

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Child and Family Services
11 State House Station
2 Anthony Avenue
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel.: (207) 624-7900; Toll Free: (877) 680-5866
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay); Fax: (207) 287-5282

MEMORANDUM

TO: Child Care Providers and Essential Employees

FROM: The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS)

DATE: April 22, 2020

SUBJECT: **Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) COVID-19 CARES Act**

In March 2020, Congress approved the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which included \$3.5 billion in additional funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to provide immediate and recovery support to families and providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of this amount, Maine received approximately \$11 million.

After assessing current needs and hearing from parents, providers, and advocates, the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) will be implementing the following three strategies with the CCDBG funds from the CARES Act:

1. Provide child care subsidy for essential employees who exceed current Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) income guidelines (until 6/30/20 or two weeks after the end of the civil emergency, whichever is soonest);
2. Provide a one-time stipend to:
 - a. all licensed child care providers, and
 - b. all license-exempt non-relative providers participating in CCSP; and
3. Provide grants to aid child care providers in resuming operations following the civil emergency.

Child Care Subsidy for Essential Employees

OCFS will subsidize child care for households where all parents/guardians are essential employees, working outside of their homes, in need of regular child care provided by a non-relative (until 6/30/20 or two weeks after the end of the civil emergency, whichever is soonest):

1. Subsidy will be paid directly to child care providers on behalf of essential employees currently **working outside of their home** during the civil emergency.
2. Any households where all parents/guardians are **deemed essential employees** under the civil state of emergency can apply, regardless of income.

3. While income requirements will be waived, income information will still be requested in order to assess whether families are eligible for the standard Child Care Subsidy Program, which would provide a longer period of eligibility.
4. All CCSP rules apply, except income requirements and any other COVID-related exemptions, and can be located at: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/step.htm>
5. Essential employees can apply for child care subsidy by downloading and returning (by mail, fax or email) the full CCSP application located at: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/child-care/Application-2020.pdf>
6. Essential employees may choose their own child care provider, who is a non-relative, or locate a child care provider by visiting: <https://www.childcarechoices.me/index.php/home-page/>
7. Providers not currently accepting subsidy will be required to complete a CCSP Provider Agreement
8. Applications will be expedited and processed in the order they are received
9. Questions can be directed to the Child Care Subsidy Program by calling 1-877-680-5866 or 207-624-7999 or emailing CCSP.DHHS@maine.gov.

Child Care Provider Stipend

Once providers complete the survey sent to them, the one-time stipend will be automatic and sent to:

- a. all licensed child care providers, and
- b. all license-exempt non-relative providers participating in CCSP.

The stipend amount will be based on the following factors:

1. Facility status (open or closed) as of the week of 4/6/20
2. Per child care slots based on licensed capacity
3. \$75/licensed child care slot for providers who are closed and not providing care
4. \$175/licensed child care slot for providers who are open and providing care
5. \$225 total to each license-exempt non-relative provider participating in CCSP
6. If a provider did not receive the survey, they may contact OCFS by calling 1-877-680-5866 or 207-624-7999 or emailing CCSP.DHHS@maine.gov.

Recovery Grants

Grants to aid child care providers in resuming operations following the civil emergency will be made through an application process with more details and communication to come.