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Early Childhood Education and Care Department Releases Updated COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements for Child Care Providers

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SANTA FE, NM – Today the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) released an updated set of COVID-19 health and safety requirements for child care facilities and early childhood professionals throughout the state. The new requirements permit providers to safely return to normal group size and student-to-teacher ratios according to their licensing level, establish safety requirements for transporting children between locations, and update requirements regarding child, staff, and essential visitor health screenings. The updated requirements were developed in accordance with current guidance from the U.S. Center for Disease Control, New Mexico Department of Health, and in consultation with the New Mexico Public Education Department.

“Our top priority has always been the health and safety of New Mexico’s young children and the child care professionals who serve them,” said ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “As New Mexico’s COVID-19 numbers improve and the vaccine rollout expands, it is appropriate to safely relax some of the restrictions our child care providers have been operating under these many months. These updated requirements will allow our struggling child care providers, who are so essential to the economy and well being of our

state, to serve our communities at full capacity while maintaining a safe learning environment.
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The updated requirements also include:

- Physical distancing between children now at three (3) feet when possible in accordance with CDC recommendations
- COVID-19 testing for provider staff is now required on a monthly basis
- Updated quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated staff
- A continued commitment to mandatory mask wearing for all staff, essential visitors, and children ages three years and older

A full list of the new health and safety requirements for New Mexico child care centers and early childhood professionals is available on the ECECD website here: www.nmececd.org/updatedrequirements/

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