



515 East 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60615  
(773) 638-5600  
chicagocommons.org

March 20, 2020

Dear Chicago Commons Early Education Families and Employees –

We appreciate your patience as we navigate this complicated COVID-19 landscape. As you know, we have been following guidance from key departments at the State of Illinois and City of Chicago on how to respond and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Just yesterday at 5:00 pm, Mayor Lori Lightfoot shared that she would extend the closure of Chicago Public Schools through Monday, April 20, 2020 in the interest of public health and safety.

In concert with Chicago Public Schools, we will extend suspension of operations of our four early childhood education and school age programs in Back of the Yards, Pilsen, and West Humboldt Park through Monday, April 20 with children returning Tuesday, April 21. We will also extend the temporary suspension of operation of our family hub adult education program through April 20.

This is not a decision we take lightly, but know it is something we must do for the safety of our communities and families. We want to reiterate that there are no cases of COVID-19 at Chicago Commons. We know that this message brings about many questions. The second page of this letter contains more information for individuals impacted by this decision and who to contact for more information. We also know we can't cover all the questions in this letter, but our commitment is to work with our partners and funders to cover wages and benefits for employees during this period of time and to support families needing to make alternative care plans during this difficult period.

This is a fluid situation with lots of moving parts. I cannot thank you enough for your support during these quickly changing times. Please accept my sincerest thanks for your patience as this situation has continued to evolve. Going forward, we will provide you with update as new information becomes available via email, our text message system, social media, and our website—[www.chicagocommons.org](http://www.chicagocommons.org). Should you have questions or require additional information, please contact your center director (listed below) or myself at [ramireze@chicagocommons.org](mailto:ramireze@chicagocommons.org) or 773-826-3793.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edgar Ramirez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Edgar Ramirez  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Center/Program	Contact	Phone	Email
Guadalupano Family Center	Yolanda Colon	312-666-3883	colony@chicagocommons.org
Nia Family Center	Kristin Pettice	773-722-0115	petticek@chicagocommons.org
Paulo Freire Center	Joanna Burke	773-826-6260	burkej@chicagocommons.org
Taylor Center	Ann Bunch	773-227-8551	buncha@chicagocommons.org
Family Hub	Andrea Guzman	(773) 635-2172	guzmana@ChicagoCommons.org
Community Partners	Aurora Rodriguez	(312) 690-5237	RodriguezA@ChicagoCommons.org

### **What this means for Chicago Commons Early Education and Family Hub Employees**

Chicago Commons Early Education Staff and Family Hub staff are expected to work from home beginning Tuesday, March 17 with guidance on duties that will be forthcoming. Duties may include professional development, record keeping, lesson / program planning, and outreach to families. We will request center directors, family workers and other essential early childhood and family hub staff members to support core operations during this time by working remotely. All employees will continue to be paid and receive full benefits during this time. Early Education Centers will undergo a deep cleaning during this period. Please work with your directors to obtain resources to support telecommuting—cellphone stipends, laptops/iPads, etc.

### **What this means for children and families at our centers and enrolled in our Family Hub.**

All children should plan to return to the center on Tuesday, April 21. Should this change, we will notify you via text message and our website [www.chicagocommons.org](http://www.chicagocommons.org). Families in need of further support during this suspension can work with their family worker for support and other resources. Our hope is to support you around any basic needs you may have during this time.



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20 de marzo

Queridas Familias de Educación Temprana y Empleados de Chicago Commons —

Apreciamos su paciencia durante esta época complicada con respecto al COVID-19. Como pueden saberlo, hemos estado siguiendo instrucciones de departamentos claves del Estado de Illinois y la Ciudad de Chicago de cómo responder y prevenir el contagio del COVID-19.

Apenas ayer a las 5:00 pm, la Alcaldesa Lori Lightfoot comunicó que se extenderá el cierre de todas las Escuelas Públicas de Chicago hasta el lunes, 20 de abril, 2020 con el interés de nuestra seguridad de salud y pública.

En concierto con las Escuelas Públicas de Chicago, vamos a extender la suspensión de funcionamientos de nuestros cuatro centros de educación infantil temprana y programas de edad escolar localizados en Back of the Yards, Pilsen, y West Humboldt Park hasta el 20 de Abril con los niños regresando a clase el 21 de Abril. También extenderemos la suspensión temporal a nuestras operaciones de programas de educación para adultos hasta el 20 de Abril.

Esta no es una decisión que tomamos a la ligera, pero sabemos que es algo que debemos hacer por la seguridad de nuestras comunidades y familias. Queremos reiterar que no hay casos de COVID-19 en Chicago Commons. Sabemos que este mensaje genera muchas preguntas, pero nuestros líderes están trabajando con empleados y familias. Nuestro compromiso es cubrir los salarios y beneficios para los empleados durante este período de tiempo y apoyar a las familias que necesitan hacer planes de cuidado alternativos durante este período difícil.

Estamos pasando por una situación fluida con cambios constantes. Les agradezco su apoyo durante estos momentos cambiantes. Por favor reciban mi más sincero agradecimiento por su paciencia conforme la situación vaya evolucionando. Les seguiremos dando seguimiento con información nueva conforme se vaya dando por medio de correos electrónicos, nuestro sistema de textos, medios sociales, y nuestra página web — [www.chicagocommons.org](http://www.chicagocommons.org). En caso de que tengas alguna duda o requieras de más información, por favor de contactar su director de sucursal (lista abajo) o mí mismo a [ramireze@chicagocommons.org](mailto:ramireze@chicagocommons.org) o al 773-826-3793.

Sinceramente,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edgar Ramirez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Edgar Ramírez  
Presidente y Director Ejecutivo

<b>Centro/Programa</b>	<b>Contacto</b>	<b>Teléfono</b>	<b>Correo Electrónico</b>
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**Lo que esto significa para los niños y las familias en nuestros centros e inscritos en nuestro Family Hub.**

Todos los niños deben planear regresar al centro el Martes 21 de Abril. Si esto cambia, se lo notificaremos por mensaje de texto y por nuestro sitio web [www.chicagocommons.org](http://www.chicagocommons.org). Las familias que necesitan más apoyo durante esta suspensión pueden trabajar con su trabajador familiar para obtener apoyo y otros recursos. Nuestra esperanza es apoyarlo en cualquier necesidad básica que pueda tener durante este tiempo.