

Support for Childcare Providers During COVID-19

March 30, 2020

We appreciate childcare providers staying open to provide quality, safe care to Iowa's children during this critical time. While not often included with first responders, the service you provide is critical. Thank you for your public service.

Childcare Assistance (CCA) Payment

The Department is aware of the hardship on childcare providers due to COVID-19. In order to assist, effective March 9, 2020, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) no longer limits the amount of absent days paid per month to childcare providers who remain open for business.

Connecting Families with Childcare

The Department also continues to provide families with information so that they may select an existing childcare provider within their community. DHS developed an interactive map to connect families with existing childcare providers. We update this map daily based on information provided by you to your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency (CCR&R). All childcare providers should report available slots to CCR&R daily, or as frequently as possible. This will ensure access for essential workforce and will help fill current vacancies within existing childcare providers. All DHS communication has and will continue to include the CCR&R parent referral contact information in order to direct the essential workforce, including health care, first responders, critical infrastructure—which includes food service and grocery workers—to licensed centers and registered home settings.

You can view the map by clicking [here](#), or go to www.dhs.iowa.gov/COVID19 and click 'Find Childcare for Essential Workforce Map.' Contact CCR&R by visiting www.iowaccrr.org/families or call 1-855-244-5301.

Supplies

Access to cleaning supplies in order to sanitize effectively is of the utmost importance. Please contact your local CCR&R if you need assistance with supplies. The Department is working with CCR&R to get you the supplies you need and will be distributing cleaning supplies as soon as possible. Licensed centers and homes regulated by DHS will get immediate attention. Supplies for those who are serving essential workforce will be prioritized. Some retailers are limiting the quantity of certain supplies you're able to purchase. You may want to work directly with them to request an exception.

Additional Funding

We are pleased that the federal government enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The CARES Act includes emergency funding to assist childcare providers. The CARES Act is a step forward in providing economic relief for childcare providers affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The Department is assessing the allowable use of dollars. DHS will collaborate with local communities and providers to ensure a robust partnership that ensures these funds are used to best address Iowa's childcare needs.

Thank you for the critical work you perform every day. We will get through this together and we will be as strong as ever.