

Child Care Services Daily Update – May 5, 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.

Reminder: 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. 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. 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.

Reminder-Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grant Clarification

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) is providing this grant opportunity to TDHS licensed agencies in order to maintain program viability and quality and to relieve families who are enrolled but not currently sending their child to care of the burden of child care expenses during this time of impact.

Additionally, TDHS licensed child care agencies that remain open can apply for costs associated with operating under the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow agencies to continue to pay operating costs while factors such as child attendance, staff availability, and supply costs are impacted. Child care agencies receiving grant funds should prioritize using those funds to continue paying staff salaries and costs during the time of impact.

The grants are structured so that families of children who are not attending care during this time are not required to pay because the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grant provides funds to maintain your regular operating expenses through funds other than tuition. During the time defined in the application, non-attending private pay families should be reimbursed previously paid tuition.

TDHS Subsidy/Certificates in effect on February 28, 2020 will continue to be paid for all enrolled children, both attending and non-attending children. For children receiving TDHS Subsidy/Certificates, the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grant will cover all co-pays and additional tuition cost differentials (the amount between the maximum State rate and the Provider weekly rate) for the period of impact.

Families of children receiving TDHS Subsidy/Certificate during the period of application will not be charged any co-pays or cost differential. Through the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grant, TDHS will cover all co-pays and additional tuition cost differentials for children enrolled in the subsidy/certificate program.

While the agency is open, all families not receiving payment assistance through the subsidy/certificate program and whose children continue to attend can be charged tuition as defined by your agency. These tuition charges will not/are not covered through the Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery Grant.

These grants were established to support providers and families during the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19. Through these grants, an agency can receive funds that allow them to continue paying their operational costs without charging parents who are not receiving care.

These grants are available **statewide** to all TDHS licensed agencies including center and home-based care providers. To apply simply visit www.childcaretennessee.com. Once on this site you will be asked to login. If you already have login credentials, you may use your existing credentials. If you do not have login in credentials, you will be asked to register. Once registered, you will receive the credentials via email and may then apply. Should you have specific questions about the application, you may email Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee at DHSCOV19@cfmt.org.