

Emergency Preparedness and Aftermath Planning Guide

for

Children's Centers in Pinellas County

Reviewed 8/2/2024



Pinellas County License Board
8751 Ulmerton Road
Largo, Florida 33771
Office Number 727-507-4857
After Hours Emergency Number 727-262-0247
State of Emergency Number 727-369-3900

Introduction

This booklet contains information about emergency preparedness and aftermath topics.

This is intended to be a guide and to enhance your planning process. It is not a complete or thorough planning template.

Your emergency preparedness plan should be revisited and updated every year.

The Emergency Licensing Regulations included herein were approved by the Pinellas County License Board on December 12, 2018. These regulations become effective when the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) declares a state of emergency for Pinellas County. They remain in effect 72 hours after the state of emergency is rescinded and can be extended by the PCLB's Executive Director.

Although some licensing standards will be waived (pgs. 5-10), most standards will be maintained to protect the health and safety of the children in care.

Children's Center Operators are required by Licensing Regulations, to notify PCLB within 24 hours of a storm or other emergency event. VII. C. 10. Emergency Procedures and Notification: *"After a fire, man-made, or natural disaster, the children's center must notify the Child Care Licensing Program within (24) hours as to their status of operation in order for the License Board to ensure the health standards are being met. If the children's center closes temporarily prior to re-opening, the License Board staff must inspect to ensure health and safety standards."*

In the event of a declared State of Emergency, Children's Center operators must call the PCLB State of Emergency Line within 24 hours after a storm event at 727-369-3900 to report their status.

Be prepared with a call back number when reporting storm damage, water availability, operable septic system and electricity status of your Children's Center.

In any other emergency, please call the PCLB office at 727-507-4857 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., or our after-hours emergency line at 727-262-0247 if applicable.

In the event of a spontaneous event, such as a tornado, fire, or flood, have a plan, know where to best shelter in place, have a meet up spot that is known ahead of the event and notify PCLB once it is safe to do so. If you are unsure about where to best shelter in place, ask your fire marshal for their expert opinion when they inspect your building. You should also know the difference between a "watch" and a "warning." A "watch" means there is potential for danger, while a "warning" means there is danger. You will need to be prepared to act in the event of a "watch" and put the plan into action in the event of a "warning."

PCLB's process to survey damage to your children's center is outlined on page 11. The six primary areas to be addressed are listed in detail for your review.

No one can predict the unknown but planning and preparedness can help to reduce stress from the impact of an event. As always, call upon your licensing specialist to discuss any issues of concern.

Emergency Preparedness for Child Care Centers

The time to prepare is before the storm.

Before the Storm

1. Put together your communication plan.

A. Communication: Parents - In most cases, you have plenty of time to alert parents that the child care program is closing. Make sure that your parent contact numbers are up to date so that parents can be easily reached. However, as we have learned, storms are tricky. Closure decisions are not always clear cut. Many programs close when the public schools close. Because the media broadcasts public school closings, this is an efficient way to let parents know whether or not your program is closed. Other programs have a recorded "hotline" where parents can call and find out if the program is closed. Whatever your plan, make sure parents know what it is before a storm comes. If transportation is part of your regular services, let parents know that this service may not be available after a storm due to road closures and gas shortages, etc.

Consider how you will inform parents that your program has reopened. The same "hotline" can be used to update parents about your program: the damage, the progress, and the reopening.

"Plan B" A Back-up Plan: As part of your communication plan for parents, you should talk with parents about what they will do if your child care center cannot immediately reopen. Many times parents assume that you will be able to provide child care after a storm even though your center is on the same block as their damaged home! Help parents create a 'Plan B'. Discuss options such as family or friend child care. Family care is care provided by relatives and does not require a license. Friend care is provided by trusted friends. In Pinellas, one household can offer child care for the children from one other household without the need to be licensed. Your program may link families with other families in their neighborhood. Having communication plans in place will reduce the stress for parents and your program.

