

Child Care Provider Bonus for Serving Children of Eligible First Responders and Health Care Workers
REVISED - May 13, 2020

The Office of Early Learning along with local early learning coalitions throughout the state are prioritizing child care for first responders and health care workers. As an incentive for child care providers to remain or to reopen to serve these families, the Office of Early Learning is offering a bonus to these providers.

Provider Eligibility

1. Q: Which child care providers are eligible to receive the bonus for serving eligible first responders and health care workers needing child care?

A: Child care providers that currently have a School Readiness contract with a coalition or RCMA, including licensed family child care homes, and are serving eligible first responder and health care worker families. If a provider does not have a school readiness contract with a coalition or RCMA, the provider will need to request to apply for a contract and comply with the contract execution process in EFS Mod.

2. Q: Does a child care provider have to serve newly enrolled children or will a provider qualify for the bonus if it has been serving families all along? If it's newly enrolled children only, what is start date?

A: Child care providers that serve eligible children starting April 1, 2020 will be eligible for the monthly bonus, up to a total of three months from the first month of providing services. Please refer to Q6 for definition of eligible children.

NOTE: If children are already being served, parents must obtain a completed Child Care Application and Authorization Form - First Responder and Essential Health Care Personnel (referral) from their employer or other authorized agency and contact the coalition for services.

3. Q: Do child care centers that only provide Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) services qualify for the bonus?

A: No, only contracted School Readiness child care providers are eligible for the bonus (refer to Q1).

4. Q: If a provider has multiple locations, is it eligible to receive a bonus for each location it serves eligible children?

A: Yes, providers may earn up to \$4,000 per month for a maximum of \$12,000 per provider location. See Q7 and Q8.

Qualifying Families/Children

5. Q: Is there a definition for who qualifies as a first responder and a health care worker?

A: Yes, first responders and health care workers are defined in Governor DeSantis's [Executive Order 20-91 Essential Services List](#).

6. Q: Who are eligible children of first responders and health care workers?

A: Children, from birth up to 13 years, where one or both of their parents are employed as first responders or health care workers, and have a valid Child Care Application and Authorization Form for First Responder and Essential Health Care Personnel (referral) on file and are authorized by a coalition for services. Eligibility will be determined in three- month increments. Please refer to the [First Responders Health Care Workers Referral Q&A dated 4-13-20](#) for additional information regarding eligibility.

Bonus Amount/Payment

7. Q: What is the amount of the bonus and how often is it paid?

A: Providers will receive a monthly bonus/incentive of \$500 per child of a first responder or health care worker up to \$4,000 per month and for a maximum of \$12,000 per provider location. The incentive is in addition to the school readiness reimbursement rate the contracted provider receives.

8. Q: What if a provider serves more than eight (8) eligible children?

A: As stated in Q7, providers will be eligible to receive a maximum bonus of up to \$4,000 per month per provider location. Providers that are capable of serving more children are encouraged to continue serving as many children as possible during this unprecedented time while adhering to CDC guidelines.

9. Q: Does the bonus change based upon the provider type, i.e. licensed center, family home child cares, etc.?

A: No, the bonus is the same for all provider types as long as they meet the requirements described in Q1.

10. Q: When did the bonus become available and how long will it last?

A: Bonuses are payable to contracted SR child care providers serving eligible children on or after April 1, 2020, for a period of three months during the declared Covid-19 pandemic. A provider must deliver services to an eligible child for at least 1 day during a month to receive the bonus for that month.

11. Q: How will providers receive their payment?

A: Upon approval of proper documentation, coalitions will reimburse providers the month after it provides services, up to a maximum of \$12,000. Coalitions must include providers' reimbursement with their monthly SR/VPK invoices. More specific invoice instructions will be provided by OEL.

12. Q: If a provider serves a child for a partial month due to the child leaving the center, will the bonus be paid for that child?

A: A child care provider will be eligible for the bonus, up to the limits defined in Q7, if it serves an eligible child for at least one day during a month.

13. Q: If a provider stops services during the month due to a closure, will the bonus be prorated?

A: A child care provider will be eligible for the bonus, up to the limits defined in Q7, if it serves eligible children for at least one day during a month.

14. Q: If a provider serves children from multiple coalitions, how will the bonus be paid?

A: Child care providers that contract with multiple coalitions will be paid by the coalition where the provider is physically located (“home coalition”). Home Coalitions will coordinate with other coalitions to ensure provider is paid accurately for all eligible children served up to the limits defined in Q7. Attached is a listing of coalition contacts for first responder/health care worker referrals.

General

15. Q: Who should a child care provider contact if it has additional questions?

A: Providers should contact their local coalition for any additional assistance.

[Click here to locate your Early Learning Coalition](#)