

Child Care Provider Webinar Q&A Sept. 15, 2020

Child Care Guidance

Q: Does DCYF have any information or suggestions on air purifiers indoors to stay safe from COVID-19? Are there any more requirements to help ensure healthy air while children are spending more time indoors?

A: Continue to look at the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) guidance as it relates to child care. **DOH COVID-19 Guidance Child Care, Youth Development, and Day Camps**, updated 9-4-20.

Q: I'm curious what additional financial supports are going to be made available to child care providers with remaining federal CARES funds?

A: We do not have any information to share at this time. When more information is available, we will share the information with providers.

Q: Is there going to be an official COVID-19 video explaining social distancing, face masks, cleaning, etc.?

A: There are no plans for a video at this time. Detailed guidance on social distancing, face masks and cleaning are available in the **DOH COVID-19 Guidance Child Care, Youth Development, and Day Camps**, updated 9-4-20.

Q: Can we bill DCYF for days our child care center has to close due to a COVID-19 case or exposure? Temporary closures for 72 hours to clean or 14 days to quarantine? What if we just close one classroom?

A: **Enrollment based payment is no longer available.** Providers must bill for subsidy based on child attendance.

Q: Most of my staff makes too much for benefits for the health exchange. There should be no reason why all child care workers can't get free health care since they are putting them and their families at risk by coming to work. Is there any way this can happen?

A: Legislators are currently discussing the impact of COVID-19 on child care and the challenges that COVID-19 has highlighted for providers. We expect child care to be a primary topic of discussion during the 2021 Legislative Session.

Q: It's my understanding that there are still funds available to support child care providers in Washington State. How will these funds be used in an equitable manner? Example: amount received based on exact number of children your facility serves, not a range like 1-48.

A: Grants are available for providers from a variety of sources. The state has additional money that has been allocated for child care. The process for application is being finalized. For more information, read: **Additional COVID-19 Relief Funds for Child Care Stabilization 9-25-20.**



Q: I have questions on staff exposures and when to shut down the entire center versus one room. If a staff member, who is in different rooms, is in a room but they are socially distanced from a child, and a child gets COVID-19 in one of our rooms, does the entire center need to shut down because that staff member has been in other rooms, or just the room that the one child is in?

A: The DOH **Child Care, Youth Development, and Day Camps During the Covid-19 Outbreak** was updated 9/4/20 and is the best resource for questions related to exposures, group size, hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting practices. You may also contact your local health department and your child care licenser to discuss your specific questions.

Q: Are there going to be licenser visits? Are they waiting until the new year? Are the Zoom licensing visits going to continue?

A: Licensers will continue to work with you virtually. On-site visits will only take place if there is a need that cannot be met virtually. There have been no decisions about how operations might change in January 2021.

Q: Why are families having to request full day care in September when districts are closed? Clients authorizations are varying and it's frustrating to track as a provider. Why can't DCYF extend full day care for subsidy clients September - June?

A: DCYF uses an automated process to reduce school-age child authorizations from full-time during the summer to part-time during the school year. This process ensures that authorizations align with the amount of care families are eligible to receive. Family eligibility and amount of care authorized is determined at application or reapplication. Families that need additional care must report this change and authorizations will be updated to align with the family's new eligibility.

Q: Is the safe sleep training going to reflect on any new COVID-19 precautions that we need to do?

A: There have been no changes to the WAC related to safe sleep, so there are no changes to the safe sleep training at this time.

Health Benefits

Q: Is this something I can walk my staff through - where they can get insurance?

A: Yes, you and your staff can visit **Washington Health Plan Finder** to figure out if you qualify for Apple Health, which is the Medicaid plan for Washington State and get estimates on other health plans.

Q: Is this something that the employee would get on their own or employers purchase for them?

A: The health insurance being discussed is insurance that the employee would get on their own. Apple Health, Washington's Medicaid plan, is free or low cost. Qualified Health prices vary. You can visit **Washington Health Plan Finder** to explore options and cost.

Q: Who can qualify for federal subsidies?

A: The health insurance subsidies are based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and could cover households or individuals up to the 400% FPL.

Q: If we have already gotten medical through Washington Health Plan Finder, how do you apply for just dental?

A: You can enroll at **Washington Health Plan Finder**. If you are currently on a health plan you can log into the website and select dental. Signing up for dental does not require a qualified life event, but you

may need to reach out to staff to open up enrollment. Medicaid does provide adult dental benefits, so if you are enrolled in Apple Health the website could not help.

Q: I heard that family providers have health insurance for free. Is this true? If so, why can't this be extended to center staff?

A: Insurance rates and eligibility is dependent on income. Visit **Washington Health Plan Finder** to see if you qualify or to browse and compare plans. Additionally, licensed family child care providers who care for children receiving state subsidy have access to healthcare through the Union's collective bargaining agreement. It is not necessarily free and is not available to all family child care providers.

Q: I have heard that it is very hard for someone who owns the business to qualify, is that true?

A: Insurance rates and eligibility are dependent on income. Visit **Washington Health Plan Finder** to see if you qualify or to browse and compare plans.

Q: Is there a requirement for the number of hours one must work per week in order to qualify?

A: No.

Q: I have Apple Health (Medicaid), do I need to re-apply again?

A: Apple Health members must renew every year. You can find out how to renew your Apple Health insurance at this link: **Apple Health (Medicaid) Renewal**.

Q: Is this information available in Spanish?

A: The call center has no cost language assistance and the website is in English and Spanish.

Q: I have an employee who is pregnant. Does this apply to them?

A: Individuals who are pregnant have different requirements to enroll that are more inclusive. I would encourage them to visit the website if they are uncovered to see if they qualify.

Q: I have applied but my copayment is too high.

A: If you haven't shopped around or checked your eligibility yet, visit **Washington Health Plan Finder**. This website may be able to detect lower rates for you. You could work with a navigator by clicking the get virtual help button.

Q: Does a family need an address to qualify for Apple Health? We have some clients who are homeless or in housing transition that lack health insurance.

A: No. For purposes of Washington Apple Health and other qualified health plans you do need to enter a county, but not a permanent home address. There is a checkbox for individuals who currently do not have a permanent address or are a part of the Address Confidentiality Program.

Q: Is this only if we apply today?

A: Due to the public health emergency, you can go to **Washington Health Plan Finder** and may be able to enroll in a plan this month, but enrollment will not be available again until the open enrollment period of November 1 – January 15.

Q: Is there any help with coverage for a family member or spouse as a family home child care?

A: Anyone can call in or visit the website to see if they qualify for assistance.

Q: Is there a phone number for child care providers to get coverage? I sent in application and haven't heard anything.

A: I would recommend that you go to our website and get virtual help and talk to a navigator. You could also call 1-855-923-4633.

Q: Do family child care providers usually qualify?

A: It will depend on their income.

Q: Can licensed family child care providers still use the Union health care plan if we serve children receiving subsidy?

A: Licensed family child care providers may be eligible for health care through the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Service Employees International Union 925.