

ECE Provider Conference Call #7
July 1, 2020
1:30pm

The call began at 1:30 p.m. by the conference operator. The operator informed the callers to press *1 if they wished to ask a question and # if they wished to remove their question from the queue.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE: Kim welcomed everyone, thanked them for joining the call and expressed appreciation for their commitment and dedication during this pandemic. She explained that today's call would follow the same format as previous calls, including agency updates and a Q & A period.

She indicated that the following individuals would provide updates today:

Jon Sheehan, Office of the Governor

Kim Klein, Director of Finance, DOE

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator, DOE, Office of Child Care Licensing

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

Jamie Mack, Division of Public Health

Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor: Jon noted that we are delaying moving into Phase 3 due to a slight uptick in COVID-19 cases in the beach community in Sussex County. When we do move to Phase 3, DOE will put the appropriate information out to everyone. He thanked everyone for the work they do each day.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE: Kim discussed two resources that have been successful in providing information to early learning providers. The first is a [Reopening Child Care Safely in Delaware guidance document](#) that is continually being updated by the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) as guidance and policies change. The second is a series of three informational webinars, which have had over 700 attendees. The feedback on the webinars has been that the format is organized and has been well received by everyone. They also noted that the Q & A portion of the webinar has been informative. She noted the document is available on the DIEEC website (and is linked above) and that this website is a one-stop shop on information for providers.

Kimberly Klein, Director, Director of Finance, DOE: Kim provided an update on Enhanced Reimbursement, including some reminders:

- For your June application, the system auto-calculated the payment assuming you opened June 15. We asked all providers on the University of Delaware's confirmation call to verify if that was accurate or not. If your center did not close on June 15, your payment amount would need to be adjusted manually at DOE to reflect your continued closure status.
- We have received several questions regarding payment amounts. For example, when you submitted your application it says your payment would be this much, but when you received the payment it was significantly reduced. So the application is assuming you opened on June 15 and if you did not (when confirmed through the UD confirmation call), then adjustments were made to the payment amounts to reflect that ongoing closed status.
- If you missed that part of the confirmation call and you were paid assuming you were open and you were not open, please contact us immediately at enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us.

It is important that you contact us immediately so that we can address any overpayment situation.

- Reminder for June that the State of Delaware accounting system is down for the end of fiscal year close out
- As promised, any application submitted and confirmed through the UD confirmation calls by June 24 will be processed for payment on June 25 (the last day DOE can process payments)
- Any application not confirmed by June 24, will be processed after July 9 when the system comes back up; therefore, June payment will be a little bit delayed
- For July, ER will be continuing, and payments will be calculated based on five weeks
- Your center must be open on July 1 to be eligible for ER payment during July
- Do not submit an ER application if you are not open on July 1
- University of Delaware staff will confirm that you were open July 1, when they call to confirm your ER application for July

OCCL Update

Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Childcare Licensing, DOE: Betty Gail noted that:

- OCCL is now officially a part of the Department of Education (as of July 1), and therefore you will start to see all OCCL communication will be coming from DOE and no longer DSCYF
- An email blast was sent out June 25 with additional info including a listing of individuals who can now enter facilities (including fire marshal personnel, electrical inspectors, reps from Office of Drinking Water)
- As for pre-employment interviews, applicants must be properly screened before entering and the interviewee should be interviewed in the room in which they might be employed. Contact your licensing specialist for further guidance.
- Regarding interns being left alone with children has not changed. They must have DE First qualifications, be at least 18 yrs. old, have one year experience at child care facility, and determined eligible through the criminal history unit. They may only be alone with three year old children or older. All this information must be in the personnel file. (See [ECE Provider Call Minutes #6](#) for specific information). Also to note again, aides many not be alone with children at any time.
- Administration of medication course is now online, although there have been some glitches with difficulty logging on and completing sections. We are working to resolve those issues with DIEEC/UD.
- DIEEC reports 700 people have registered for the online administration of medication course (294 have completed it)
- OCCL asked to clarify some public health guidance regarding how long a person must stay home if suspected of COVID-19, the person must go home and not return for at least ten days (assuming they do not have a doctor's note saying it's not COVID-19). During this period they must be symptom free for seven days prior to return to work.

