

## Child Care Services Daily Update – August 26, 2020

The Tennessee Department of Human Services is committed to supporting child care agencies in providing programs that are safe, healthy and educationally rich. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges over the past several months and many opportunities to approach the delivery of services in different ways. Thank you for remaining flexible and attentive to health and safety protections, while also remaining responsive to family needs.

### **Important Update: Disaster/Emergency Grant Clarifications:**

As many agencies continue to reopen or stabilize operations, the opportunity to apply for financial supports through the Disaster/Emergency Grant program is still available. These grant supports were launched to provide immediate temporary financial relief to child care agencies as they adjusted and began navigating the impacts of COVID-19. We are extending availability of the grant applications to support providers as they adapt to new approaches in starting the school year. With this in mind, there are new timelines for submitting grant applications.

The category of Operational Costs Support has been extended through **September 30, 2020** in order to support these September operational adjustments. All applications for Operational Costs Support will need to be submitted by October 15, 2020 for the month of September. October 15, 2020 will be the final day for Disaster/Emergency Response and Recovery grant applications to be submitted.

The Department continues to provide supports to families and providers to absorb the impacts of COVID-19 and adjust to the next normal. The COVID-19 Operational Costs Support 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 through September 30, 2020.

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).**

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## Update on Child Care Payment Assistance Program

The Department is extending the pandemic Child Care Payment Assistance program that was launched in response to COVID-19 through **December 31, 2020**. This category of care has no income limits and is designed to serve children 6 weeks to age 13 in TDHS licensed or DOE approved care settings.

**Clarification:** For families who were approved prior to August 21<sup>st</sup>, the eligibility will be extended through December 31, 2020. For applications received beginning August 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the family is determined eligible, the eligibility period will begin August 22<sup>nd</sup> through December 31, 2020. The child's enrollment will begin August 22<sup>nd</sup> if attending, or when the child starts attending if at a later date.

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## Child Care Certificate Program Update:

The Department will continue to reimburse at the maximum reimbursement rates based on the child's care level according to the Child Care Certificate Program Provider Reimbursement Rates found [here](#) for all child care payment assistance categories.

**Please Note:** The Child Care Certificate Program will continue to waive all parent **co-pay fees** for all pay periods through December 31, 2020. We want to support families and child care providers during this time by paying the full cost of care up to the maximum Child Care Certificate Program Provider Reimbursement Rates established by the Department.

Additionally, TDHS will continue to make subsidy payments for all children enrolled in the certificate program as usual for participating providers who are open, even if the child is not attending, perhaps due to family impact. However, if you are aware that a child has been disenrolled with your agency, please indicate on your EAV the child has terminated with a "T" when submitting. This will allow the opportunity for another family who may be in need of child care to utilize the slot with your agency.