DSS issuing additional support to child care programs

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PIERRE – Child care providers in South Dakota are set to receive a second financial boost from the Department of Social Services (DSS) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Child care programs play a key role in keeping South Dakota families strong by allowing parents to work while children receive high quality care," said DSS Cabinet Secretary Laurie Gill. "The COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges to child care providers and we are pleased to be able to help these businesses remain viable through these important times."

The purpose and conditions of the second round of grants are the same as the first plus extra money for personal protective equipment. Round two is expected to include more than $5 million in additional grant awards to South Dakota child care programs.

"Every family, and every child in South Dakota is important to us, and we know child care is important to them," Gill said. "With child care available, our healthcare workers and emergency personnel are able to work; our grocery stores, pharmacies, and retailers can stay open; and this grant money helps assure child care services remain available while exercising safe pandemic protocols."

The grants are part of ongoing efforts by DSS to support families in the state. DSS received CARES Act funding to support child care programs and the families they serve and began awarding funding to DSS-regulated child care programs to help families keep access to these services. The grant money helped providers with both ongoing expenses and new pandemic-related costs. In round one, DSS awarded more than $3 million in assistance.

"We remain committed to supporting, and standing strong with the child care providers that serve South Dakota families," said Gill. "Their work is vital to our kids, our families, and our economy."

To learn more about child care services provided by DSS, please click on the Child Care tab at dss.sd.gov.