

ECE Provider Conference Call #4
May 13, 2020
1:30pm

The call started at 6:01 pm by the conference operator. The operator informed the callers to press *1 if they wished to ask a question. Remarks were made by the following:

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE: Kim welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining the call. She noted the goal of these calls is to keep everyone in Delaware's early learning industry informed.

She indicated that the following individuals would provide updates:

Jon Sheehan, Office of the Governor

Kim Klein, Director of Finance, DOE

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator, DSCYF, Office of Childcare Licensing

Thomas Hall, Deputy Chief, Division of Social Services, POC Office

Office of the Governor Update

Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor

Jon thanked providers for the work they are doing every day, and he highlighted Provider Appreciation Day that occurred last Friday, May 8. He noted the Governor's Office has received questions as to what Phase I means for childcare providers. The Governor's Office knows it is important that you receive this information as soon as possible, so we hope to get you this information at least ten days before June 1.

DOE, Finance Office Update

Kimberly Klein, Director

Kim clarified the following about Enhanced Reimbursement (ER) Program:

- We have no information as to when the ER funding will end. It is ongoing until further notice.
- The ER Program began April 1.
- If you applied for April, you applied and will be paid for the entire month of April.
- You can only submit one application per month per site, and it must be submitted after the 15th of that month (for example, May 15th for May).
- There is no deadline to apply each month.
- We are still taking applications for April, but please apply as soon as possible for April if you have not done so.
- Questions about ER payments should be sent to:
enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us
- If you received a paper check for April's payment, but were expecting a direct deposit (ACH), this means DOE was not able to override what exists in the state's financial system. If you want an ACH instead of a paper check, contact the Division of Accounting at 302-526-5600 or at FSF_Supplier_Maintenance@delaware.gov to provide them with correct banking information.

OCCL Update

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Childcare Licensing, DSCYF

Meredith Seitz, Chief Policy Advisor, DSCYF

Betty Gail appreciated the work that providers are doing for families and children. She noted that programs should have received an email indicating that if you are not already an emergency childcare site you may still become one. We will process your application as soon as possible. As the Governor allows for expanded business openings, you may be able to serve additional children. You may accept children whose parents are essential employees who cannot work from home.

DHSS Update

Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services

Like the more 500 childcare providers who remained open as emergency childcare site, DSS offices remain open and is actively serving, the citizens of Delaware. The following are some things the POC office has been working on during the pandemic event:

- DSS continues to experience a greater than 40% plus increase in applications and we continue to process them within the established standards.
- For certification periods set to expire during March through June, we have extended those certification periods six months for clients in the Purchase of Care, Medicaid, TANF, and SNAP programs.
- As authorized in the Cares Act, Delaware increased the March, April, and May SNAP benefits to maximum amount allowed by family size. For the month of April this resulted in 38,000 families receiving an additional seven million dollars in nutrition support.
- DSS in collaboration with DOE is standing up a new program named the Pandemic EBT or P-EBT program that will be made available to all children who attend a school in Delaware and who participate in the free and reduced school lunch program. These children will receive the value of the missed school provided meals on an Electronic Benefit Transfer Card or EBT. This program is expected to benefit approximately 100,000 children in Delaware. **I will include a flyer** about this program in the minutes distributed for this call.
- DSS has also been actively providing direct support within the community during the months of April and May.
 - Social workers have been deployed to assist at the numerous virus testing sites to help citizens access food, housing, and other basic needs
 - DSS staff have been delivering meals to the various motels and shelters housing citizens who are either homeless or in quarantine.
 - Six DSS Staff our serving as shelter managers for a site in Sussex county housing 25 citizens in quarantine
 - The Culinary Café a DSS Employment and training site, is preparing breakfast, lunch and dinners daily for approximately 250 clients who are displaced and living in hotels
 - DSS staff are helping man the 211 call-center to assist Delaware citizens in accessing services and have fielding calls for sister agencies though our Customer Relation Unit.
- For Purchase of Care providers