B. Communication: Staff - Your staff need to know what is expected of them in the event of an emergency and you need to know what your staff will be doing if a storm hits our area. Will they be evacuating? Do they live in a flood zone? Are they responsible for caring for their own young children, disabled or elderly people at home? Do staff have their own transportation or rely on bus service? Will they need to bring their own children to work with them? Make a communication plan for staff to be contacted if your program is closing or re-opening.

One of the major concerns for emergency child care in the aftermath of a storm is whether or not volunteers have been Level 2 background screened. No one wants children to be exposed to people who may potentially harm them.

Suggestion: Make copies of each staff member's Level 2 background screening papers and distribute to the employee. If your program is unable to reopen immediately, staff may be able to work or volunteer with another program to provide child care. It's important for staff (and others) to always carry a photo ID to provide identification to authorities or in the case of injury, so that families can be contacted.

Before the Storm – continued

2. Check your building

Is it in an evacuation zone? Is it prone to flooding? Do you have adequate insurance? Is the building in good repair? Do you plan to board up your windows? Do you need to take other precautions? If the center lost power prior to you leaving for the day, is there a plan to turn the power off to all appliances to prevent a fire hazard when power returns? Are you on well water? Do you have a “disaster supply kit” for your center?

Make sure your vehicles are fueled as gas may be in short supply or there may be no power to run the pumps. The “Fuel up on Fridays” rule will ensure that even if a storm occurs on the weekend, your vehicles will be fueled for Monday.

Do you have cash on hand for needed supplies as credit card machines and ATM’s may not be operable?

Take proof of ownership of your center with you (copy of utility bill, tax bill). As a security measure to prevent “sightseers and looters” from entering an area, law enforcement may not allow you to return to the area after a storm unless you show reason to be there. Your staff may also need to show an employee ID card or pay stub for entrance.

3. Check the outside of your property

Have you trimmed the trees in the playground and around your building? Is your outdoor equipment in good repair? Where will you store your outdoor equipment if a storm comes?

4. Protect your valuables and legal papers

How will you protect your valuable equipment? What cannot be replaced? How have you filed and protected your legal papers and files? Don’t forget to have your license number with you!

5. Plan ahead for reopening

- a. In order to re-open you will at minimum need electricity, clean drinking water, an operational septic system, and a working telephone/cell phone.

Be prepared to schedule your utility provider to conduct an inspection of your natural gas lines to be sure there are no broken gas lines, leaks prior to entering the building after a storm.

Generators: PORTABLE GENERATORS ARE NOT PERMITTED. Generators are only permitted for use if the generator has been “permanently installed” by a licensed electrician and maintained in accordance with the manufactures recommendations and complies with the Florida building code/Fire Prevention Code 69A-60, F.A.C., and inspected by the local fire inspector prior to use. Additionally, if the generator is gas powered, the facility must install and maintain a carbon monoxide detector. Under no circumstances are candles, open flames, gas or fuel lanterns to be used. So, if you plan to re-open before the regular electricity is restored you must purchase and permanently install your generator now.

Before the Storm – continued

- b. Think ahead to what you will need to re-open after the storm. Do you have non-perishable food items, bottled water, hand sanitizer, heavy-duty trash bags, batteries, cell phone, diapers, wipes? Are children's enrollment records available, intact, and accurate?
- c. Prepare and train your staff on helping young children cope with a disaster; on what the symptoms of stress look like for a young child; and on how they should take care of themselves.
- d. Although not required, it would be a good service to provide the parents of children in your care with copies of their children's health & immunization records to keep with them in the event of a disaster. This would alleviate the question of whether or not the child has all their immunizations and is in good health should the family need to re-locate.

Also, keep an adequate supply of enrollment forms on hand for newly re-located families and for existing families who have temporary addresses or contact phone numbers.

State of Emergency

Once the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners declares a state of emergency, Emergency Regulations will become effective. While the majority of the child care licensing regulations will remain the same, the PCLB has approved waivers for some standards. Review the following chart carefully. If you plan on providing child care and have questions regarding these waivers, call your licensing specialist before an event. Remember these special Emergency Regulations will be in effect for a limited period: up to 72 hours after the State of Emergency has been rescinded. Thereafter all regular standards again become effective unless extended by the PCLB Executive Director.

