

Child Care Services Daily Update - April 1, 2020

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) will continue to provide you with the most current information pertaining to Child Care programs. We will continue to remain diligent in keeping this site current.

Availability to Serve Children of Families who are Deemed as Essential Employees

Today we began reaching out to you as a follow-up to the survey that closed on March 29th.

We greatly appreciate you taking the time to complete so that we may better understand the types of resources and supports needed during this extraordinary time. Many of you stated that your enrollment is down and you have availability to serve children of families deemed essential employees. We want to be able to support you in getting this information out to the families.

Our CCR&R partner has been collecting information from you over the past two weeks regarding availability. Beginning today, our licensing staff will be reaching out to you to update this information. Specifically, your PE will ask you to verify your availability, if you want to accept children of essential employees and how many children you are able to accept. They will also ask if you want us to post this information for you. If so, we will create a chart for our website that lists your agency information and availability.

Please contact your Licensing Program Evaluator for additional information.

Payments through the Child Care Certificate Program

Dear Child Care Provider,

We continue to pursue multiple strategies to support providers and parents during this unusual circumstance.

Earlier this month, communication to providers with information on payment procedures for child care agencies participating the Child Care Certificate Program was shared. This is an update to that communication.

The Department will continue to make subsidy payments for all children enrolled in the certificate program through the end of April 2020 as usual for all participating agencies, including those agencies who are closed due to the impact of COVID-19 or where children are not attending, perhaps because of family impact. Please submit your Enrollment Attendance Verification forms as per your normal payment cycle. If your agency was closed on certain days, mark with a "C" on your EAV as usual.

If the children are not attending your program but are still enrolled with you, continue to mark them as absent, according to regular procedures.

Please Note: The Child Care Certificate Program will also waive all parent co-pay fees for all pay periods through the end of April beginning with the 03/16/20-03/31/20 pay period. This means that providers will be paid the full rate without the parent co-pay fee being deducted for all children on the submitted EAV for the 03/16/20-03/31/20, 04/01/2020 -04/15/2020, and 04/16/2020-04/30/2020 pay periods or if you submit your EAV on a monthly pay cycle.

If your agency received co-pay fees from parents for the 03/16/20-03/31/20 pay period, the agency must issue a refund or a credit to the families. We want to support families and child care providers during this time. Many families have temporarily lost their jobs due to the impact of COVID-19 and we want these families to be able to retain their enrollment.

At the end of April, we will reassess all of these temporary measures to determine how we can support you moving forward based on the effects of COVID-19.

Please send any questions to ChildCareServices.dhs@tn.gov

Reminder: Disaster/Emergency Response & Recovery Grants: We are including additional guidance on the application process for each grant category as you complete your applications.

The Department of Human Services is offering a wide menu of grant supports to help DHS licensed child care providers who have been impacted by the March 3 tornados and COVID-19. Here is a basic overview of those available grants. There are 4 categories of grants. Based upon their circumstances, programs may apply in more than one category and may need to apply more than once for a single category.

Child Care Programs Impacted by the March 3 Tornados

Tornado Relief Grant- Includes 3 types of support:

- 1) Operations costs like utility repair & inspections- based upon the specific costs incurred
- 2) Equipment, Materials & Supplies*- replacement of items that were destroyed, damaged, or lost because of the tornado
- 3) Consultants & Coaches*- consulting or curriculum that will help staff and/or children cope with stress, anxiety, grief etc.

*The maximum combined grant amount for these two categories is \$1,000 per slot of licensed capacity to care for children.

Agencies are encouraged to apply for a Tornado Relief Grant after they have completed all insurance recovery and have a complete picture of the full range of expenses.

Tornado Loss of Income Grant- Programs can apply for lost income due to closure of the agency because of tornado damage. Grant awards will be based on the itemized lost operating income for the period of closure. Maximum total grant availability will be **no more** than the lost income associated with a period of closure not to exceed 30 calendar days. **If funds are received from this grant, no family will be charged tuition for closure of child care agency during time of Emergency/Disaster. Providers that closed due to the tornado may apply at either a two-week or 30-day interval.**

Questions: Email DHSTornadogrant@cfmt.org

Child Care Programs Impacted by COVID- 19

COVID-19 Relief Grant- Includes 3 types of support:

- 1) Operations** costs like utility repair & inspections- based upon the specific costs incurred. DHS licensed child care agencies that remain open can apply for costs associated with operating under the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. These costs could be claimed for up to a maximum of 30 calendar days. This will allow agencies to continue to pay operating costs while factors such as child attendance, staff availability, and supply costs (including cleaning supplies) are impacted. Agencies would be eligible to apply for reimbursement of impacted operating costs upon intervals of two weeks or 30 calendar days. **Only include salary costs for the employees who remain on payroll and will be paid through your agency (does not include laid-off employees).**
- 2) Equipment and Materials *- replacement of items that were compromised, or destroyed, due to the impact of COVID-19.
- 3) Consultants & Coaches*- consulting or curriculum that will help staff and/or children cope with stress, anxiety, grief etc.

*These two grant categories are less likely to be needed as part of the COVID-19 response. The maximum combined grant amount for these two categories is \$1,000 per slot of licensed capacity to care for children.

COVID-19 Loss of Income Grant- Programs can apply for lost income due to closure of the agency due to COVID-19. Grant awards will be based on the itemized lost operating income for the period of closure. Maximum total grant availability will be **no more** than the lost income associated with a period of closure not to exceed 30 calendar days. **If funds are received from this grant, no family will be charged tuition for closure of child care agency during time of Emergency/Disaster. Providers that closed due to COVID-19 may apply at either a two-week or 30-day interval.**

*** *Terms and Conditions apply to the Lost Income and Operations Cost grant awards that require families to be refunded or credited for tuition payment for times when children were not in attendance. If funds are received from this grant, no family should be charged tuition for days of a child's absence from the child care agency during the time period covered by the grant application.**

Questions: Email DHSCOV19grant@cfmt.org