Jamie Mack, Environmental Health Director, Division of Public Health, DHSS: Jamie noted that nothing has changed for early childcare providers since we are still in Phase II, and things will stay the same for now until we move to Phase III. DPH is taking steps to get better compliance with current restrictions, including doing more active inspections.

Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services (DSS): Tom thanked everyone for allowing him this time. DSS continues to provide updates to providers through our Provider Portal, Listserv, and the MyChildDE.org website, and provide direct assistance to providers through the Resource mailbox, and the POC helpline.

For the month of June

- All sites that were open or opened at any point during June were paid 100% of June enrollment. June Enrollment is defined June POC authorized children at 100% attendance
- Closed sites paying full staff – are being paid 100% of February enrollment
- Closed sites not paying staff – are being paid at 20% of February enrollment
- June provider billing instructions for POC providers was sent out last week. A copy of that memo is attached to these minutes

For the Month of July

- All sites that are open now or by the end of this week, will be paid based on their July enrollment. Enrollment is defined as July POC authorized children at 100% attendance
- Sites that remain closed during the entire month of July will not be eligible for POC payments
- Sites that open next week or later, will be paid based on the actual POC attendance for the month of July
- POC billing guidance for July was sent out yesterday and a copy of that notice is attached to these minutes.

Tiered Reimbursement Payments for April have been paid and we are expecting to release May tiered reimbursement payments this month on the regular schedule.

DSS will continue covering the cost of parent co-pays for the month of July.

Lastly, normally this time of year we do an automated switch of part-time school age children to full-time status. Given that we are paying providers based on enrollment, the cost was prohibitive to switch all children full time since we are still paying the providers for all children enrolled whether they attend or not. Providers can still request children be switched to full-time. Last week, we requested that providers that had identified children who will be attending fulltime to notify us. Providers were asked to send the names and MCI numbers of children that are currently attending and need to be switched from part time to full-time to the POC Resource mailbox at POCResource@delaware.gov by the close of business on Monday June 29, 2020. If you did were not able to meet that deadline or have questions about switching children to full time please contact the POC TEAM at POCResource@delaware.gov and put SUMMER CHILDCARE in the subject line.

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. As always, please feel to reach out to me directly at 302-255-9605.

Questions and Answers

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

Q. Michelle – For part of June we were closed and paying staff, and we did not open until Jun 15. Were we supposed to submit a staff roster?

A. Tom – For POC, if you were open, you did not need to send staff roster.

Q. Tina – Regarding POC plus fees, if we opened on June 15 and the child is attending, are we able to take the plus fee or not?

A. Tom – You are allowed to do that. POC plus is an arrangement between provider and client. If you have that arrangement, you can bill that person and collect that money.

Q. Lindsay – With the contractors able to come in to centers, when will we see our licensing specialist coming out for inspections?

A. Betty Gail – We are working on that, and you will be given plenty of notice before that happens.

Q. Bonnie – What are the ER requirements for June?

A. Kim – For June, when you submitted your application, you were instructed to select your status as of June 14 (either essential/open, closed/paying staff and closed/not paying). The system calculated your payment as closed/paying staff for first two weeks of June and automatically assume you were open last two weeks of June. So when you submit your application, it will tell you what you are eligible for with that status. However, when University of Delaware staff calls for your confirmation they were asking “Did you open on June 15?” If no, then your payment would be adjusted as of June 14. Your monthly amount would have been readjusted to reflect your status as closed for entire month of June. It is important to honestly answer that question being asked by UD staff. If not answered correctly, you were overpaid. You will need to contact us immediately to return that overpayment to the State of Delaware. An easy way to think about it is, if you submitted your application and you were due \$5000, but you knew you were not open last two weeks of June, then payment should have been less than that. If application matches what you were paid and you did not reopen, please contact us at enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us.