State of Emergency

REGULATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S CENTERS DURING EMERGENCIES

Original date: August, 2006; revised May 7, 2008, August 6, 2008, December 12, 2018

All licensing regulations will be in effect during emergencies. Only the following regulations have been decreased. Licensees wishing to operate under these self-executing Emergency Regulations would be subject to conditions 1-3 listed below; 4 is an agency operation policy.

1. Emergency Regulations will become effective upon the declaration of a State of Emergency by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners pursuant to Florida Statutes, Chapter 252, and will remain in effect for up to 72 hours after the State of Emergency has been rescinded. The Executive Director, or designee, is granted the authority to extend the use of Emergency Regulations as the situation dictates. After Emergency Regulations are rescinded, Licensing Regulations governing children's centers and family day care homes would again be in effect.
2. After a fire or natural disaster, the children's center/family day care home or large family day care home provider must notify the Child Care Licensing Program within 24 hours as to their status of operation in order for the Child Care Licensing Program to ensure health standards are met for continued operation as a children's center/family day care home or large family child care home. Damage to the building or property/home may require approval from the Child Care Licensing Program and in addition may require the Health Department and/or other agencies to inspect and approve the premises.
3. Emergency Regulations represent a variance to Licensing Regulations. A variance is a privilege and not a right; as such, it can be withdrawn at anytime, with or without cause and without the right to appeal. Negative sanctions may also be brought against the licensees' regular license, if appropriate.
4. The Executive Director is given the authority to approve specific centers or homes to use Emergency Regulations during states of emergency declared by the Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough, Pasco, or Manatee pursuant to Florida Statutes, Chapter 252, upon a showing that the licensees' request is based upon the need to care for refugee/evacuee children.

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S CENTERS

LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS	WAIVERS TO REGULATIONS
<p>DEFINITIONS</p> <p>Children's Center - A children's center includes any day nursery, nursery school, kindergarten, or other facility whatsoever which provides child care, with or without compensation. A children's center provides care for five (5) or more children under thirteen (13) years of age, not related to the operator by blood, marriage, or adoption away from the child's own home for less than 24 hours per day.....</p> <p>School Age Center – A school age center means a children's center that provides child care for only school age children.....</p> <p>Overnight Care - Overnight care means child care provided past 12:00 am and shall not be provided in children's centers. . .</p>	<p>DEFINITIONS</p> <p>Children's Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive to state level of up to twenty-four (24) hours per day per child. <p>School Age Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive age restrictions to allow infants through school age in all categories of children's centers. <p>Overnight Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive to state level to allow overnight care.

<p style="text-align: center;">LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WAIVERS TO REGULATIONS</p>
<p>I. PERSONNEL</p> <p>B. Education/Credentials</p> <p>1. Education Qualifications</p> <p>a. Day nursery workers (DNW) caring directly for children in any day nursery shall be high school graduates. School age center workers (SACW) caring directly for children in any school age center shall be high school graduates. All day nursery workers and school age center workers in the adult-child ratio hired on or after January 1, 2006, must fully meet the education requirement. Staff hired prior to January 1, 2006, will have until January 1, 2007, to satisfactorily complete a GED program or be a high school graduate.</p> <p>b. The staff member in charge (SMIC) of the staff and program of a day nursery shall have completed a minimum of six (6) semester hours of college credits in early childhood education with passing grades.</p> <p>c. The staff member in charge (SMIC) of the staff and program of a school-age center shall have completed a minimum of six (6) semester hours of college credits with passing grades in early childhood education, elementary education, physical education activities for children, guidance, recreation, or the eight content areas listed in the Licensing Regulations I.B.1.f.3.</p> <p>d. The nursery school or kindergarten teacher in charge (TIC) of curriculum, staff, and program shall have completed two (2) years of college training including twelve (12) semester credit hours in early childhood education with passing grades and shall have had two (2) years of teaching experience. Teachers (T) working directly under the person in charge of curriculum, staff, and program shall be high school graduates, and in addition shall have completed two (2) years of college training including twelve (12) semester hours credit in early childhood education with passing grades or shall have completed twelve (12) semester hours credit in early childhood education with passing grades and have had two (2) years of teaching experience.</p> <p>(1) Child care staff, not in charge of curriculum, staff, or program who does not meet requirements, may be employed temporarily as a teacher of a licensed, nursery school or kindergarten, if said staff member is in the process of acquiring the necessary educational qualifications. A teacher in the process (TIP) of acquiring the necessary educational qualification must meet the experience requirement and one of the following:</p> <p>(a) A minimum of three semester credit hours or four-quarter hours of college credits each year toward acquiring the necessary twelve semester credit hours or 16-quarter credit hours; or</p> <p>(b) Participation in the Child Development Associate credentialing program; or</p> <p>(c) Participation in the Child Care Apprenticeship Program of Pinellas County.</p>	<p>I. PERSONNEL</p> <p>B. Education/Credentials</p> <p>1. Education Qualifications</p> <p>Waive entire standard.</p>

LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS	WAIVER TO REGULATIONS
<p>I. PERSONNEL B. Education/Credentials 1. Education Qualifications f. continued (3) continued (g) Principles of child growth and development (h) Strategies to manage an effective children's program operation (4) In lieu of completion of six (6) semester hours of college credits in the eight content areas, a staff member in charge of a day nursery, school-age center or nonpublic school may satisfactorily complete a CDA credential, a state approved equivalent, or a Florida School-Age Certification. This may be documented on a transcript, diploma, or certificate.</p>	
<p>I. PERSONNEL B. Training Requirements 18. Infant Center Training a. Director Training (1) The director shall be required to complete prior to issuance of a temporary permit the approved infant training specifically for directors who plan to provide for infant care. (2) A new director of an existing children's center providing infant care shall be required to complete within ninety (90) days of hire the approved training for infant care. Directors hired prior to October 1, 2005 shall be required to complete the approved training by January 1, 2006. b. Child Care Staff Training Child care staff caring for infants shall complete the approved training for infant care within ninety (90) days of employment; and in addition, annual in-service training of ten (10) hours shall include four (4) hours of training specifically related to infant care.</p>	<p>I. PERSONNEL B. Training Requirements 18. Infant Center Training Waive entire standard.</p>
<p>II. SUPERVISION A. General Supervisory Standards 10. Infants shall not be combined with children over two (2) years of age except that any child two (2) years of age or older who is not toilet trained may be allowed to remain in the infant group. 12. Adults shall be engaged in child care exclusively and shall regularly work no more than eight (8) hours in twenty-four hours. 13. A staff member qualified to be in charge shall be on the premises at all times when children are present.</p>	<p>II. SUPERVISION A. General Supervisory Standards 10. Waive entire standard. 12. Waive work hours to no more than twelve (12) hours in twenty-four (24) hours. 13. Waive entire standard.</p>

LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS	WAIVERS TO REGULATIONS
<p>II SUPERVISION</p> <p>B. Adult-Child Ratios</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The staff-to-child ratio <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 1 adult for each 3 infants 2 months to 1 year; b. 1 adult for each 5 infants 1 to 2 years; c. 1 adult for each 10 children 2 years old. <p>C. Group Size</p> <p>In infant programs the maximum group size shall be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For ages 2 months to 1 year of age-a maximum group size of 6 Infants. 2. For ages 1 year to 2 years of age – a maximum group size of 10 Infants. 	<p>II SUPERVISION</p> <p>B. Adult-Child Ratios</p> <p>Waive entire standard to state ratios of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 1 adult for 4 infants birth to 1 year; b. 1 adult for 6 infants 1 to 2 years; c. 1 adult for each 11 children 2 years old. <p>C. Group Size</p> <p>Waive entire standard to no maximum group size</p>
<p>V. RECORDS</p> <p>A. Facility Records</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Children's Health Requirements <ol style="list-style-type: none"> g. No infant shall be admitted to the children's center without first obtaining immunizations appropriate to the age according to standards. 9. A notarized Emergency Medical Release form must be on file for each child in care. 	<p>V. RECORDS</p> <p>A. Facility Records</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Children's Health Requirements. <p>Waive to state level of obtaining immunizations within 30 days of enrollment.</p> 9. Emergency Medical Release. <p>Waive to delete notarization requirement.</p>
<p>VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>D. Indoor Play Space</p> <p>Indoor play space is required.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A children's center that holds a valid license on October 1, 1992, must have a minimum of 25 square feet of usable indoor floor space for each child. . . 10. For infants, there must be a minimum of 35 square feet per child of suitable and usable space, which includes open play space. Applications received after January 1, 1993 for programs serving infants under one year of age must meet the requirement of a minimum of 50 square feet per child of suitable and usable space, which includes open play space. All infant rooms shall include a diapering area with hand-washing facilities with hot (temperature not to exceed 110 ° F.) and cold running water. 	<p>VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>D. Indoor Play Space</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Waive to state level of a minimum of 20 square feet of usable floor space. 10. Waive 50 square feet to 35 square feet per child of suitable and usable space. <p>Waive to delete hot water requirement.</p>

LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS	WAIVERS TO REGULATIONS
VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT E. Outdoor Play Space 8. A separate fenced play area shall be provided for infants under two (2) years of age.	VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT E. Outdoor Play Space 8. Waive entire standard.
VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT F. Napping Space 4. Cots and/or cribs shall be set up so that each child is no closer to another, during the nap period, than two-feet. . .	VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT F. Napping Space 4. Waive to state level of 18 inches around individual napping space.
VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT G. Bathroom Facilities 2. For children's centers, having one (1) to thirty-six (36) children, there shall be a minimum of two (2) toilets and two (2) wash basins. There shall be a minimum of one (1) toilet and one (1) wash basin for every eighteen (18) children thereafter.	VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT G. Bathroom Facilities 2. Waive to state level of one (1) sink/washbasin for one to fifteen (15) children; 1 additional sink/washbasin for every thirty (30) thereafter.
VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT G. Bathroom Facilities 6. For school-age centers, having one (1) to thirty (30) children, there shall be a minimum of two (2) toilets and two (2) wash basins. There shall be one (1) toilet and one (1) wash basin for every thirty (30) children thereafter.	VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT G. Bathroom Facilities 6. Waive to state level of one (1) sink/washbasin for the first fifteen (15) children; 1 additional sink/washbasin for every thirty (30) thereafter.
VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT I. Indoor Equipment 4. Shelves shall be provided for equipment and supplies in rooms used by children. . . 5. Tables and chairs suitable in size and sufficient for the total number of children and for the age group under care must be provided and maintained. 6. For preschool children, adequate and appropriate equipment and materials shall include but are not limited to: a. Dramatic play materials: toy housekeeping furniture, supplies, and props. b. Construction play materials: fluid and structured, unit blocks, water play, sand play, and other mediums. c. Art, music, and creative expression materials: easels, paints, brushes, paper, scissors, crayons, markers, clay/play dough, rhythm instruments, and a source of music, such as a tape or CD player	VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT I. Indoor Equipment 4. Waive to allow for shelving alternative. 5. Waive to delete "sufficient for the total number of children". 6. a. - g. Waive to delete equipment and materials for specific areas.

