



London N. Breed, Mayor  
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

## Executive Summary of the City & County of San Francisco COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Operation for Health Care Workers, First Responders, and Low-Income Working Families

*D R A F T as of March 23, 2020 – 4PM*

In response to the declared City emergency brought on by the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the San Francisco Recreation & Park Department and Public Library have closed all of their public recreation facilities and libraries in support of public health advice to decrease public assembly. With the concomitant temporary closure of the SF Unified School District and the childcare hardship that school closure imposes on working parents – especially health care workers and activated disaster service workers -- we are opening 46 facilities – 38 public recreation facilities and 8 branches of the San Francisco Public Library to serve as emergency childcare facilities. This emergency childcare program will operate M – F, 6:30AM to 7:30 PM, allowing 30-minute windows for early drop-off and late pick-up. These emergency centers will provide childcare for parents in the following categories:

- SF Department of Public Health staff
- Hospital workers from any public or private hospital in San Francisco
- City employees who have been activated as Disaster Service Workers
- Low-income working families who originally registered for the program (not accepting new registrations)

In partnership with SF Public Libraries (SFPL) and SF Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), our childcare model is the following:

- Children ages K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade – at 38 SF Recreation & Park sites
- Children ages 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade – 7 SFPL branch sites, including the Main Library starting March 30, 2020
- All food and beverage for this program to be contracted by DCYF and 3 meals delivered to each childcare site daily for each participant

For RPD, our planning process entailed the following:

- Assessed each of our facilities to determine feasibility, reviewed number of rooms, programmable spaces, and number of amenities (including kitchens, restrooms, drinking fountains, outdoor play structures)
- Determined capacity using existing Fire Marshall guidelines and knowledge of current program offerings at each site
- Scheduled DPH and SF Fire to conduct building inspections



- Explored staff-to-child ratios and determined a ratio of 1:8 to be the most appropriate alignment with Public Health mandates
- Examined current programming and existing materials, supplies, and equipment and selected sites that had existing children and youth programming
- Reviewed current staffing to determine those most qualified to provide programming for K-8 cohort (e.g., *LiveScan*, fingerprinting)
- Using social distancing metrics recommended by DPH, established specific capacities for each of our recreation facility sites.

Using the above process, RPD created program capacity for 537 K -- 8<sup>th</sup> grade children. Furthermore, SFPL will create program capacity for 120 youth 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade starting March 30, 2020.

To best administer the program quickly to the targeted population (knowing that total demand would exceed available supply), we needed a registration system for the targeted population to use and achieve the following:

- Create a process for eligible parents to register and know that they had a spot
- Ensure that the registration process was accessed solely by the target population.

Our recreation program registration database is *ActiveNet*, and we used that software to set up a non-public website for program registration. Using list serves from DPH, hospital groups, and DHR, email communication was sent to all qualifying individuals with the link to the non-public registration site. Similarly, for the Low-Income Working Families group, we used the list serve of all our RPD Scholarship families and emailed them the link for their registration. In addition, we are accepting on-site registration as eligible parents show up in person, if capacity for the site has not been reached.

A further outreach process includes a 'call center' at our headquarters when parents could call for information and register their child over the phone. Parents can call the call center directly or, more likely, be referred to our call center through SF311, the City's customer service portal.

Since COVID-19 is a public health emergency, it was critical that we work closely with SF Department of Public Health throughout this entire process. In addition to DPH guidelines for social distancing in our program planning, DPH policy and guidelines were essential to the following issue in setting up these emergency childcare sites:

- Cleaning and sanitation standards for facilities
- Screening questions for the registration process
- Staff guidance for identifying potential symptoms and isolation/notification protocols

This multi-agency effort was coordinated under the framework of our City's Emergency Operation Center and emergency management communication and management protocols have been in effect during the program's creation.

## **SUMMARY OF STATUS/ACTIVITIES TO DATE:**

Since operations for emergency childcare sites began on March 16, 2020, RPD has accomplished the following:

- Registered 232 youth for Week 1 (3/16 - 3/20); registered 100+ (and counting!) youth for Week 2 (3/23 - 3/27)
- Distributed 1000+ free meals to youth at childcare sites
- Designated 331 RPD staff as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) to provide high-quality and culturally-competent programming, supervision, custodial services, and administration of/for childcare sites
- Working to provide internet connectivity at each of RPD's 38 childcare sites so that children can participate in distance-learning opportunities
- Creating a curriculum to address youth anxiety and stress about COVID-19 outbreak
- Mayor London Breed [joined](#) RPD General Manager Phil Ginsburg and City Librarian Michael Lambert for a site-visit to the childcare site at Hamilton Recreation Center on March 20
- Exploring other populations to expand eligibility to for childcare
- Working with Human Service Agency's Office of Early Childhood Care and Education to create expanded slots for the 0-5 population, as our facilities are not licensed to take care of youth 0-5