

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS COVID-19 CHILD CARE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

August 13, 2020

WHAT FUNDING OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS?

Licensed Providers and Registered Child Development Homes

Rejuvenation grants: This grant is for programs that are currently closed and want to reopen. This grant provides funds to restart your business along with financial assistance to help with cleaning your program environment or obtaining supplies needed to follow CDC guidelines (such as additional thermometers or disinfectants). CDC guidelines for open child care programs can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>. Providers can receive \$1,000 in restart up funds as well as an additional \$500 for cleaning and supplies. Child Development Homes can receive \$450 in restart up funds as well as an additional \$150 for cleaning and supplies. Eligibility requirements are:

- ▶ Your child care facility was open and operating as of 3/1/2020.
- ▶ Your child care facility is currently closed due to COVID-19 but agrees to re-open.

Basic Monthly Stipend: Programs that are open and meet all eligibility requirements can receive a monthly stipend. Providers can receive \$2,000 per month and Child Development Homes can receive \$500 per month. This funding is to provide immediate support to your child care program. Examples may include supporting staff wages, replenishing toys or products, paying rent or utilities, or something similar. Eligibility requirements are:

- ▶ Currently open and operational and agree to remain open OR re-open and remain open
- ▶ In the event that your program has concerns about remaining open, you agree to work with DHS and public health officials to try and take necessary steps to remain open and operational;
- ▶ Prioritize serving families with essential service workers;
- ▶ Follow DHS Child care Guidance outlined at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare-covid-19>;
- ▶ Follow CDC recommendations to child care providers outlined at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html> to prevent the spread of COVID-19; and
- ▶ Programs that have received the following funding in a particular month are not eligible to receive that month's stipend:
 - A provider that received more than \$1,000 or a Child Development Home that received more than \$250 from a small business grant or community development grant;
 - Any funding in excess of budgeted funding from your school district; and
 - Full-price payments from parents/guardians to hold slots.

Essential Employees Monthly Stipend Add-On: Programs that meet all requirements for the basic monthly stipend and make the choice to give all essential employees a 25% discount can receive an additional amount in their stipend. Eligible providers would receive an additional \$2,000 per month and eligible Child Development Homes would receive an additional \$500 per month. Essential employees include:

- ▶ All hospital staff;
- ▶ All healthcare providers in private practice and all direct care staff;
- ▶ Staff who provide critical government infrastructure: examples include: social services, child protection services, public health officials, tax collection, corrections and other public safety;
- ▶ Emergency responders;
- ▶ Food service workers, including grocery store staff and limited restaurant staff to include supporting take-away options.

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All Open Programs Serving Child Care Assistance (CCA) Clients

Unlimited CCA Absences: The Department is aware of the hardship on child care 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 child care providers who remain open for business.

Reimbursing Family Co-Payments: As an additional support, DHS is waiving family co-payments and reimbursing providers for the co-pay amounts. This change will be backdated to April 6, 2020 and continue through the billing period ending October 4, 2020 or whenever the Governor's Emergency Declaration ends, whichever comes first. Although the family co-payment will still be deducted from your normal payments, DHS will issue reimbursements to providers for that amount through a separate payment. Providers do not need to do anything extra to receive these co-payment reimbursements; these payments will be processed every four weeks and will be sent out to providers automatically.

I RECEIVED A CO-PAY REIMBURSEMENT CHECK, HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TIME PERIOD THIS IS FOR?

The first payment report that was processed on May 8 was for the billing periods of 4/6/2020 to 4/19/2020 and 4/20/2020 to 5/3/2020.

The next co-pay report will be run on 6/5/2020 for the May billing periods of 5/4/2020 to 5/17/2020 and 5/18/2020 to 5/31/2020.

NOTE: if you billed DHS for the April billing periods above after May 8, 2020 those copay reimbursement amounts will be included in the report run on 6/5/2020.

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH FAMILIES I RECEIVED REIMBURSEMENT FOR?

Please use the CCA Payment Summary report that you get with every DHS payment. You can match the units billed for each family and the amount of the family's copay from your certificates of enrollment. You may also get this information on the Provider Portal.

WHAT IF I AM FORCED TO CLOSE, CAN I STILL BILL ABSENT DAYS?

Effective with the May 18th billing period, DHS will pay 'absent days' to a provider who is required to close by local or state authorities for a period of time due to a COVID outbreak. An outbreak is defined as three or more staff or participants testing positive for COVID-19 by viral PCR testing indicating likely transmission in the program.

IF MY PROGRAM IS CLOSED AM I ELIGIBLE?

Closed programs that want to re-open are eligible for rejuvenation grants. Once the program re-opens they would be able to receive all the additional funding options for which their program is eligible.

HOW SOON AFTER I APPLY FOR THE REJUVENATION GRANT IS MY PROGRAM EXPECTED TO OPEN?

You are expected to open within the next calendar month after receipt of the rejuvenation grant.

WHAT IF SOME OF THE PARENTS PAID FULL PAYMENTS, BUT NOT ALL OF THEM, DOES THIS MAKE ME INELIGIBLE FOR THE MONTHLY STIPEND?

Some parents have chosen to support their child care providers by continuing to provide full payments. This may be accepted however if you specifically mandate full payment to maintain a slot and/or direct families that are required to stay home, reducing their access to child care services, you are not eligible for the monthly stipend.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Rejuvenation grant: the program owner/administrator will need to fill out a survey in the month their child care program re-opens. The survey can be found on the DHS website at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities>.