- In May, Emergency Childcare Providers were instructed to enter 100% attendance for all children authorized to their site, those providers should have received their payments by now; assuming they entered their attendance at the beginning of this month.
- On May 5th, DSS issued 1.25 million dollars in payments to 442 providers whose March attendance was lower than their February enrollment. These supplemental payments were to ensure providers were paid at least their February enrollment for the month of March.
- On May 9th, DSS issued 2.65 million dollars in POC payments to 287 closed childcare sites.
- For the Month of May, payments remain the same as April:
 - Those sites that serving as emergency childcare sites, you will be paid based on your May enrollment or in other words for full attendance for all the POC children authorized for your site.
 - Those sites that are closed and paying staff will receive 100% of February enrollment while those closed and not paying staff will receive 20% of their February enrollment.
 - POC staff will be contacting those sites who reported in April that they were closed and paying staff to verify they continued paying staff.
 - For those sites that are closed and whose status regarding paying staff remains the same their May payment will be the same as their payment for April services.
 - Like last month Copays will be included in the POC payments for May.
 - DSS will not be paying Purchase of Care Plus fees
 - Directions for entry May billing in the POC portal will be issued later this month.
- Going forward, DSS and DHSS are active participants with the Department of Education, the Office of Childcare Licensing and the childcare provider community to develop a workable reopening plan. I am sure POC payment structure will be part of that discussion. As decisions are made and information becomes available, POC will get this information out as quickly as possible.
- At DSS the POC staff are on duty and ready to accept calls and POC questions via the POC Helpline which is 302-255-9670 or via email at POCResource@delaware.gov. Thank you for your time, as always if you would like to speak to Tom Hall, you may contact him at 320-255-9605. (Note: These are the correct phone numbers for DSS/POC Office, as there was some confusion on the call.)

Questions and Answers

(Some questions edited for ease of reading; apologies for any wrong name)

Q. Crystal: My ER calculation was confirmed two weeks ago, but I have not received my check. When I contacted Division of Accounting, they said the contact information and zip code were wrong on my W-9. What should I do?

A. Kim Klein: Email the details of this to enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us for further assistance. Also, any time you email this address, please be sure to include your application ID as this helps us to locate your application.

Q. Charlotte: How are monthly payments calculated?

A. Kim Klein: For ER, there is a set amount for each week based on the type of center you are, your county location and status as either an emergency childcare cite, closed paying staff or closed not paying staff. **Attached is a chart showing the ER amounts.**

Q. Pyle: If we apply as an emergency childcare site and our group size changes each month, does that impact the amount of ER we receive?

A. Kim Klein: Every month that you apply, your application will be based on your enrollment for the 15th of that month. This also accounts for your status to change (open, closed, emergency site). Please remember that for May, enrollment is the number on your POC roster for May and the number of private pay children who are paying as of May 15. (Note: ECAP and Head Start sites must include those slots in their enrollment as well.)

Q. Lisa: Will we get a 1099 tax form for ER at the end of the year?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, this is taxable income.

Q. Tina: For POC, how do we fill out attendance for POC?

A: Tom Hall: By the end of the month we will be sending out directions on how to complete your attendance for the month. Tentatively the directions will be the same as for April billing. If you are open, you will enter attendance for POC (which is 100%).

Q. Connie: For ER, we are getting a lot of pressure to reopen from parents who need childcare services. What do we do about bringing back high risk employees? How do we man rooms without these workers?

A. Kim Krzanowski: These are issues we will need to address with the Governor's Office and Division of Public Health as we develop a transition plan. Individual and business decisions will need to be made. We will provide more guidance when it is available.

Q. Bonnie: For ER, when we reopen with limited capacity will ER continue in a partial fashion?

A. Kim Klein: We do not know the answer to this at this time.

Q. Jennifer: For ER, what do we do if our attendance changes after the 15th of the month?

A. Kim Klein: You must base your May 15th application on your enrollment as of the 15th of that month. If enrollment changes after the 15th, that does not impact your calculations for this program.

Q. Wendy: We are allowed no more than 10 kids in a room, but how does that work at naptime?

A. Betty Gail: You are limited to ten children regardless of what activity is occurring in the room.

Q. Martha: I am a licensed home childcare that is closed. For POC, will we get full pay in May for April?

A. Tom: We paid for April services on May 9th. If you have any concerns with payment, please contact me at 255-9605.

Q. Linda: For ER, if closed, do we submit new application each month even if our information doesn't change each month?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, an ER application is required to be submitted once a month for each provider who wishes to receive ER funds.

Q. Lisa: Regarding the new illness that is being found in children, what guidance do you foresee for providers?

A. Kim Krzanowski: DOE and DPH are closely monitoring this issue. Information will be distributed when it is available.

Q. Kim: How long do we have to spend the ER on payroll?

A. Kim Klein: There is no timeline for when you have to spend ER funds.

Q. Angie: Because we are open as an emergency childcare site, is it necessary for parents to provide us with proof they are essential workers?

A. Betty Gail: While not required, you do have the right to request proof that parents are essential workers.

Q. Tanya: For ER, can a home childcare submit an ER application and get this funding as well?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, the same ER application is used for all types of childcare centers. ER is open to all types of licensed childcare programs.

Q. Tanya: Can I still submit an ER application or April?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, you can still submit an ER application for A.

Q. Tina: Several family childcare providers are noting that if they are not in DE Stars they are not aware of ER. If you don't have a TA, is this information getting sent out to all licensed childcare providers?

A. Betty Gail: Yes, this information has been sent out to all licensed childcare providers. Please call the office near you to confirm we have your correct email address.

