NCDHHS

NCDHHS to Provide Financial Support to Essential Workers and Child Care Providers

Raleigh, N.C.

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The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) is providing financial assistance to help essential workers afford child care and bonuses to child care teachers and staff who provide care during the COVID-19 crisis.

"Child care is an essential service as we respond to the COVID-19 crisis," said NCDHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen, M.D. "Our health care professionals caring for those who are sick, grocery workers who are restocking shelves, and truck drivers delivering packages to our doors all need child care so that they can go to work – and we want to be sure child care teachers and programs have support in providing safe, quality care."

NCDHHS established an Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program for essential workers as defined in Governor Roy Cooper's March 27 Executive Order 121 (https://www.ncdhhs.gov/news/press-releases/governor-cooper-announces-statewide-stay-home-order-until-april-29). Essential worker emergency child care financial assistance will be offered through May and may be extended. To receive an emergency care subsidy, parents must complete the COVID-19 Parent Application for Financial Assistance for Emergency Child Care (https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Whats-

New/Coronavirus-Information-for-Child-Care/covid-19-parent-application-for-financial-assistance-for-emergency-child-care) (application in Spanish (https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/C/COVID-19_Parent_Emergency_Child_Care_Spanish.pdf?ver=2020-04-13-134708-743)) and submit it to their child care provider. Financial aid is available to parents and caregivers who are essential workers and who meet the following criteria:

- Their income is below 300 percent of the poverty line;
- They are an essential worker fighting COVID-19 or protecting the health and safety of communities; and
- They feel they have no other viable child care options available to them.

The hotline is available to help essential workers find child care programs that are meeting new health, safety and operational guidelines. Care options are available in licensed child care facilities for children from infants through age 12. The hotline is in partnership with the NC Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Parents and caregivers can call (888) 600-1685 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Child care teachers and staff that work in programs serving essential workers will see bonuses in their pay in April and May. NCDHHS will pay child care programs staying open to serve essential workers $300 per month for each full-time teacher and $200 per month for each full-time non-teaching staff member, including administrators, janitors and other support staff. Bonus payments will be paid by the child care programs to all eligible staff during their regular pay periods. Part-time workers are also eligible for prorated bonus awards.

In addition, all child care programs, whether they remain open or have closed, will receive regular child care subsidy payments based on typical attendance for April and May. NCDHHS also will pay all NC Pre-K providers, regardless of site location or if the program is open or closed, in full through the remainder of the program year based on February attendance. NC Pre-K providers are expected to support NC Pre-K children and families remotely during the remainder of the program year.

For more information about child care during COVID-19 in North Carolina, visit www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/covid19/child-care (/divisions/public-health/covid19/child-care).

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