

## Child Care Services Daily Update - May 11, 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.

### **Additional Clarification When Applying for Operational Costs through the COVID-19 Relief Grant \*Updated\***

As we continue to explore opportunities to support child care agencies and families during this public health emergency, we want to provide additional clarification on existing resources that are available.

The Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program is for the period of April 15, 2020 through June 14, 2020. When a family is approved for this child care category, we will backdate the certificate authorizing care to April 15, if the child was attending as of that date. If the child was not in care on April 15, we will begin the Certificate with the actual date of enrollment.

We understand that you may have already filed for a Disaster/Emergency Response & Recovery Operations Cost grant. Under this category, you may apply for the cost difference between the private pay and State Reimbursement Rates. In cases where there is a cost difference between your private pay rate and the State Reimbursement Rate that is issued for essential employees, we will provide you with additional information on how you can seek that cost difference through a Disaster/Emergency Response & Recovery Operations Cost grant application, so there is no cost to the family participating in the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program. Additional guidance will be made available during the month of June to provide information on how to reconcile this cost difference through the grant application.

Many families have lost employment or have been subject to lay-offs during this time and are struggling to pay above the State Reimbursement Rates. This is causing some families to withdraw their child from the licensed care program. We certainly want to avoid this from happening so the family may retain their child's slot. The COVID-19 operations costs relief grant allows you to apply for costs associated with operating under the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand there may be a "cost difference" above the maximum state rate that families are required by your policy to pay. We ask that you apply for this "cost difference" amount under the Response & Recovery Operations Cost category. This will provide relief for the family and support you in recouping that revenue.

The stipulation under this grant, is that once the money is received, if you have already charged and received payment from the parent, you refund or credit their accounts. If you have not received payment from the family, this grant amount will cover the full cost of care for children enrolled through subsidy.

**Learn about grant opportunities and apply online by visiting [www.childcaretennessee.com](http://www.childcaretennessee.com).**

**Reminder: Child Care Payment Assistance for Essential Employees:**

The Tennessee Department of Human Service 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.

This category of care has no income limits, and is designed to serve children 6 weeks to age 13 in DHS **licensed** or DOE approved care settings. This is a time limited category for the period of April 15 – June 14 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.

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.

We will be happy to assist you with enrollment. Please submit your agency contact information including name of agency, name of person to contact, and telephone number in the request for enrollment to [ChildCare.Certificate.DHS@tn.gov](mailto:ChildCare.Certificate.DHS@tn.gov). You will then be contacted by a Child Care Services staff member to discuss participation and complete the contract for enrollment. This one on one contact will allow the opportunity to discuss the procedures and answer any questions you may have about the program and the benefit for families, the community and you.

**\*\*\*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. In other words, if the child is not showing on your EAV and you have received a Certificate, please add that child to your EAV before submitting.**

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.