

Child Care Services Daily Update – May 14, 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.

Updated Information: Federal Assistance

The federal government recently issued some additional guidance that relates to the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grants, which are funded with ACF Child Care Development Fund/CARES Act dollars.

“The CARES Act does not restrict child care providers from simultaneously receiving funding from the CCDF Discretionary funds and from other federal or state programs, such as the small business loan funds offered through the CARES Act. However, child care providers who receive ACF grants may not use grant funds for costs that are reimbursed or compensated by other federal or state programs, including the Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), the Public Health and Social Services Emergency fund, or unemployment compensation.”

This is not provided as legal advice. We are simply forwarding language that was provided by the federal government.

Reminder: Additional Clarification When Applying for Operational Costs through the COVID-19 Relief Grant

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 15, 2020. When a family is approved for this child care category, we will back date the certificate authorizing care if the child was attending effective April 15th or will begin the Certificate after that date for the child with the actual date of enrollment if after April 15th. We understand that you may have already filed for the Disaster/Emergency Grant Operational Cost category. Under this category you may apply for the cost difference above the State Reimbursement Rates.

We will provide you with additional information on how to recoup the cost difference above the maximum State Rate so that you may refund or credit the family approved under the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program if you have already applied for the Disaster/Emergency Grant for Operational Costs for April. 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 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.

Please Note: There is a new method implemented for agencies to learn the status of their grant applications or ask specific questions about the application in process. Community Foundations of Middle Tennessee has created one easy form for you to complete. This enables a quick feedback process and routes your request into one easy system so that everyone gets an answer in an orderly manner. Please allow adequate processing time before requesting a status update.

Early applicants received a pop-up when applications are completed. The process is now improved:

1. An email is received upon submission of the application.
2. An email is received when the application is approved by DHS field supervisors and sent to the next processing step.
3. An email is received when the application is sent to DHS for invoicing. There are several steps between invoice and receipt of funds by your agency.

Submit any status requests about Support and Enhancement Grants and Disaster/Emergency Grants to <https://childcareoftennesseellc.formstack.com/forms/helpdesk> and you will be provided this feedback form to complete for a status response.

Learn about grant opportunities and apply online by visiting www.childcaretennessee.com.