



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Guidance Related to COVID-19: Subsidized Child Care Provider Attendance and Payment

(Updated June 22, 2020)

Background

As part of the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is sharing updated guidance regarding the attendance policy and payment processes for subsidized child care providers.

Scope

OSSE is continuing payments to subsidized child care providers, given the extended public health crisis. This document contains:

- Updated information on child care subsidy continuation of payments and payment calculation criteria, attendance requirements, and family co-payments.
- Information about placement changes, recertification of eligibility and new applicants.

Please see below for more details.

Date Issued

Guidance was originally issued on April 17, 2020, and took effect on May 1, 2020. This update to guidance will remain in effect until Sept. 30, 2020, or until the effective date of subsequent revised guidance, whichever is later.

Guidance

Based on the emergency Mayor's Orders and the issuance of a public health emergency by the Mayor, OSSE has activated the [District-wide Child Care Disaster Response Plan](#) (CCDRP).

I. Subsidized Child Care Payments

OSSE will continue payment to facilities receiving subsidy. In previous guidance, OSSE committed to paying providers who closed due to the public health emergency, based on enrollment, for March and April 2020. Beginning May 1, 2020, **a facility's monthly payment equaled the individual facility's average monthly payment for the current fiscal year from October 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020. Subsidy payments will continue using this methodology through September 30, 2020, whether a provider remains closed or chooses to open.**

To receive continuing subsidy payments during the current public health emergency, all facilities must adhere to the following process:

1. Notify your designated OSSE education service monitor (ESM) in writing prior to closing to receive approval;
2. Follow the existing procedures for filing an [Unusual Incident Report](#) (UIR) indicating the closure is due to either (A) the public health emergency or (B) possible exposure to COVID-19 (see *Potential Exposure and COVID-19 Reporting* below); and
3. Providers who choose to open should file a UIR indicating the date that they will reopen. Providers choosing to remain closed are not required to submit a second UIR if one has already been submitted.

Any facility remaining open or re-opening **must** be compliant with health and safety guidance for child care facilities as published by OSSE and DC Health.

Payments During Closure

Subsidy payments will not be based on actual attendance as long as the closure is approved pursuant to the process described above. Approved closures during the activation of the CCDRP must be classified as an approved closure (AC) on the monthly attendance submission in the OSSE Attendance Tracking System (OATS). **Providers should continue to submit attendance (even if it is zero) by the fifth business day of each month.**

Payments During Re-Opening

Subsidy payments will not be based on actual attendance as long as the re-opening is approved pursuant to the process described above.

II. Excused Absences

If a facility stays open, individual children who remain home due to the public health emergency should be coded as an excused absence (EX) on the monthly attendance submission in OATS. No additional documentation will be required to support these excused absences. Payments through September 30, 2020, **will not** be impacted by excused or unexcused absences.

III. Family Co-payments

OSSE will no longer be reimbursing family co-payments. Child care providers who choose to open can (but are not required to) collect family co-payments for children in attendance starting on July 1, 2020. Co-payments will continue to be waived for families who are enrolled at child care providers who remain closed.

IV. Placement Changes

Families seeking a placement change to another child care provider during this time have been advised as follows:

Families who would like a placement change to a different child care facility due to closure resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19) can email ESA.childcare@dc.gov with the following information:

- Parent's name
- Child's name

- Current placement
- Requested placement
- Effective date of requested change

Families and the child care providers will receive email confirmation of the change.

V. Families who Require Recertification of Eligibility

Families who have their 12-month eligibility expire during the public health emergency will remain eligible for subsidized child care until the District government resumes in-person operations. Families will receive a notice in the mail with a request to come in and recertify after the public health emergency is lifted.

VI. New Applicants to the Subsidy Program

The Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Care Services Division (CCSD) has established drop boxes for families with new applications for the child care subsidy program at the Congress Heights (4049 South Capitol St. SW) and Taylor Street, (1207 Taylor St. NW) locations. Families who drop off documents for processing can expect a phone call from a DHS social service representative to conduct a phone interview regarding their eligibility.

The child care subsidy application and information about required documentation can be found [here](#).

Potential Exposure and COVID-19 Reporting

If a child care provider identifies a child or staff member who has tested COVID-19 positive, it is important for the child care provider to establish a plan for COVID-19 exposures.

- Identify a point of contact at the child care facility that an employee can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- Staff or students diagnosed with COVID-19 should not enter the child care facility until they have been cleared from isolation.
- Child care facilities should notify DC Health by emailing coronavirus@dc.gov with the following information:
 - “COVID-19 Consult” in the email subject line;
 - Name and direct phone number of the best point of contact for DC Health to return the call; and
 - Short summary of incident/situation.
- An investigator from DC Health will follow-up within 24 hours to all appropriately submitted email notifications.
- In consultation with DC Health, child care facilities should have a notification process in place to share the following with staff and parents:
 - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19;
 - Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at coronavirus.dc.gov; and
 - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
- DC Health will instruct child care facilities on dismissals and other safety precautions in the event a known COVID-19 individual came in close contact with others at the facility.

The District of Columbia is continually monitoring this situation and will issue additional guidance as circumstances change.

In the event you decide to close your facility, please remember to submit an [Unusual Incident Report](#) to osse.childcarecomplaints@dc.gov or your designated licensing specialist. We are grateful for your ongoing patience, flexibility and cooperation as we manage the dynamic nature of this event. As we approach the next few weeks, we ask for continued patience and trust as the District navigates this unique situation.

Questions?

If you have questions relating to this guidance, please contact Eva Laguerre, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning and Director, Licensing and Compliance, Division of Early Learning, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) at (202) 741-5942 or Eva.Laguerre@dc.gov.

For resources and information on the District of Columbia Government's COVID-19 response and recovery, please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.

Related Regulations

- CCDBG Act and its implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. Parts 98 and 99, as administered by the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- District of Columbia's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan, current version;
- Child Development Facilities Regulation Act of 1998, effective April 13, 1999 (D.C. Law 12-215; D.C. Official Code §§ 7-2031 *et seq.* (2012 Repl. & 2017 Supp.)) ("Facilities Act");
- Day Care Policy Act of 1979, effective September 19, 1979 (D.C. Law 3-16; D.C. Official Code §§ 4-401 *et seq.* (2012 Repl. & 2017 Supp.)) ("Day Care Act").