LICENSING REGULATIONS GOVERNING PINELLAS COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTERS	WAIVERS TO REGULATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Early literacy and language materials: books, puppets, flannel boards, and writing supplies. e. Science and math games and materials: magnifying glasses, magnets, measuring equipment, textured objects, geometric shapes, and supplies for counting, matching, sorting, patterning and sequencing. f. Gross and fine motor development: balls, climbing and balancing equipment, puzzles, and other manipulatives. 	
<p>VI. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>I. Indoor Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. continued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Other materials that will enhance the child's development. <p>For programs using nationally recognized early childhood educational theory, such as Montessori programs, equivalent equipment and materials may be used. Equivalences must be approved by the License Board for adequacy and appropriateness.</p> <p>...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. a. A cloth sheet which can be fastened to the cot is required as the "washable cover" for cots. . . b. Each child in care must be provided safe and sanitary bedding to be used when napping. Bedding means a cot or crib. . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Infants up to one (1) year of age must sleep in individually assigned cribs or portacribs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. a. Waive to delete the fastenings for cloth sheet. b. Waive to state level to include floor mats at least one (1) inch thick and covered with an impermeable surface for resting/napping. 14. Waive to state level to include play pens for resting/napping.
<p>Any regulation requiring running water.</p>	<p>Bottled water may be used.</p>

The Aftermath – After the Storm Passes

Most experts, government sources and the like, have stated that everyone should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours after the storm has passed. No one can actually predict or forecast the conditions of the aftermath, but PCLB staff have a plan in place to survey the damage to children's centers as soon as it is safe to do so.

Damage Survey Process

1. **Within 24 hours of the storm or event, call the appropriate number below to report your operation status.**

In the event of a declared State of Emergency: 727-369-3900

In any other emergency: 727-507-4857 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., or after-hours emergency line at 727-262-0247 if applicable.

Be prepared with a call back number when reporting storm damage, water availability, operable septic system and electricity status of your Children's Center.

2. Expect someone to return your call to do a more extensive telephone damage assessment survey. PCLB may partner with Pinellas Early Learning Coalition (ELC) to ensure a quick response time when make these calls.
3. Licensing specialists and/or the Health Department, Building Department, or the Fire Department may need to make follow-up site visits.

Your children's center may need to close temporarily until your situation can be assessed and concerns satisfactorily addressed.

4. You must survey the damage to your center and property before offering to provide child care. The following are the six primary areas that must be addressed:

- A. INTEGRITY OF PHYSICAL FACILITY - INDOOR & OUTDOOR
- B. DRINKING WATER QUALITY
- C. ELECTRICAL POWER SUPPLY & A WORKING TELEPHONE (can be a cell phone)
- D. FOOD SERVICE & SAFE HANDLING
- E. SANITATION & VERMIN CONTROL
- F. STAFFING & SUPERVISION

A. INTEGRITY OF PHYSICAL FACILITY - INDOOR & OUTDOOR:

- No damage sustained by storm.
- Structure integrity including roof, windows, doors, etc., not compromised.
- Check for sagging ceilings and warped drywall as signs of structural damage.
- No live wires, downed wires in play area/parking area, or on adjacent building/property. Turn off power at the main breaker box if you see sparks or broken or frayed wires inside. Call the power company immediately.
- If appliances appear to have been flooded or wet, unplug and do not use until checked out by a professional.
- No open sewage or flooding in play area, or on premises.
- Outdoor area not significantly compromised. (fence exemptions available when warranted.)

The Aftermath- continued

- All equipment in play area must be checked for structural integrity/damage and ensure it is securely anchored.
- No trees downed in the area, no low-lying tree branches.

Outdoor Area:

- Fencing checked for structural integrity and gaps.
- Temporary fencing **MUST BE** inspected and **MAY BE APPROVED** on a case-by-case basis as a substitution for permanently installed fencing around the play area.
- Nails, glass, roof tiles, and other debris from the storm must be removed.
- If facility has multiple playgrounds, some of which were damaged, but at least one which remain uncompromised, then facility may rotate children through this play area.
- All outdoor toys and play equipment must be cleaned and sanitized prior to use if flooding occurred.
 - This includes roof leaks, ceiling tiles and debris downed, water intrusion from high outdoor water levels, standing water accumulated. Clean then sanitize with ¼-cup bleach to a gallon of water.
 - If any sewage contact and/or standing water accumulated, sanitize with 1-cup bleach to a gallon of water.
- Children's Center may be permitted to re-open without a usable playground with prior approval from PCLB.

