

May 6, 2020

Dear Childcare Provider:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) would like to thank you for your service to Iowa's children and families. You are receiving this letter to make you aware of funding opportunities that have been made available to childcare providers. More information about all forms of resources, including financial resources can be found on the CCR&R Resource page at <https://iowaccrr.org/providers/links/resources2020/>.

General Funding Opportunities

Rejuvenation grants: This grant is for programs that closed due to COVID-19 and are interested in reopening. This grant provides funds to restart your business along with financial assistance to help with cleaning your program environment or obtaining supplies needed to follow CDC guidelines (such as additional thermometers or disinfectants). CDC guidelines for open childcare programs can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

Centers can receive \$1,000 in restart up funds as well as an additional \$500 for cleaning and supplies. Child Development Homes can receive \$450 in restart up funds as well as an additional \$150 for cleaning and supplies.

To be eligible to receive this grant you must be a licensed or registered childcare facility that meets the following eligibility requirements

- Your childcare facility was open and operating as of 3/1/2020.
- Your childcare facility is currently closed due to COVID-19 but agrees to re-open.

If your program meets the above eligibility requirements and is currently closed the owner or program administrator may apply for these funds by filling out the Rejuvenation Grant Survey. These monthly surveys can be found on the Funding Opportunities page of the DHS website at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities>. If you have questions please send an email to RejuvG@dhs.state.ia.us.

Basic Monthly Stipends for Open Childcare Programs: Programs that remain open or re-open may be eligible for monthly stipends during the months of April through July. Eligible centers receive \$2,000 per month and eligible Child Development Homes receive \$500 per month. This funding is to provide immediate support to your childcare program. Examples may include supporting staff wages, replenishing toys or products, paying rent or utilities, or something similar.

To be eligible to receive this stipend, you must be a licensed or registered childcare facility that can comply with the following:

- Currently open and operational and agree to remain open OR re-open and remain open
- In the event that your program has concerns about remaining open, you agree to work with DHS and public health officials to try and take necessary steps to remain open and operational.
- Prioritize serving families with essential service workers
- Follow DHS Childcare Guidance outlined at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare-covid-19>
- Follow CDC recommendations to childcare providers outlined at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html> to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Programs that have received the following funding in a particular month are not eligible to receive that month's stipend:
 - A center that received more than \$1,000 or a Child Development Home that received more than \$250 from a small business grant or community development grant
 - Any funding in excess of budgeted funding from your school district
 - Full-price payments from parents/guardians to hold slots.

Essential Employees Monthly Stipend Add-On: Programs that meet all requirements for the basic monthly stipend and make the choice to give all essential employees a 25% discount can receive an additional amount in their stipend. Eligible centers would receive an additional \$2,000 per month and eligible Child Development Homes would receive an additional \$500 per month. Essential employees include:

- All hospital staff;
- All healthcare providers in private practice and all direct care staff;
- Staff who provide critical government infrastructure: examples include: social services, child protection services, public health officials, tax collection, corrections and other public safety;
- Emergency responders;
- Food service workers, including grocery store staff and limited restaurant staff to include supporting take-away options.

To apply for the basic monthly stipend and the essential employees add-on the program owner or administrator must fill out the appropriate Monthly Stipend Survey to determine eligibility. The surveys can be found on the Funding Opportunities page of the DHS website <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities>.

For every month the program would like to receive this funding the program owner/administrator will need to fill out a survey to determine eligibility for that month. Both the April and May survey will be available until 5/31/2020. Surveys for following months will be available during that month (i.e. the June survey will be available from June 1, 2020-June 30, 2020). Surveys must be filled out by the last day of the month. If you have questions please send an email to Canwehelp@dhs.state.ia.us.

Funding Supports for open programs serving Child Care Assistance (CCA) clients:

Unlimited CCA Absences: The Department is aware of the hardship on childcare providers due to COVID-19. In order to assist, effective March 9, 2020, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) no longer limits the amount of absent days paid per month to childcare providers who remain open for business.

Reimbursing Family Co-Payments: As an additional support, DHS is waiving family co-payments and reimbursing providers for the co-pay amounts. This change will be backdated to the billing period starting April 6, 2020 and continue through the billing period ending July 26, 2020. We ask that providers stop collecting the family co-payments from families immediately. For any family co-payments you have already collected, please credit those payments to the family's account or reimburse your families for those payments made once DHS issues you the supplemental payments intended to cover this cost.

Although the family co-payment will still be deducted from your normal payments, DHS will issue reimbursements to providers for the copayment amount through a separate payment. Providers do not need to do anything extra to receive these co-payment reimbursements; these payments will be processed every four weeks and will be sent out to providers automatically.

Additional Information for those not serving CCA clients:

If your program does not already get CCA payments for eligible families, DHS does not have your tax ID information in our systems. It will be necessary for you to submit a W9 form for your program to receive a stipend or rejuvenation payment. Please go to <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities> to obtain the form. Once the form is completed follow the instructions online to return by e-mail or mail.

Once again, thank you for your efforts in providing childcare to the children of Iowa. If you have any questions, please look at our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on Funding Opportunities page of our website <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare/funding-opportunities>. If you have additional questions not addressed on the FAQ you can email us at Canwehelp@dhs.state.ia.us.

Sincerely,

Julie Allison, Bureau Chief
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services
Bureau of Child Care