



**ANNOUNCEMENT: ELRC-20 #07  
OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING  
BUREAU OF EARLY LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER OPERATIONS**

**ISSUE DATE: April 21, 2020**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately**  
**SUNSET DATE: May 31, 2020**

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Child Care Works Payment Modifications Due to Impacts related to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>All Regulated Child Care Facilities; Early Learning Resource Centers; and OCDEL Early Learning Resource Center Program Representatives</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>Tracey Campanini Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning</b>

**THIS ANNOUNCEMENT REPLACES IN ITS ENTIRITY, ANNOUCEMENT ELRC-20-#05**

**PURPOSE:**

To provide additional information to child care programs participating in Child Care Works and the Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRC) in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This is an updated policy, providing additional information and replaces ELRC Announcement 20 #05.

**BACKGROUND:**

COVID-19 is active in Pennsylvania. The information about managing COVID-19 is continually being updated. This announcement focuses on the clarification of payments for Pennsylvania's child care subsidy program, Child Care Works (CCW), for the period of May 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020.

On March 6, 2020 Governor Wolf issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency. The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) is serving as the lead agency to coordinate information at the state and local level.

Information will continue to be shared going forward to address questions and concerns brought to OCDEL's attention. We continue to monitor information from [the Pennsylvania Department of Health](#) and [the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Guidance developed by DHS will be centrally located on [this page](#), which will be updated as additional guidance becomes available. We encourage you to continue to consult these resources for updates on COVID-19, information on staying healthy, and updates on the situation in Pennsylvania.

PA DOH has routinely shared that Pennsylvanians should be prepared for the continued spread of the COVID-19 virus and is urging continued planning. As a result, child care programs serving children and families enrolled in CCW have inquired whether they would continue to receive CCW payments in the event child care facilities closed due to COVID-19.

On Friday March 13, DHS issued a policy announcement addressing CCW payment in the event child care was mandated to close by the Governor. In times of emergency, the commonwealth strives to support citizens to the greatest extent; therefore, processes and policies are evaluated and updated to be responsive to community needs. As a result, this policy provides further flexibility for CCW payments for child care services.

## **DISCUSSION:**

During this emergency period, child care providers are encountering complex challenges that exceed the scope of normal operations. DHS recognizes that providers are impacted by mandated closure for significant periods of time due to COVID-19 impacts. In order to continue supporting child care providers through facility closures resulting from COVID-19, the Department is updating its previously issued guidance which addressed CCW payments through April 30, 2020.

Effective May 1, 2020, CCW payment will continue to providers, with the exception of providers who have been closed by Certification due to a negative sanction or who have reported permanent closure. Providers will continue to be paid based on enrollment for those children who remain eligible for CCW through normal invoicing and payment methods.

In most cases the ELRC is not terminating CCW eligibility for families during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there are some instances where eligibility must end. During the COVID-19 closures, adverse actions will continue to occur for the following circumstance:

- Over income
- Voluntary withdrawal
- Loss of appeal
- Child turns 13
- Family moves out of PA
- Family assets over \$1 million
- Intentional fraud
- TANF cases determined ineligible by the County Assistance Office

Providers will no longer be paid for children for whom an adverse action was issued. This policy will be in effect through May 31, 2020.

The status of this policy will be reviewed and updated before the end of May, 2020 to provide guidance to ELRC and inform the child care community of the policy for the period of June 1-30, 2020.

OCDEL recognizes families will be impacted by changes to their own work schedule and income during child care closures related to COVID-19. Child care providers who are closed will not collect copayments from families for CCW for the period of the closure. If a provider continues to operate under a waiver or as a group or family child care home in a residential setting, the provider may collect copayments from families whose children are actually in care. A provider who remains open may not collect the copayments from families whose children are not currently receiving care.

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Child care programs
  - a. Share with staff completing CCW attendance reporting and invoicing.
  - b. Please direct any questions to your ELRC.
2. The ELRC
  - a. Review and share with appropriate staff.
  - b. Please direct any question to your program representative.
  - c. The ELRC will support child care providers with any transition after closures are lifted.