Q. Dorothy: We are a family childcare center that is closed. For POC we have six children, with two after school children and two afterschool children who are on full time leave, how does this impact our reimbursement?

A. Tom: If you are closed, your enrollment will be based on February at 100% attendance. If someone feels their March attendance was significantly different than their February enrollment, we could address that separately. Please contact Tom at 255-9605 or the POC Helpline at 302-255-9670.

A. Kim Klein: For ER, any child on POC roster for May 15 would count as enrolled child regardless if they are attending full-time or part-time.

Q. Courtney: With small businesses opening, enrollment has increased. If we have large rooms we can partition, does this meet the OCCL criteria?

A. Betty Gail: Call your local OCCL office for further guidance.

Q. Jennifer: Is there any guidance regarding summer camp activities like water play or field trips?

A. Betty Gail: No guidance at this time, although OCCL is working on this and will put this guidance out to providers as soon as possible. We understand the timeliness involved.

Q. Jessica: For POC, what do we put in the written attendance logs (for April/May) that we keep on file?

A. Tom Hall: For your personal records that will be reviewed by the POC monitor, record actual attendance and note COVID-19 on your attendance sheet.

Q. Caller: Regarding the three month extension from OCCL, what if we cannot get trainings and other licensing requirements completed within the extended timeframe?

A. Betty Gail: OCCL will accommodate and work with providers who are making a “good faith” effort to meet licensing requirements. We realize that you may need time to come into compliance. Be sure to keep the lines of communication open during this time.

Q. Pen: As an emergency childcare site can we close for Memorial Day?

A. Betty Gail: Yes, please just inform your families.

Q. Sabrina: Because we are at full POC capacity, we didn’t qualify for ER or any supplement for February or March. Is there any assistance in place for those who are at full capacity?

A. Kim Klein: ER is only for licensed providers not at full capacity. ER is to cover vacant slots not funded by another source.

A: Tom Hall: There are a few providers in this situation. We can offer to take a look at your March attendance. If it is better than February enrollment, we can potentially assist. Please call Tom at 255-9605 for further assistance.

Q. Christine: Regarding maximum group size, does that include children and teachers?

A. Betty Gail: Maximum group size is children only. It does not include adult staff.

Q. Linda: Do we need to submit an ER application each month?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, you will go into the ER application (<https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/childcare-reimbursement>) and select the month of May. You will input your information. Next, you will get a confirmation page which shows the calculated reimbursement amount.

Q. Tammy: For POC, you say that you will pay for enrollment for February based on the portal. What if we have kids in the portal who are not actually attending?

A. Tom Hall: February payment was based on 100% attendance, and yes that includes kids who may be at a different site now.

Q. Lisa: What do I do if I made a mistake on my ER application, such as I did not include paying myself?

A. Kim Klein: Please send an email to enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us indicating this error. For center owners who are the only staff working and being paid, and who are not collecting unemployment benefits, you can consider yourself closed and paying staff.

Q. Alisha: For POC, for the payment received this week, does that cover copays or the weekly pay that the state typically pays?

A. Tom Hall: For April, payment was based on February enrollment. If this amount seems low, contact Tom Hall to discuss 255-9605.

Q. Kelly: For POC, will there be an explanation of payments given to providers?

A. Tom Hall: No, it was not our intention to give a breakdown of the payment.

Q. Catherine: I have six POC kids, but some of them have expired, so how should I handle that?

A. Tom Hall: Call the POC Helpline at 302-255-9670. We will need to look at this specific case.

Q. Wendy: If a child is sent home with a fever, when can they return to childcare?

A. Betty Gail: This is contained in regulations and is usually 24 hours, unless your specific policy is more stringent.

Q. Linda: For ER, once we fill out the application and view it, does it provide you with an estimate payment?

A. Kim Klein: Yes, it calculates the expected payment. You will receive a call to confirm the numbers you entered. Please note, that if that call creates an adjustment to your application, your payment will be adjusted from what was listed on the screen.

Q. Pen: Is ER payment to go to 75% payroll and 25% other?

A. Kim Klein: There is no expectation regarding percentage to be paid to each category.

Q. Pen: When is the De Stars Tiered Reimbursement Reporting Form due?

A. Kim Krzanowski: De Stars Tier Reimbursement Form will be due before July 1.

Q. Trevor: This is the first some providers are hearing about some of these assistance programs. Who is the best contact for us to connect with to ensure we are receiving information?

A. Betty Gail: Please reach out to me at 302-892-5800 and we can determine why you have not received information to date.

Kim Klein thanked everyone for participating on the call and noted that minutes will be sent out. Again, ER payment questions can be sent to enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us. Any additional information will be sent out when it is available.

The call concluded at 7:02 pm.