NJ Human Services Extends COVID-19 Child Care Assistance Programs Through End of January

Dec. 28, 2020

(TRENTON) – To continue the Department's efforts to support working families and child care providers impacted by the pandemic, New Jersey Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson today announced that the state will be extending several COVID-19-related child care assistance programs for families and providers through the end of January.

The extensions include programs that have helped families pay for child care during remote schooling and support the sustainability of child care providers.

The programs are funded through the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund, which under federal law was set to expire at the end of December. However, the newly signed federal legislation extends the December deadline for these funds, providing an opportunity for the Department to act quickly to extend our child care initiatives through January.

"We are pleased to be able to announce the extension of these critical programs through the end of January," Commissioner Johnson said. "Child care is a key part of our children's future and vital to the economic strength of our state. As we continue fighting through this public health and economic emergency, it's crucial that we provide as much assistance to working families and the child care sector for as long as we can. We will continue to look to find ways to help."

The following COVID-related child care initiatives will be extended through January 31:

- **State Child Care Subsidy during School Day:** Extending state child care subsidies for child care during the school day for school-age children 5-to-13 years old. Under this initiative, currently enrolled and newly enrolled school-age children are eligible for state subsidy funding for child care services throughout the school day at licensed child care centers or registered family child care providers. Traditionally, school-age children receive the subsidy for before- and after-school care, but this initiative extends the program to the school day due to remote learning schedules.
- **Child Care Tuition Assistance for Children in Families Earning up to $150,000 and in Remote Learning:** Extending child care tuition assistance for families currently enrolled in this program. Tuition assistance has been made available to families with incomes up to $150,000 not eligible for the state Child Care Subsidy Program but in need of either full- or part-time child care due to their child's school's remote learning schedule. For families who have been approved for this assistance, Human Services will continue to pay their selected providers for their school age children 5-to-13 years old in child care due to remote learning.
- **Supporting Child Care Centers:**
  - Continuing to pay child care providers a supplemental payment of $300 per subsidy-eligible child for January, including infants, toddlers, and school-age children.
  - Continuing to pay child care providers based on the number of enrolled children who receive state assistance in their program, rather than attendance.

The Department will review the signed federal legislation closely to determine additional actions the Department may be able to take to support working families and the child care sector in the months ahead, but wanted to act quickly to extend these initiatives through January to give families and providers certainty about January funding.

Human Services also continues to waive parent co-pays in the state's child care subsidy program for parents who request it due to impacts from COVID-19.

Before the pandemic, Human Services also reduced co-payments by 50 percent for parents who receive state assistance paying for child care, saving New Jersey families $23 million per year.

Human Services also has invested more than $100 million in additional funding to increase child care subsidy rates since the start of the Murphy Administration.

To learn more about the state's Child Care Subsidy Program, please visit childcarenj.gov.

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Department of Human Services
222 South Warren Street
PO Box 700
Trenton, NJ 08625-0700