Basic Monthly Stipend and the Essential Employees Add-on: For every month the program would like to receive this funding the program owner/administrator will need to fill out a survey to determine eligibility for that month. Surveys for each month will be available during that month (i.e., the June survey will be available from June 1, 2020-June 30, 2020). **Surveys must be filled out by the last day of the month.** The survey can be found on the DHS website at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities>.

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Reimbursements for CCA family co-pays: Providers do not need to do anything extra to receive these co-payment reimbursements; these payments will be processed every four weeks and will be sent out to providers automatically.

WHERE DO I FIND MY PROVIDER NUMBER?

Your provider number can be found in a number of places. It will appear on any Notice of Decision that you have received in the upper right hand corner. If you use the Provider Portal it also appears near the top of the home screen in the white box next to the title "Location". Additionally, if you are a child development home provider it appears on your registration certificate.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE THE FUNDS?

Funds will be sent as checks to eligible programs. If your program currently receives CCA payments, your information is already on file with the Department and you will receive the additional checks in the same manner as your CCA payments (e.g., paper check or direct deposit).

If your program **does not** currently receive CCA payments, the Department does not have your tax ID information in our systems. It will be necessary for you to submit a W9 form for your program to receive a stipend or rejuvenation payment. Please go to <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities> to obtain the form.

Completed forms may be sent by:

E-mail:

To Wagestax9@dhs.state.ia.us

Mail:

Department of Human Services, 5th Floor
Attn: Kim Shackelford
1305 E. Walnut St.
Des Moines, IA 50319

I WANT TO REOPEN, WHO DO I CONTACT?

If your program wants to reopen, please contact your licensing consultant or home compliance worker so they can update your status in our records.

If you are interested in the Rejuvenation Grant available to programs that want to reopen, please see the instruction under the "How do I Apply" question.

IF I AM CLOSED ON MAY 3, 2020, BUT OPEN ON MAY 18, 2020, CAN I STILL GET A STIPEND?

Yes, if your program re-opens during a month you are still eligible to receive funds for that month. Alternatively, if your program is open part of the month and then closes you will still be eligible for the funds for that month. However, please remember that if the closure is not required by your local public health department, one of the eligibility criteria of accepting these funds is that you will notify your licensing consultant or home compliance worker and discuss trying to take necessary steps to remain open.

AM I ELIGIBLE FOR THE GRANTS IF I HAVE GOTTEN A LOAN FROM THE PAYROLL PROTECTION PROGRAM (PPP)?

You remain eligible for these grants if you have gotten a loan from PPP, however any funds received by DHS may not be utilized for payroll purposes.

IF ALL MY ESSENTIAL WORKERS ARE CCA PAID AND I CANNOT OFFER THEM 25% OFF, CAN I STILL GET ADDITIONAL STIPEND?

Yes. You are required to continue to waive family co-pays. If you enroll a new family that is identified as essential, you are required to offer reduced rate of 25% if you have received the additional monthly stipend.

IF I HAVE MORE THAN ONE PROGRAM, DO I HAVE TO APPLY FOR EACH INDIVIDUALLY?

Yes.

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IF I AGREE, MOVING FORWARD, TO REDUCE ESSENTIAL FAMILY PAYMENTS BY 25%, CAN I APPLY FOR THE ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEE ADD-ON FOR THIS MONTH?

Yes however you must reimburse families 25% of the tuition they have paid back to the beginning of that month.

WHEN WILL I KNOW IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR THE REJUVENATION GRANT AFTER I APPLY?

When completing the survey, if any of your responses to the questions make you ineligible you would have seen a message letting you know that you are ineligible. We are processing the rejuvenation grants on an ongoing basis. If you are eligible you will receive an e-mail once your survey response has been processed and sent to payment.

WHEN WILL I KNOW IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR THE MONTHLY STIPEND AFTER I APPLY?

When completing the survey, if any of your responses to the questions make you ineligible you would have seen a message letting you know that you are ineligible. Due to the large number of responses we cannot individually verify if programs filled out the survey in a manner that would make them eligible for the stipend or the essential employee's add-on. DHS will not determine final eligibility until after the survey closes at the end of the month.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE THE MONTHLY STIPEND FUNDS IF I AM ELIGIBLE?

Each month's Monthly Stipend Survey will close on the last day of that month (with the exception of the April Survey which will close on the last day of May). After each survey has closed, DHS staff will review responses to verify final eligibility for both the basic monthly stipend and the essential employees add-on. Two lists will be created: one of programs that were eligible for that month's basic stipend and another of programs that were eligible for that month's essential employee's add-on. You should receive funds approximately the middle of the following month. If you believe you were eligible but have not received funds by the following dates your program may contact their local CCR&R on or after:

August 24, 2020 for the July stipend

September 21, 2020 for the August stipend

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT SPEND THE FUNDS AS OUTLINED IN EACH RESPECTIVE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY?

If you do not spend the funds in accordance with the guidance provided for each funding opportunity, you will be required to return the funding.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS THAT AREN'T ANSWERED ON THIS FAQ DOCUMENT?

If you have additional questions that haven't been answered in this document, you can e-mail us at canwehelp@dhs.state.ia.us.

