

EMERGENCY ORDER RELATED TO THE IMPACT OF HURRICANE IRMA

Florida continues to recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Irma. Families with children in early learning programs, child care providers and public schools in areas damaged by the hurricane continue to attempt to resume normal functions and activities. These victims continue to need certain accommodations afforded in the emergency order that I entered on October 11, 2017, relating to the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program and the School Readiness Program. Governor Scott signed Executive Order 17-235 on September 4, 2017, that was extended by Executive Order 17-287 on November 2, 2017. Those executive orders authorize state agencies to extend emergency orders in thirty-day increments.

Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 17-235, Section 4B, as extended by Executive Order 17-287, Section 252.46, Florida Statutes, as directed by the State Coordinating Officer, I extend the order of October 11, 2017, waiving the following statutes and rules for an additional 30 days:

1. Provisions of law and rule related to the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program
 - The provisions of subsections (1)(b) and (3)(a) Rule 6M-8.620, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), related to the Florida VPK Assessment to the extent necessary to extend the Assessment Period 1 (AP1) for an additional 30 calendar days to permit sufficient time for the administration of the assessment.
 - The provisions of subsection (3)(c) Rule 6M-8.620, F.A.C., related to the reporting of student data from the Florida VPK Assessment to the extent necessary to extend an additional 30 days to permit sufficient time for providers and school districts to enter and submit data for the AP1 on the Bright Beginnings website.
 - Rule 6M-8.204(5)(a)1, F.A.C., to the extent necessary to allow a student to be considered in attendance for all VPK program hours offered during a temporary emergency closure for a combined total of seven instructional days, rather than five days.
 - Rule 6M-8.204(5)(a)3, F.A.C., to allow a private provider or school district to revise its class schedule to restore VPK instructional days which are lost due to temporary closures caused by emergency circumstances in excess of seven instructional days, rather than five days.
 - Rule 6M-8.300(2)(c), F.A.C., to the extent that a VPK provider may notify a coalition of a change in schedule as a result of the impact of Hurricane Irma up to 30 days after the change.

2. Provisions of law and rule related to the School Readiness Program

- The provisions of Rule 6M-4.200, F.A.C., requiring a 12-month eligibility period.
- The provisions of Rule 6M-4.208, F.A.C., to the extent that applicants may be deemed eligible and enroll in the School Readiness Program without having provided the documentation required in subsection (4) of the rule for an initial temporary eligibility period of up to three months. At the end of the initial temporary eligibility period, the coalition may redetermine continued eligibility on a case-by-case basis subject to the family's displaced status, documentation and funding availability.
- The provisions of Rule 6M-4.400(6), F.A.C., and Section 1002.84(8), Florida Statutes, regarding a coalition's authority to waive the required copayment on a case-by-case basis for a child whose family income is at or below the federal poverty level and whose family experiences a natural disaster, to the extent that a coalition may waive the copayment regardless of family income, including those children whose family income is above the federal poverty level.
- The provisions of Rule 6M-4.620, F.A.C., requiring School Readiness personnel to complete preservice training requirements within the first 90 days of employment, to the extent that for those personnel whose 90-day time period expired between September 1 and October 31, 2017, the time period shall be extended an additional 45 days from the date of the original expiration date. During the extension, the personnel must continue to be supervised until the training requirements are met.

ORDERED in Tallahassee, Florida, this 9 day of November, 2017.



Pam Stewart, Commissioner of Education