



Tropical Storm Elsa

The effects of Tropical Storm Elsa are still uncertain, but we know that Florida is going to be impacted. Pinellas and surrounding counties are beginning to prepare, and we wanted to ensure that all of you are taking proper precautions for yourselves and the families you serve. The safety of our providers and families is paramount.

The Pinellas County License Board recommends the following guidelines when preparing your home or center for the storm:

- Clear your playgrounds of any unanchored equipment. Turn equipment that could retain water upside down. Move garbage cans to an inside location and do a check of your premises to make sure everything is secured.
- Notify your parents in advance if you should choose to close.
- Should you choose to remain open, make sure that parents are aware of your emergency plans and where you would evacuate if needed. Be sure that you have current emergency contact information for all parents/guardians.
- If you unfortunately suffer damage to your home or children's center, you must notify Pinellas County License Board within 24 hours. Please call **(727) 369-3900**. Prior to re-opening, you must have a visit from a licensing specialist to verify that health and safety requirements are in compliance.

All SR and VPK providers **MUST** report closures to the Coalition by emailing tfetzer@elcpinellas.org. Please give your provider/center name, anticipated dates of closure and best contact number. Don't forget that all emergency closures for providers eligible for closure reimbursement must be entered into the Portal using the Attendance tab. Instructions for entering Temporary Closure into the Portal are available using the Provider Portal User Guide (pg. 142), which can be found [HERE](#).

For VPK providers, information regarding reimbursement during temporary emergency closures can be found [HERE](#).

For SR providers, information regarding reimbursement during temporary emergency closures can be found [HERE](#).

Early Learning Coalition physical offices will be closed tomorrow, Tuesday, July 6, 2021. Early Learning Coalition will be accessible by phone or by visiting our [website](#) and using the LIVE chat. We encourage all providers to use their best judgement in closure decisions.

This is a scary time for the state of Florida, but having a plan and being prepared can help ease the stress, especially for our smallest friends.

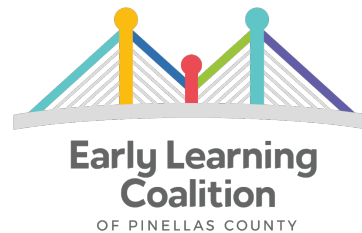
Please visit the below sites for further resources on how to best prepare for Tropical Storm Elsa:

- [Tampa Bay Hurricane Guide](#)
- [Hurricane Tips for Parents: How to Help Kids](#)
- [Pinellas County Hurricane Guide & Evacuation Zone Map](#)

For further information, you can visit the [Red Cross](#) or [Ready.gov](#). Whatever your plan, please stay safe this during this storm.



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