NJ Human Services Announces Availability of Up to $20 Million in Health and Safety Grants for Child Care Centers and Youth Camps

$5k and $2k Grants Available; Emergency Child Care Assistance Program to Continue through June 30th

May 29, 2020

(TRENTON) – New Jersey Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson today announced the immediate availability of up to $20 million in grants to assist child care centers and youth camps in meeting health and safety guidelines in response to COVID-19.

Child care centers can receive up to $5,000, while youth camps can receive up to $2,000.

The money can be used to purchase additional cleaning products, personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves and thermometers, and other products and services to assist centers in complying with appropriate guidelines.

In addition, Human Services announced that the state Emergency Child Care Assistance Program, which is paying for child care services for essential employees identified in Executive Order 110, will continue through the end of June, when the program will end. Applications will no longer be accepted after June 1st.

Human Services also will continue to pay child care centers throughout the month of June for the child care slots for children enrolled through the State's child care subsidy program for families with lower incomes. Payments will continue to be made based on the centers' March subsidy enrollment.

Between April 1st when child care centers were ordered to close and June 15th when centers can reopen, Human Services expects to have provided about $125 million in funding to centers for both emergency child care and state subsidy program child care slots. Funding is intended to support families' needs as well as the viability of the child care network.

"The health and safety of the children served in child care settings and the dedicated staff who nurture and support them is paramount," Commissioner Johnson said. "We encourage eligible child care centers and youth camps to apply for these grants to help comply with new public health guidelines. We look forward to continuing to work with child care providers to support the educational development of the children served and the needs of the critical staff who make quality child care possible."

The grants are available to licensed child care providers and youth camps that comply with updated state health and safety guidance. The providers must be registered with the NJ Workforce Registry and must apply through the New Jersey Child Care Information System (NJCCIS). Applications are subject to review and approval.

Providers who have received funding for these same services from other sources such as the federal government, school districts or private grants are not eligible for this funding.

"We are committed to doing all that we can to support child care during this challenging time," Human Services Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said. "With these grants, child care centers and youth camps can be better prepared and ready to protect the all-important health and safety of both children and staff."

The grants are the latest steps by Human Services to assist child care centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Human Services has also:

- Worked with child care centers throughout the state to fund emergency child care for essential employees;
- Continued to pay child care providers for the slots used in March - when centers first closed - by children whose care is covered by the state's child care subsidy program;
- Waived parent co-pays in the state's child care subsidy program for parents who requested it due to impacts from COVID-19; and
- Delivered PPE to emergency child care centers.

"We urge residents to visit www.ChildCareNJ.gov for additional information regarding the New Jersey Child Care Subsidy Program," said Human Services Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who directs the Division of Family Development that oversees the child care program. "I also thank the child care centers and their staff for their amazing dedication and commitment during this difficult time."

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