

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE UNITED WORKERS UNION ECEC RULES TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE NOT THE DIRECTOR AT YOUR CENTRE:

- Firstly it's important to explain to your director what's in the United Workers Union Rules to Stop the Spread of COVID-19. Show your director why it is the only way to remove the immediate risk to both staff and children. You might want to bring a fellow staff member with you to this conversation. Here are some of the key points to explain to your Director:
 - o Early childhood educators are at the front line of this pandemic. We need to care for ourselves, the children and the families at this centre.
 - o If we don't take action NOW we are putting the community at risk and putting the sector at risk of being shut down.
 - o The centre needs to show parents that it has a plan to stop the spread of COVID-19-19 or the centre will suffer further un-enrolments.
 - o Staff will stop coming to work if the current, serious risks to their health and safety are not resolved.
 - o The Union will be running a scorecard of centres who have implemented the Rules, and those who haven't and are choosing to put children, families and the community at risk.
- Next, get your director to commit to implement the Rules.
- Then you and your director can work together to implement the Rules (see how to do this below).

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE DIRECTOR AT YOUR CENTRE:

- Start implementing the Rules TODAY! It is critical that the sector takes action immediately to protect workers, children, families and the community.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE RULES:

- Arrange an emergency staff meeting that evening.
- Give copies of the Rules to everyone and talk through how they will be implemented.
- Ring every worker who wasn't at the staff meeting to tell them what they missed.
- Email your Union to tell them you will be implementing the Rules. Send the email to ***Bigsteps@unitedworkers.org.au***
- Tell every parent of the new policies and procedures and give them a copy of the Rules – they will appreciate it!

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CENTRE REFUSES TO IMPLEMENT THE RULES:

- Firstly, go and speak with all your colleagues and ask them where they stand. Tell them how you feel. If you are worried that there is a real risk to your health and safety if the Rules are not adopted – say that! Here are some tips on how to have this conversation with your co-workers:
 - o Ask them if they are feeling safe at work.
 - o Explain the Rules to them. Ask if these measures would make them feel safer coming to work.
 - o If they feel that these measures would be a good thing, ask them to back you up by speaking to the director about implementing the Rules.
- Next, demand a meeting with your director and all of your colleagues that feel unsafe. Here are some important things to do in that meeting:
 - o Give your director a copy of the United Workers Union Rules to Stop the Spread of COVID-19.
 - o Explain to your director why you are concerned by the lack of safety measures to stop the spread of COVID-19.
 - o Explain why you feel at immediate risk of contracting COVID-19.
 - o Ask your director to follow the Rules, so that you are no longer at risk of contracting COVID-19.
 - o If your director refuses, explain to them that you are at immediate risk of contracting COVID-19. Because of this they will need to find you safe alternative work or you will be ceasing work.
 - o Tell them that without a strong commitment to improve health and safety you cannot continue to work in an unsafe centre.

- If your director will not implement the Rules to improve health and safety in the Centre then provide your director with a copy of the letter in this pack. The letter:
 - o Explains to your director that you are concerned you are at immediate risk of contracting COVID-19.
 - o Asks your director to find work you can do from a safe location (this may include doing training or programming from home).
 - o Explains to your director that if they cannot find safe work for you then you will need to stop working.
- If you need to leave then the centre may dip below the required ratios. Talk to your director about how you can help with next steps.
 - o It might be useful to explain that everyone working in ECEC is faced with a huge challenge at the moment – balancing their commitment to early childhood education with a grave concern about health and safety for everyone who comes into contact with the centre.
 - o Let your director know that you are committed to children’s safety even during this time of crisis.
 - o Ask your director what you can do to help in the next hour. You could start by offering to help your director contact parents for one hour so they have every chance to come and collect their children.
- After one hour has passed it is time to leave the centre. Talk to your director before you leave, telling them once again why you are leaving and that you are leaving now.
- After you have left the centre call or email your Union immediately and let them know.

Union members came up with the Rules to ensure the safety of everyone in early childhood: educators, children and parents. Nothing in this plan will risk the safety of the children in our care. No educator would ever do that! In fact this plan is about the safety of children, and the safety of educators.

If you have enough staff members on board the director will have to either shut down the centre or implement the Rules.

It will be much easier for a director to quickly implement the Rules than tell all the parents they are shutting down because they won't implement responsible infection control measures!

No matter what, get in contact with your Union and tell every parent of the outcome – they deserve to know!

You can contact your Union by:

- **Emailing Bigsteps@unitedworkers.org.au**
- **Touching base with your organiser**
- **Calling the following numbers:**

ACT & NSW: 1800 805 027

NT: (08) 8924 4700

QLD: 1800 065 885

SA: 1800 622 900

TAS: 1800 625 119

VIC (all): (03) 9235 7777