Child Care Update

Dear Family Child Care and Center-Based Child Care Providers:

Thank you for the care you continue to provide for children and families in your community. Below is some new information from our state and federal partners.

As Minnesota continues to reopen the economy, all businesses, including those deemed critical (like child care providers), are required to complete a COVID-19 preparedness plan to ensure that staff and those they serve are informed of health and safety measures. The Department of Human Services (DHS) has created a process for you that considers the planning many of you already have under way. Child care providers are required to complete a plan. The documents (including an optional template) and guidance are available on the Licensing Division's COVID-19 website and mn.gov/childcare.

COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 testing capacity has expanded and includes testing for people who attended recent large gatherings in the Twin Cities. You can find testing locations across the state on COVID response page and metro testing events on the Department of Health website. As a reminder, COVID-19 testing is covered without cost-sharing.

Please share any stories or feedback on barriers to testing your staff or families are facing at childrenscabinet.mmb@state.mn.us.

Financial Supports & Flexibilities

- Minnesota Small Business Relief Grants: The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) will oversee the Minnesota Small Business Relief Grants Program approved by the Minnesota State Legislature and signed by Gov. Tim Walz on June 16, 2020. This program will make available $10,000 grants to Minnesotan-owned and operated businesses that can demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. There is a total of $60.3 million available for grant awards. The grants will be selected through a computer-generated, randomized process with priority to businesses affected by operating restrictions by an executive order on May 18, 2020. Qualified local and regionally based non-profit organizations will disburse and administer awards. Individual businesses that receive awards can use grant funds for
working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar expenses that occur or have occurred since March 1, 2020, in the regular course of business. There is not a requirement of repayment for the grants. Licensed Family Child Care businesses and Licensed Child Care Center businesses are eligible to apply. The application is posted on the DEED website.

- **Federal legislation:** Senator Tina Smith is co-leading a bill to provide additional supports to child care providers. The *Child Care Is Essential Act* is COVID-19 child care legislation that would provide $50 billion to help stabilize the child care sector through direct grants to child care providers, and includes companion legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives. [More information on the bill is available here on this Senate website.](#)

- **Non-CCDF Supports in OCC:** The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, enacted in March, included provisions that address the needs of child care providers and child care workers, as does the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (“Families First Act”). The Office of Child Care (OCC) has prepared a document listing the funding programs outside of the Child Care and Development Fund program that affect child care providers and staff. The document can be accessed, along with updates reflecting ongoing legislation, on the [OCC webpage](#).

- **New Child Care Assistance Program waiver:** DHS is pleased to announce a waiver that extends CCAP absent day policies through August 9, 2020. For more information on this waiver, refer to this [DHS memo](#).

- **Other small business supports:** The Children’s Cabinet collaborated with the Small Business Administration (SBA) Minnesota District Office to host an outreach event for child care providers on June 17. The [webinar](#) included an overview of financial and business supports available through the SBA and information on how to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), changes to the program, and information for those who access PPP on meeting the forgiveness criteria. The deadline to apply is June 30. You will find a summary of the changes to PPP [in this article](#).
  
  - Check out the [Child Care Financial Supports Matrix](#) for more information on supports available to providers.

The Children’s Cabinet in partnership with agency leadership continues to explore the possibility of additional financial supports to open providers. Thank you for the feedback you provided following last week’s provider update.

**Provider Call**

On June 10, MDH, in partnership with the Children’s Cabinet and Think Small, hosted a webinar in Spanish for LatinX providers and staff. The recording is available on the [Think Small YouTube channel](#).
The next provider call is Monday, July 6, at 7 p.m. The call will feature agency partners, including the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), MDH, DEED, and DHS. We will share meeting information in a future update. Access the recording of the June 8 conference call.

Share Your Status

As businesses re-open we anticipate additional families needing child care, including an increased need for school-age care. Please continue to update your capacity through the survey. If you have questions about your license and availability to serve additional school-age children, call the DHS hotline at 1-888-234-1268.

Public Health Support

For specific health questions regarding your care settings, reach out to the MDH school and childcare team at health.schools.covid19@state.mn.us.

Please continue to send questions to childrenscabinet.MMB@state.mn.us or call us at 651-259-3636.

Thank you,

Erin Bailey & Jenny Moses, Governor’s Children’s Cabinet

On behalf of participating agency leaders and staff

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Contact Us.

Website: www.mn.gov/childrenscabinet
Email: childrenscabinet.MMB@state.mn.us