

Lee CARES Childcare Assistance Program

Overview

Lee County Government is investing \$57.5 million in Human & Business Services to provide immediate assistance for individuals, families and businesses. Funds are available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act federal stimulus package.

Lee County has identified \$4.5 million in emergency support that is available to qualified households and childcare providers through the **Lee CARES Childcare Assistance Program**, which will help families who were impacted by Governor DeSantis' Safer at Home Act return to work by providing scholarships for quality childcare.

The program's highlights include:

- Lee County will work with United Way and a network of Gold Seal providers who offer quality childcare programming. The Gold Seal Quality Care program designation is available to providers who gain accreditation for a higher level of care and supervision provided to children.
- Scholarships will be provided for childcare services to qualifying families.
- United Way also will work with its Partner Agencies whose services include childcare and summer programming, municipalities and Lee County Parks & Recreation.
- Lee County will provide PPE and enhanced cleaning services to the designated Gold Seal, United Way partner agency and municipal providers.

Eligibility

- Household income must have been impacted by Governor DeSantis' Safer at Home Act and childcare must be a necessary expense to return to work.
- Approved childcare providers will utilize their existing scholarship criteria to identify eligible families in need.
- Childcare staff will provide an additional questionnaire that is specific to the CARES fund.
- United Way staff will review the additional CARES questionnaire and, if the family qualifies, award scholarship funding directly to the childcare facility.
- The childcare assistance via CARES funding will be given for an appropriate timeframe while the family regains employment stability.

www.LeeFLcares.com