

Child Care Providers Child Care COVID-19 Grant Informational Webinar Q&A

May 12, 2020

Q: What is an SSPS number and how do you get one?

A: SSPS stands for Social Service Payment System number. Most providers already have an SSPS number. You can sign in to the WA Compass Provider Portal and submit an application to get one or find it on the top right of your license. If you do not have one, your DCYF licensor can work with you to get you one.

Q: What about temporary closures? How do we help them reopen?

A: The provider needs to be open during the date of the application and remain open until July 31, 2020, in order to receive funds. At this time, we have received approval for \$29 million for licensed providers whether they serve children on subsidy or not. We are working with Child Care Aware on reopening and business supports for providers.

Q: Who is eligible to apply for Child Care COVID-19 grant funding?

A: Licensed providers who are open and currently serving children are eligible. DCYF will ask how many children you are serving and ask that you remain open through July 31, 2020.

Q: Where on WA Compass will this application be?

A: When you log on to the Provider Portal, if you are an open, licensed provider you will see a green box at the top middle of the page.

Q: Is there a timeframe that the funds need to be used by and can we use it on our mortgage?

A: The money will be dispersed through June 30 or until it runs out, whichever comes first. The preferred date to use these funds would be by the end of September 2020. We will look into the mortgage question and get back to you with more information.

Q: What will DCYF use the other portion of the CARES Act Child Care Development Block Grant funds for?

A: The use of remaining funds has not yet been determined.

Q: Who is the Child Care Covid-19 grant for?

A: Licensed child care provider sites that are open and serving children and agree to serve children through July 31, 2020.

Q: Planned closures on holidays – is it okay to close to recognize these holidays before July 31, 2020?

A: Yes.

Q: When will the application be available?

A: We hope to release this application by May 15, 2020. The application went live on May 15, 2020.

Q: What will happen if providers accept the funds but have to close before July 31, 2020?

A: If you are following the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines on temporary closures, the expectation is that you temporarily close to clean everything if there is a potential COVID-19 exposure, then reopen.

Q: When will we know the application is available?

A: We will send out an email to everyone on the provider distribution list when the application is available. We will also provide assistance on how to fill out the application if needed.

Q: Is there anything that needs to be attached to the application?

A: No, you do not need to attach anything to the application. Providers will answer a series of questions, commit to staying open and caring for children through July 31, 2020, and then submit the application. The portal will automatically process the application. For providers whose primary language is Spanish or Somali, a translated application is available on the portal. This can be printed and submitted by email (you can take a picture and email your application in).

Q: Is this taxable?

A: Yes. These are taxable dollars.

Q: How will we receive payment?

A: If you are currently receiving child care subsidy through the state, you will receive your payment in the same way you receive your subsidy payments. If you have not ever received an SSPS payment you will receive a check via US Postal Service. We are not asking providers to get a Statewide Vendor Number.

Q: Will there be a second round of funding?

A: We do not know yet. It may depend on how many applications we receive during the first round.

Q: What about vacation days scheduled for closures or for trainings?

A: In order to receive this block grant, we ask that you do not permanently shut down for a long period of time unless you need to temporarily close due to potential COVID-19 exposure. You may keep your regular schedules, including planned vacation days. We recommend that you keep documentation of your annual calendar or planned vacation closures.

Q: How will providers get paid if they do not currently take children on state subsidy?

A: Everyone is going to receive funding through SSPS, whether or not they currently take children on state subsidy.

Q: Do we need to be a part of Early Achievers to apply?

A: No.

Q: What is the COVID-19 Child Care Grant timeframe?

A: The payments are through June, or until the funds are exhausted.

Q: Is the portal login different from the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT) login?

A: Yes, the Provider Portal is a different site than MERIT. It is accessed by visiting https://wacompass.force.com/PP_LoginPage

Q: What if you have been closed for the past two months but can reopen the day the application is available and plan to stay open after that?

A: You will need to continue to stay open during the time of applying by submitting your application through July 31, 2020.

Q: Can the funds be used for compensating the workforce for tokens of appreciation or bonuses?

A: Allowable expenses are facility, health and safety, utilities, food, cleaning supplies, salaries and benefits, and not bonuses.

Q: Do you have to keep documentation or a log of what the money is spent on?

A: Yes, in case you are audited you are able to look back at what the funds were used for. We will be posting an FAQ soon which will include answers to questions like this.

Q: Will DCYF be providing guidance at each phase leading in to the summer and fall?

A: Yes, there is a group that will look at this and what it means for providers as we move through each phase of the Governor's plan.

Q: Where can we send follow up questions?

A: Feel free to email the Community Engagement team at dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov for any questions you may have. We will continue to update our FAQs and will send out information on future webinars.