

## **Emergency Child Care Assistance**

The coronavirus public health crisis that we are facing has presented a number of child care issues for those New Jersey residents who are defined as “essential.” Under Governor Murphy’s Executive Order No. 110, child care centers that want to remain open for emergency child care for essential workers had to apply to do so, and all other of the state’s child care centers were closed on April 1, 2020. A number of centers have applied to remain open for the critical work of serving the child care needs of essential employees. In addition, family child care programs do not fall under the Executive Order and can continue to operate.

As part of the emergency, the state is launching an Emergency Child Care Assistance Program (ECCAP) to help support child care costs when a parent or guardian is an essential employee, regardless of your income. The Department of Human Services’ Division of Family Development will administer the program.

If you are an “essential” employee needing child care, you must register with the Department’s county-based Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies. “Essential” employees who are normally eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program must enroll in the ECCAP to continue receiving child care services. Your CCR&R will follow-up with you within two business days to gather additional information about you and your needs and help you identify a child care provider.

### **Who is considered “Essential” for Emergency Child Care Assistance?**

- Health care workers, including staff working in health care facilities and in community-based services including home health and behavioral health;
- Law enforcement personnel, fire and emergency services personnel, and correctional facility staff;
- Individuals employed at emergency child care centers operating on or after April 1, 2020;
- Staff working for entities that provide essential social services, including, but not limited to, group home and shelter staff;
- Essential government employees who are unable to work from home, including child protection services workers, child welfare workers, foster care workers, unemployment compensation processing staff, and public health employees; and,
- Certain critical workers, as defined by the Commissioner of DCF, at essential retail businesses, as defined in Executive Order No. 107 (2020) and subsequent Administrative Orders, which includes, for example, grocery store and gas station employees.

### **How much will child care cost?**

If you currently receive child care assistance under the state’s Child Care Subsidy Program or are eligible for it, your child care costs will be fully covered by the state. To give you a sense of whether you would be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program, the income maximum for a family of four is \$52,400 annually. You also can go to [www.childcarenj.gov](http://www.childcarenj.gov) and use the calculator to see if you are likely to be eligible and learn more about this program.

For all other families, the Emergency Child Care Assistance Program is now available. Under this program, the state will pay the following rates and you will be responsible for the difference between that and what the child care center is charging. What the child care center can charge you is subject to limits based on the center in which you enroll. Tuition for center services, including Emergency Child Care Assistance, cannot exceed 110% of the rate the center charged in February 2020.

Below is how much the state will pay per week.

	<b>State Rate for Emergency Care</b>
<b>INFANT</b>	\$450.35
<b>TODDLER</b>	\$415.70
<b>PRESCHOOL</b>	\$415.70
<b>SCHOOL-AGE</b>	\$336.00
	<i>Full-time weekly rate for one child</i>

### **How long will the state pay for child care?**

The state is committed to paying for child care in this way through the end of April and will revisit the situation at that time as we get additional information about federal resources to address this critical need.

### **How to enroll?**

1. If you meet the definition of an essential employee and have child care needs, go to <https://tinyurl.com/r4mtxmm> to register.
2. You will be contacted by one of the [state's Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies \(CCR&R\)](#) within two business days. Your CCR&R will follow up on next steps to gather information about your household and help you identify a participating child care provider.
3. If your child is currently enrolled in a center that is now serving as an emergency child care center, you can continue to utilize its services while your application is pending.
4. If you are income-eligible for the state Child Care Subsidy Program, the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency will use the information you provide to establish that you are an essential employee and help enroll you in the Child Care Subsidy program, which will provide a child care subsidy that will be considered payment in full.
5. For all other families, the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency will use the information you provide to establish that you are an essential employee, enroll you in Emergency Child Care Assistance, and to ensure that the center is paid the state portion for April.