Q. Janelle – We are experience a problem getting through to DOE to get Delaware First certificates?

A. Kim – If you are referring to Delaware First, that team is up and running, and you can contact me at kimberly.krzanowski@doe.k12.de.us. We can contact you with someone on that team.

Q. Irene – What if a program is still not open due to recent spikes and remaining in Phase II? Are we required to open? What if families aren’t comfortable brining their kids? Will we be reimbursed?

A. Tom – POC – If you are open and families aren’t coming, you would get paid.

A. Kim – To be eligible for ER, you must be open on July 1. It’s not a requirement to be open in general, but to be eligible for ER funding, you have to be open July 1, 2020.

Q. Althea – My program has been open since March, but no one is able to come out to do a POC site visit, so we were put in bad standing. Is there a possibility to send paperwork to POC, so I can come off of that bad standing status?

A. Tom – Please contact Tom at 255-9605 to resolve the issue.

A. Linda Freeman with POC suggested she send her an email (Linday.freeman@delaware.gov) and Linda would follow up.

Q. Ms. Davis – For June, are we supposed to use the POC portal to get paid for June, or is everything done prior months.

A. Tom – If you are open you will use portal and enter full attendance for all POC authorized children.

Q. Christina – With the state delaying Phase III, but guidance being out there for August, what does it look like for providers with paying based on attendance in August? Is our capacity going to be back to normal, or do we need to be prepared to not be reimbursed for normal attendance?

A. Tom – For POC for August, the guidance is that you should have sufficient attendance, but as we get closer the guidance may change.

Q. Janet – If your POC kids are here, but you aren't full, would we still get reimbursement for ones who have not come back?

A. Tom – for July, if you are open, you will get paid for 100% of POC attendance.

Q. Dawn – We opened on June 8 as an emergency site. Do we still use the ER or do we do POC for month of June?

A. Tom – ER is based on licensed capacity, so if you were up to your licensed capacity and POC, then you would just do POC. If not, then you could potentially get ER also.

Kim – For ER, when we ask for your enrollment (as of June 15), it is the number of authorized children on your POC roster plus any private pay students paying as of June 15.

Q. Crystal – Regarding being opened as of July 1, but online it indicates if we were open by July 6, we would qualify for reimbursement for POC children at our site.

A. Tom – For POC, yes it is July 6.

A. Kim – For ER, it is July 1.

Q. Jill – In the beginning of pandemic, it was stated that no children will be dropped from your roster. However, during that time we had kids dropped from our roster. Parents are calling trying to bring their children, we can't take them. It also messes up ER. How do we fix that?

A. Tom – Call the POC Hotline at 255-9670 and we can get those kids added back on the roster.

Q. Sharon – For ER, do we submit our application today or July 15?

A. Kim – The application will be available on July 15 at 8:00a.m., and you will apply then based on your enrollment as of July 15.

Q. Tammy – Regarding the administration of medication online training, our staff paid to attend it in person before the pandemic began. Do we go online?

A. Betty Gail - At this point there are no in person classes. We are making calls to everyone who registered to find out if they want to wait to take it when in person classes resume or if they want to do it online. If online, we will issue you a refund once the state's accounting system is back up. For now, we are gathering information regarding which you prefer to do.

Q. Danielle – Regarding CPR and first aid training, I received something in the mail that some places are offering this virtually. Do you recommend that we wait to do it in person or go ahead and do it online?

A. Betty Gail - There has to be a hands on portion for it to qualify. Don't take an online version unless there is an in person portion to it. We will give you an extension for those persons who are outdated on this certification.

Q. Irene – To receive ER, we have to be open July 1, correct? Also, the ER application is not available until July 15, is that correct?

A. Kim – Both statements above are correct.

Q. Iris – If a staff member goes out of state for vacation, how long before they can return to work? If they quarantine themselves for 14 days, do they have to bring the test results back?

