

ECE Provider Conference Call #16
Friday, March, 2021
2:00 p.m.

The call began at 2:00 p.m.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director for the Office of Early Learning, DOE: Kim welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining today's call. She indicated that the following individuals would provide updates today:

Betty Gail Timm, Director, DOE, Office of Child Care Licensing
Thomas Hall, Deputy Chief, Division of Social Services, POC Office
Dr. Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, Director of the Division of Public Health (DPH)

Kimberly Krzanowski for Kimberly Klein, Associate Secretary, Operations Support, DOE: Kim updated the callers on enhanced reimbursement ending on March. Approximately 2,700 providers have been vaccinated to date.

Betty Gail Timm, Director of the Office of Child Care Licensing, DOE:

Once again, I want to thank providers for taking the time to be on the call today and for continuing to provide services to children and their families during this unprecedented time. You have certainly demonstrated the strength and resilience of the early learning community in our state.

1. OCCL is discussing when we will resume regular monitoring visits. No decision has yet been made. Any recommendation must be approved by our cabinet secretary; you will be informed in advance of any changes.
2. OCCL is also in conversation with public health to determine when we can return to DELACARE Regulations regarding class size. This would not affect infants and young toddlers as their class size in DELACARE is below the maximum size permitted under the COVID-19 modifications. You will be informed when or if this change becomes effective. I wanted to stress, however, that as of now, the modification of a restricted class size of 15 is still in place unless you have received a variance.
3. Summer camp regulations are being drafted for summer camps receiving POC. They will be in place for the summer of 2022. A task force is being assembled to provide feedback and guidance to the draft regulations before they are submitted to the register of Regulations for the formal comment period. Be on the lookout for an invitation from OCCL to serve on the Task Force. Please accept if you are interested in helping to draft these regulations.

Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services (DSS):

Thanked everyone for this time to provide an update, which includes:

DSS continues to provide updates to providers through our Provider Portal, Listserv, and the MyChildDE website and provide direct assistance to providers through the Resource mailbox, and POC helpline.

Tom shared where they are in terms of the payment supports for our POC providers

Current Payments structure

1. Pre-COVID Baseline/Floor Payments

- Last month, the POC program established the pre-pandemic baseline or floor payment for all POC providers. That initiative will be in place through June.
- All open sites will receive up to 2 payments for services provided.
- The first payment is for the actual POC attendance submitted, the second payment will be the difference between the baseline month amount and the actual attendance billed.
- It is very important that sites enter attendance information in the portal no later than the 3rd Monday of the month to ensure they receive a baseline supplemental payment.
- Baseline supplemental payments for February billing will be processed this coming weekend and should be in the provider's bank account by Wednesday, March 24th
- DHSS is happy to announce that we will continue the new baseline payment structure through June 2021.

2. Family Co-Pays

- DSS continues to pay the parent co-pay, we are also happy to announce we will continue to pay co-pays through June of this year.
- Please do not collect copays and please reimburse any families that may have paid in advance.

3. The initiative to increase paid absent days to up to ten days a month remains in place through June 2021.

- Make sure to enter all absence days when entering attendance in the portal to be able to take advantage of this new policy.

Providers who would like to remove children from their roster on the portal, should send an email to the resource mail box POCResource@delaware.gov. Please include child's MCI#.

The Market Rate Survey of provider rates has been completed and should be distributed next week. We are also continuing the Cost of Care study. If you were chosen to participate in the cost of care study, please continue to participate in providing the information we need. We are also scheduled to start the work on the cost of care estimator tool, soon.

The American Rescue Plan Act that was signed into law on March 11th: The Act has authorized that Delaware is to receive about \$108 million to support the child care industry. Over half of that money is ear marked for grants to providers who either open or temporarily closed to help support their operations during the pandemic. We have not received that money yet, but have started internal

discussions and will begin discussions next week with members of the child care community to discuss the best ways to put the new provider stabilization grant program in place.

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 you may reach out to me directly at 302-255-9605 or Thomas.Hall@delaware.gov

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to Delaware's families.

Dr. Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, Director of the Division of Public Health (DPH)

Dr. Rattay briefly discussed vaccine roll out and went to Q/A.

Kim Krzanowski thanked everyone for being the call and for your questions, and noted that we will continue to forward information as it becomes available.