department have acknowledged the number of dedicated childcare services and professionals that have expressed their interest in supporting such an initiative in recent weeks and being part of Ireland's call to action in these very difficult times.

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone said *"Over the past few weeks my Department has been planning for this emergency childcare service. We have been listening to suggestions from the sector. Now, with this decision to introduce the service, we will engage more intensively to make final preparations. A meeting with provider representatives will be arranged for early next week. We will make further information available to providers and their staff who may wish to volunteer as soon as possible thereafter. We will also finalise details with the Department of Health and the HSE and release information to essential healthcare workers on how they can access the scheme from May 18.*

"I would like to sincerely thank the services and staff who are planning to volunteer for doing their part in this unprecedented time for our health service. I know that not every early education or childcare service or staff member will be in a position to volunteer, but for those who can, their service is greatly valued."

ENDS