



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Note to editors: [B-roll of Potrero Hill Recreation Center Available Here](#)

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**SAN FRANCISCO EXTENDS EMERGENCY CHILD AND
YOUTH CARE UNTIL END OF SCHOOL YEAR**

The Recreation and Park Department will keep centers open until at least June 2nd to provide care for children of health care workers, first responders, and other essential City employees.

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed today announced that San Francisco’s emergency child and youth care centers will remain open until at least June 2nd to provide a safe place for children of first responders, health care workers, and essential City employees. The extension comes after the San Francisco Unified School District announced this week that public schools will not reopen until the fall.

The emergency child and youth care centers are part of the City’s efforts to support essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency care, which began on March 16th, is provided at 28 locations across the city to children from kindergarten through eighth grade. The centers are open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. to support health care workers in public and private hospitals and clinics who work 12-hour shifts.

“Parenting during a pandemic is stressful enough as it is, and parents who are working on the frontlines shouldn’t have to worry about finding or paying for safe, quality care for their children while they’re at work,” said Mayor Breed. “Our City departments have come together to operate these emergency care centers and support the brave workers who are taking care of others. With this extension, we are assuring essential employees that their children will have a safe place to go while schools remain closed.”

The emergency care centers are operated in partnership between the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and the Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF). Dedicated recreation professionals operate these facilities, providing a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, including sports, art and STEM projects. DCYF provides three meals a day to all participants.

With the current school year affected by the City’s Stay Home Order, Recreation and Park staff will support schools’ distance learning initiatives by providing workspace, study time, as well as Wi-Fi connectivity at select emergency care facilities. Teachers and school officials are in communication with childcare staffers about students’ learning goals.



Feedback from participating families in the program has been positive. Omoyeni Animashaun said she is relieved to know her 6-year-old son receives high quality care at Potrero Hill Recreation Center while she works nearby at San Francisco General Hospital.

“Not only is he safe and cared for, he is actively learning and his confidence has gone up thanks to the staff, who have worked with him on his reading. His skills have improved so much that when he read to me, I had tears in my eyes,” said Animashaun.

The service is offered to employees of San Francisco-based hospitals and clinics, employees of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, City employees activated as Disaster Service Workers, other essential City workers, and low-income families on the Recreation and Park Department’s scholarship list.

“I’m proud to be a City Disaster Service Worker and I am honored to serve the city where I live and work during this global crisis,” said Kristin Hogan Schildwachter with the Department of Emergency Management, who works in the City’s Emergency Operations Center. “I know the work that all DSWs are doing is essential to our City’s ability to respond and recover from this terrible pandemic, but I’m a mother first and having my children taken care of in the safe, stable, nurturing and fun environment is my priority. The care has provided my entire family comfort and stability during this tumultuous time. I’m particularly grateful to the wonderful staff of Glen Park Recreation Center—my son and daughter can’t wait to go to ‘camp’ every day.”

“The emergency child and youth care program is an example of City agencies coming together to come up with creative solutions during this unprecedented time,” said San Francisco Recreation and Park General Manager Phil Ginsburg. “Our staff makes sure that the children in their care enjoy a stable routine, time to learn, and space to have fun.”

In addition to the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department sites, Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco, TEL-HI Neighborhood Center and the YMCA of San Francisco have joined the City’s efforts and are providing 230 emergency child and youth care slots serving ages 0-17 across 11 location sites.

“No hospital, healthcare or essential worker should have to choose between working or providing emergency care for their children and youth. This is a critical need our City has responded to and has been providing for our COVID-19 first responders to lessen their stress and worry,” said Maria Su, DCYF Executive Director. “We can assure parents they can go to their jobs knowing that their children and youth are safe, well cared for, fed and are being supported in their distance learning. DCYF is proud to work rapidly with our City partners across public and private sectors to ensure that we support as many children and youth as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak.”

The Public Health Order issued on Monday, March 16 and extended on March 31 requires San Franciscans to stay home, except for essential needs. Health care workers and other essential providers are exempt from the Order because their work is necessary to respond to COVID-19.



The Order allows childcare facilities to operate if they serve parents who work in essential businesses and comply with the following conditions to the extent possible:

1. Children must be cared for in stable groups of 12 or fewer.
2. Groups of children may not mix with each other.
3. Providers may not circulate between groups.
4. Common areas may be shared by multiple groups, however their use of these areas should be staggered as much as possible.

Recreation and Park Department's emergency child and youth care centers follow social distancing and related COVID-19 sanitation and hygiene recommendations. Sites are limited to 12 children per site for smaller facilities and 24 children for larger facilities, split into two groups of 12 that do not interact, in accordance with the Order.

The Department of Human Resources is conducting outreach to Department of Public Health staff and Disaster Service Workers about the emergency childcare program. The Recreation and Park Department and the Department of Emergency Management are working together to conduct outreach to hospital and health care clinic staff.

For more information on the City's Emergency Child Care Program, visit dcyf.org/care.

Find the answers to frequently asked questions about the order at [SF.gov/coronavirus](https://sf.gov/coronavirus).

Other Public Health Orders and recommendations from DPH can be found at sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus.asp. Mayoral declarations regarding COVID-19 can be found at sfmayor.org/mayoral-declarations-regarding-covid-19.

For more information, you can also call 311. For official updates, sign up for the City's alert service: text COVID19SF to 888-777.

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