

Child Care Services Daily Update - April 28, 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.

Enrollment in the Certificate Program:

The Department of Human Services is recruiting child care providers to participate in the Child Care Certificate Program also known as the Child Care Payment Assistance Program. This is such a critical time to meet the child care needs of families and children within your community. There are countless benefits for participation; child care providers are reimbursed by enrollment, not attendance; child care reimbursement rates have increased for all participating child care providers; bonus rates are awarded for offering care during non-traditional hours and serving areas identified as child care deserts or distressed counties. Enrollment also will meet the needs of serving families identified as Essential Employees under the Child Care Payment Assistance designed specifically to serve these families who are on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic each day. We will be happy to assist you with enrollment. For more information, please contact us at ChildCare.Certificate.DHS@tn.gov.

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

Please reach out to your Licensing Program Evaluator if you are currently open to provide care and not appearing on the list to accept children of parents who are working as essential employees. We are working to keep this list current for families. The chart is posted to our website (<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services.html>) to support families in locating care and to support you in building enrollment.

Child Care Payment Assistance for Essential Employees:

The Tennessee Department of Human Services is very excited to announce additional supports available for essential employees. We have launched a new category of child care payment assistance to support families that are working in essential workforce positions. The COVID-19 Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program is available during this public health emergency. Essential employees are defined as:

- Employees of a healthcare entity
 - Medical Personnel of hospitals, clinics, medical practices and services, mental health and substance abuse services, dental offices, pharmacies, public health entities, biotechnical company employees, medical research personnel, medical device and equipment personnel, medical transportation personnel including entities that transport and dispose of medical materials, medical manufacturing personnel, administrative personnel necessary to operations

- Manufacturing and Distribution personnel producing and supplying essential products and services in and for industries such as pharmaceutical, health care, transportation, petroleum and fuel, defense and national defense
- Law Enforcement
- First Responders (EMS, Fire Departments)
 - Emergency Dispatchers including those who support 911
 - Paramedics
 - Firefighters
- Corrections Officers
- Military
- Activated National Guard
- Human and Social Services Workers
 - Government or government funded services through state-operated institutional, or community based settings, long-term care facilities, child care centers and homes, residential settings and shelters for adults, seniors, children and people with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, substance use disorders, or mental illness, transitional facilities and home based facilities to serve individuals described above.
 - Social Workers
 - Child Protection and Child Welfare personnel
 - Field offices to provide and help to determine eligibility for basic needs: SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, Child Care, Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation services, developmental centers, adoption agencies, food banks, and shelters.
- Postal Workers
 - Mail, postal, shipping, logistics, delivery and pick-up personnel
- Transportation
 - Transportation personnel
 - Personnel who work at gas stations, travel centers and truck stops
 - Airport operations,
 - Services related to roads, highways, railroads, ports, public transportation
- Restaurant
 - Restaurant personnel for the purposes of food preparation and service for off-premises consumption
- Grocery Workers
 - Personnel who produce, distribute and sell food, including grocery stores, certified farmers markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, convenience stores, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage stores

This category of care has no income limits and is designed to serve children 6 weeks to age 13 in **licensed** care settings. This is a time limited category for the period of April 15th – June 15th to meet an immediate need for the essential workforce. We ask that you encourage families to enroll. Once the family is approved, the children will show on your Enrollment Attendance Verification (EAV) for you to invoice the state.

This new category of child care payment assistance, the traditional categories of child care payment assistance (Child Care Certificate Program or subsidy) and the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grants have been designed to assist families with support and assist licensed child care agencies with funding for continued sustainability. If you are not currently enrolled with the Child Care Certificate Program, we encourage you to do so in order to provide these new supports for families of children who work in essential services and are enrolled in your care. We are prepared to expedite the Certificate Program enrollment to provide timely payment.

Please Note: The children of the new essential employee category of care will be paid through the EAV method. If you receive a Certificate authorizing care under this category, which will show as EMEE, be certain to list that child on the EAV if the approval occurred during the pay cycle and are not showing as pre-populated.

All information for this category of care will be on our website:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/covid-19/child-care-services-and-covid-19.html>

This child care payment assistance program is in addition to a network of temporary/emergency care locations that will be available through the YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs for essential workers with school-aged children. We greatly appreciate your participation in meeting the needs of all families during this time of uncertainty.