Indoor area:

- Ensure structural integrity of the building is not compromised by flooding (warped walls, cabinets, etc.)
- Remove, repair, or replace all water-damaged furniture, cardboard and paper products, carpeting and flooring. Dry out and sanitize all affected areas.
- ***An inspection by the Building Department may be required before opening for business.***

B. DRINKING WATER QUALITY:

- If water supply is lost or water pressure dropped for any period of time, observe boil water protocol as directed by your local municipality. If you have questions about the status of your water, call **Pinellas County Utilities at 727-464-4000**. If applicable, you can submit a water sample to the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County to check the status of your water supply.
- Flush water fountains/coolers, then sanitize with bleach water solution prior to use; empty and flush ice machines and sanitize with bleach water solution prior to use. Juice machines (if used) should also be flushed and sanitized prior to resumption of use. Contact your service provider for instructions.
- If on boil water notice, use only bottled water for cooking, drinking and brushing teeth. Render all water fountains/bottled water dispensers/juice machines/ice machines/dishwashers inaccessible by removing them to a locked room, taping them closed, covering with large paper bag/box, or sheet and warning sign and taping securely, or turn off water from them. Prevent use until further notice.
- Boiled water should not be given to infants or pregnant women due to the high nitrate content. Use bottled water.

Aftermath- continued

- Follow hand-washing procedures, use hand sanitizer for all staff, volunteers, and children. Hand sanitizer should be dispensed by staff to children and not left out accessible to young children as it is typically labeled “keep out of reach of children” and could be harmful if swallowed.
- Use only single service, disposable plates/cups/bowls/ spoons/forks until the boil water notice is lifted. While under a “boil water notice,” the type and quantity of food prepared may be limited.

C. ELECTRICAL POWER SUPPLY & TELEPHONES:

- Working A/C or building maintained at a comfortable temperature, fire alarm systems and emergency lighting (if applicable) operable.
- No live, exposed, or downed power wires. If you suspect any electrical problem. Call **Duke Energy (800)700-8744**. Equipment not working could be a sign of electrical problems. Ensure electrical wiring and circuitry is not compromised. Ensure that a licensed electrician completes any electrical repair work. *An inspection may be required before opening for business.*

Generators: PORTABLE GENERATORS ARE NOT PERMITTED: Generators are only permitted for use if the generator has been “permanently installed” by a licensed electrician and maintained in accordance with the manufactures recommendations and complies with the Florida building code/Fire Prevention Code 69A-60, F.A.C., and inspected by the local fire inspector prior to use. Additionally, if the generator is gas powered, the facility must install and maintain a carbon monoxide detector. Under no circumstances are candles, open flames, gas or fuel lanterns to be used. So, if you plan to re-open before the regular electricity is restored you must purchase and install your generator now.

D. FOOD SERVICE & SAFE HANDLING

If food service is normally catered, it should be anticipated that there will be an interruption in this service. It would be a wise precaution to have a supply non-perishable food items in your “disaster supplies” that children and staff would both like and be able to eat. Keep in mind that children do have allergies to certain foods (i.e. peanut butter). Ask parents to provide a non-perishable snack/food item that you could label and give their child in the event of a hurricane/disaster.

- Following power outages, discard all food in refrigerator/freezer and re-stock. (unless power was maintained by an pre-approved permanent generator.)
- Discard all packed foods in contact with flood water/sewage (except canned foods - cans may be sanitized prior to use/storage).
- Discard all paper products and disposable utensils/flatware items in contact with floodwater/sewage.
- Ensure food supply is from approved source.
- Ensure that food supply is stored appropriately, up off the floor, in a cool dry area for canned and dry goods, perishable items.

E. SANITATION & VERMIN CONTROL

- Municipal/city/county sewer service must be in normal working condition.
- Bathrooms must be operable.