A. Kim – I encourage you to join the webinar tomorrow, and type these questions in the chat box.

Q. Joe – The payments for the parent's portion of POC would be reimbursed. Do you know when that will be reimbursed to centers?

A. Tom – When we pay POC rate to providers, the copay is included in that payment.

Q. Kyle – Where can I find the information regarding the webinar that is happening tomorrow?

A. Kim – Please check the DIEEC website [here](#).

Q. Karen – What about the food program monitors, are we allowed to let them in?

A. Betty Gail – If they (food inspection monitors) are doing inspections, yes, you should let them in.

Q. Crystal – If a site is opening and has an in-service day, is that considered the first opening day (even if children are not present)?

A. Tom – For POC, yes we are fine with that. You will be open and preparing to accept clients.

Q. Connie – We reopened today and before lunch we had a child with a 101 temperature and was sent home. This child has a sibling here as well. Should the sibling be sent home as well until we can find out if it's COVID related?

A. Betty Gail – Typically no, if the sibling is not demonstrating symptoms they would not be required to be sent home. However, this is really a public health question which Betty Gail will send to Jamie Mack for an answer.

Q. Mary – Prior to now, all the communications we have received state that the parent's copay is being paid by the state. However, I heard you answer a previous question that on individual contracts we can still collect copays from POC clients. Can you please clarify?

A. Tom – The other caller had asked about how to handle POC plus fees, which are fees above what POC pays. POC has been paying for copays. IF someone has a PCO plus child and they pay \$10 more each week. The answer is that is a contractual relationship between the provider and parent. The provider can decide if they want to collect that.

Q. Jennifer – Regarding children being excluded from care due to symptoms, Betty Gail stated the child should be excluded for 10 days, is that COVID-19 suspected only.

A. Betty Gail - This is for suspected symptoms of COVID-19. If they have a doctor's note that says they are fine, then they can come back before the end of the 10-day exclusion period.

Q. Irene – If you aren't comfortable opening up, do you get reimbursed for anything?

A. Tom – If you don't open in July, you would not get paid anything.

Q. Kyle – How does ER work if someone registered in middle of July, say after the 15th?

A. Kim – Use your enrollment figure as of the 15th of the month on your July 15 application.

Q. Laura – Regarding COVID-19, I need more clarification regarding if someone tests positive in my center. There is not a clear message from DPH or OCCL as to what to do.

A. Betty Gail – I am sorry that you have not received a clear message on this. Licensing takes their guidance from Public Health. Betty Gail and Jamie Mack will put something together to send out. We are not trying to give people the run around and do want to present a clear, unified statement for everyone. Licensing is not the expert in public health.

Q. Crystal – If my center is opening and there is a possible ratio issue if we accept all children at once, are we able to gradually increase the children who are returning to our facility?

A. Betty Gail – Class size is limited to what was in the guidance, unless you submit a request for a variance from OCCL. There would be specific information that would need to be submitted to OCCL like your COVID-19 template plan, and class size information for each classroom and how many children you want to increase. We want you to be able to enroll returning children, but not necessarily enroll new children thereby exceeding group size. If you have any further questions, please reach out to your licensing specialist.

Q. Bonnie – If a center opens on June 29, what is the amount they should expect for ER?

A. Kim – Payment for June would have been adjusted to reflect their status of June 14. Email Kim directly and Kim will give her more detailed information.

Q. Althea – For those extensions that were sent out that are expiring in July, is there going to be a further extension sent out?

A. Betty Gail – Yes, there will be a further extension letter sent out.

Q. Crystal – For POC, if we don't have variance to maintain ratio or bring back all our child, can we start with a certain number of families.

A. Tom – Yes, you can ramp up attendance. If you are open, we are considering you are open.

As there were no additional questions, Kim Krzanowski closed the meeting and advised if there were any further questions to please email them to email addresses listed in the minutes. Thank you.