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Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Child Care Frequently Asked Questions Updated June 10, 2020

Parents

Accessing Child Care

Q: Who can access child care?

A: Any parent may now access child care.

Q: Is there a cost for child care services?

A: Yes. Parents pay tuition for child care services.

Q: My child care program is closed. Can they apply to reopen?

A: Yes. Family and Center-based child care programs interested in reopening may contact their licensing specialist and complete a *Child Care Verification of Reopening* form. We are no longer requiring providers to be EPCC sites to operate

Q: Are parents that allowed to access child care if they are working from home?

A: Yes. Any parent may access child care services if available. If parents/guardians are able, they are strongly urged to keep children at home as the first and best option to protect them from the virus.

Q: Do I need to be prepared to find alternate care if my essential personnel care provider takes back other families?

As child care begins to be available to additional families, some of those families may return to their provider. These providers have contractual obligations and may not be able to continue to serve essential persons. Essential persons who would like to access another provider may find one on our website at

<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/state-funded-child-care-essential-personnel> or contact LOCATE: Child Care <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/for-parents/state-funded-child-care-for-essential-personnel-only>, a free service available by

phone Monday - Friday at 877-261-0060 between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM. Specialized services for parents of children with special needs, as well as Spanish language, are also available on these platforms.

Q: My child care provider keeps charging me for child care even though I am not attending

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(e.g., the program is closed; I am keeping my child safe at home; or I don't qualify by the Governor's Executive Orders).

A: We have received several inquiries from families regarding the continued financial responsibility to pay for child care if a facility has closed or if a parent has decided to temporarily discontinue child care services. The coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on both families and child care providers. During this time of emergency, we must seek to work collaboratively and strive towards equitable outcomes. MSDE does not oversee child care contracts.

Q: How do I apply for the Child Care Scholarship program?

A: The Child Care Scholarship program provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible working families in Maryland. Parents who earn up to 60% of State Median Income are eligible (e.g., a family of four can have an income of up to \$71,525 per year and qualify for a scholarship). To find out more about eligibility and how to apply for the Child Care Scholarship program, see <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program>.

Q: Do parents still need to pay subsidy copays? Is the state still paying vouchers?

A: At this time, all co-pays for the Child Care Scholarship Program are waived. The State is continuing to pay the voucher amounts to all child care providers. Parents, attending child care at this time, would use the scholarship to help meet the cost of child care, but may still be responsible for making up the difference between the scholarship and the tuition unless waived by the provider.

Q: Can I use unlicensed family, friend and neighbor care?

A: Yes, you may use a family, friend or neighbor care that is being provided for up to 5 unrelated school-age students (kindergarten and older) only in the provider's home. This is a temporary relaxing of the regulations because of the state of emergency.

Q: What happens if I use Nannies and Alternative Providers?

A: MSDE does not regulate nannies or alternative providers, so we cannot advise on these matters. In addition, the Governor's March 13, 2020 Executive Order relaxed some licensing regulations to allow for Family, Friend and Neighbor care for five or fewer school-age students. These options are not funded by the State.

Additional Information

Q: Where can I find the plan for child care in Maryland during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Child Care can be found at <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org>.

Q: Where can I find additional information?

A: Additional information can be found on our website <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org>. You may also e-mail us at earlychildhood.msde@maryland.gov or call us at 410-767-0100.