Aftermath- continued

- Garbage pickup service may be disrupted for an unspecified time period. It would be a good preparation technique to have a supply of heavy-duty garbage bags in order to place refuse in.
- Good sanitation is critical after a storm to help cut down on disease. Keep a supply of fresh bleach water on hand to clean and sanitize on a regular basis. (Be sure to mix Bleach 1:10 for sanitizing.) Keep dirty diapers and other garbage tied up and kept in a secure location outside of the center.
- Open doors and windows must be screened to prevent rat/vermin and insects from entering.
- The entire indoor and outdoor area should be checked for vermin/animals/snakes seeking shelter (ant mounds will be common after much rain). Mosquito swarms are also common. Adequate protection measures should be taken prior to taking children outside. (Parental authorization slips are required to apply repellents.)
- Septic Tank (if applicable) must be in normal working condition. If applicable, facilities should be able to identify where the septic tank and drain field are located on the property. Facilities using these should monitor both for failure twice daily, as area flooding, and heavy use by facility may cause the OSDS system to fail. Monitor for slow drainage from sinks, odor/bubbling/gurgling or raw sewage in the area of the septic tank/drain field. The septic system may need to be pumped if these problems are observed.

F. STAFFING & SUPERVISION

- **CPR/First Aid:** Minimum 1 currently CPR/First Aid certified staff on site at all times.
- **Staff and volunteers:** All staff must be screened in accordance with applicable laws and meet age requirements. Volunteers who have completed an Attestation of Good Moral Character, may be used to meet the staffing requirements as long as they are under the constant & direct supervision of screened staff at all times. It would be useful to make copies of staff's background screening documents and keep in a folder away from the center in the event staff are needed to provide child care services at an alternate location.
- **Staff ratios:** Ratios for children remain as stated in Licensing Regulations Governing Pinellas County Children's Centers.
- **Supervision and care of children post disaster:** In the days/weeks after a disaster, young children may exhibit various behaviors due to stress. They may start having toileting accidents and acting out behaviors, separation anxieties, etc. Staff should be aware of these behaviors and recognize them for what they are and give all the children the extra patience and care that they need. Keep children busy and in a routine to try and keep behaviors to a minimum. Keep an extra supply of clothes for toileting accidents and comfort items (favorite doll, toy, blanket) for those needing extra comforting. Let the children talk about their experiences and draw pictures to share with their parents. Do not allow radio and television exposure so children are not inundated with news coverage of a disaster.

As there may be a sense of chaos following a disaster, make certain parents have provided you with any needed medication, breathing treatments, special diet foods, new emergency phone contacts, etc.

Aftermath- continued

- **Center temporarily closed for repairs due to disaster event:** A child care center may not transfer their program/child care facilities to another location that is not licensed.

Contact PCLB to schedule a site inspection for approval to re-open. Extensive renovations may require plan review and approval.

- **Children transferring from centers temporarily closed due to disaster event:** Complete Enrollment Information is required. Immunizations and physicals requirements are required within 30 days for those children transferred from their primary child care facility to alternate child care facility.

All available enrollment information shall be transferred with the children or obtained immediately upon transfer to the alternate center.

- **Field trips:**
Mandatory: No field trips due to prevailing conditions (power lines down, traffic lights down, streets blocked, area-wide power outages, regional flooding, gas shortages, etc.).

ALL OTHER RULES AND REGULATIONS SHALL APPLY UNLESS SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED.

Important Phone Numbers

Child Care Licensing Main Number: 727-507-4857 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

After-Hours Emergency Number: 727-262-0247

State of Emergency Number: 727-369-3900 (use only during a Declared State of Emergency)

Pinellas County Utilities: 727-464-4000

Duke Energy: (800)700-8744

Health Department - Environmental Health: 727-507- 4336

Most major television stations and radio stations will be broadcasting important information during and after a hurricane. Listen carefully to all information.



8751 Ulmerton Road, Suite 2000, Largo, FL 33771 * (727) 507-4857 * Fax (727) 507-4858 * www.PCLB.org
Funded by: Juvenile Welfare Board, Florida Department of Children and Families and Pinellas County Health Department