
Care 4 Kids Program




Program Policy TRANSMITTAL

Transmittal Number: C4K-POL-20-03

Date: April 30, 2020 (Rev. June 1, 2020; July 17, 2020; December 14, 2020)

To: Sherri Sutera, Program Director
Care 4 Kids Program

From: Beth Bye, Commissioner 
Office of Early Childhood

CC: Distribution List

Subject: COVID- 19 Temporary Program Changes

Program Issue: President Donald J. Trump declared a national emergency as of March 1, 2020, and on March 10, 2020 Governor Ned Lamont declared civil preparedness and public health emergencies in Connecticut due to the global pandemic of COVID-19. In response to these declarations and to support the State's emergency response and the child care field, the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) will enact temporary program changes to the state child care subsidy program, Care 4 Kids (C4K), for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergencies in Connecticut.

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting Connecticut families and child care providers. Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7T provides authority to make modifications to the Office of Early Childhood's statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements. Under that authority, the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies cited below, and any related policies, requirements, and business processes are temporarily modified as outlined below for the duration of the state of emergency in Connecticut, or until otherwise modified sooner.

Directive: The Care 4 Kids program shall make the following program changes effective as specified, until the end of the civil preparedness and public health emergencies in Connecticut, unless modified sooner. All related Care 4 Kids case notes must indicate the COVID-19 procedure was followed:

A. Redetermination

- a. Effective March 1, 2020, when redetermination forms are submitted and the family is determined to be eligible, the redetermination will be processed to grant 12 months of eligibility, except as stated in subsection (f) below. Regs., Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-18 (b).
- b. Effective March 1, 2020, for redeterminations due in March, April, and May of 2020, payment eligibility will be extended for three months, except for redeterminations that are processed pursuant to subsection (a) above. Redeterminations will then be due following that three-month extension. Regs. Conn. State Agencies §§ 17b-749-09 (g)(4), 17b-749-14 (c)(4)(C), 17b-749-18 (b)(1).
- c. Effective March 1, 2020, redeterminations due in March, April, or May of 2020, which are submitted for processing and result in a determination of ineligible, will still receive an additional three months of payment eligibility, unless household income exceeds 85% of the

- SMI level or there is no child in the household. Redeterminations extended will be due following the three-month extension. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-18 (b).
- d. For redeterminations due on or after June 1, 2020, through the duration of the declared state of emergency, an applicant who indicates that he or she is unemployed as a result of a termination, furlough, or other job loss circumstance that occurred on or after March 1, 2020, will be determined to satisfy the eligibility requirement set forth in § 17b-749-04 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
 - e. An unemployed or furloughed applicant as described in subparagraph (d) who is determined to be eligible for benefits will be issued a certificate for a maximum of half-time care to support job search activities. In a two-parent household in which at least one parent experiences a job loss or furlough, a certificate for a maximum of half-time care will be issued.
 - f. The period of eligibility for an unemployed or furloughed applicant as described in subparagraph (d) who is determined to be eligible for benefits shall be twelve months.
 - g. Family fee for an unemployed or furloughed applicant as described in subparagraph (d) who is determined eligible for benefits will be determined based on household income at the time of redetermination. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-13 (f).
 - h. An unemployed or furloughed applicant as described in subparagraph (d) must report acceptance of employment or notice of recall to C4K within 10 days of such acceptance or within 10 days of receipt of such notice.
 - i. When C4K receives notice of reemployment or recall, the family fee and level of care for a previously unemployed or furloughed applicant as described in subparagraph (d) will be redetermined.

B. Job Loss During Period of Eligibility (Effective March 1, 2020)

- a. If a parent reports losing their job due to COVID-19, they will remain eligible for Care 4 Kids through the end of their eligibility. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-04 (e).
- b. Family fee will be reduced based on household income and a new certificate will be issued for the remainder of the eligibility period. Regs., Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-13 (f).

C. Provider (Effective March 1, 2020)

- a. The parent will not be responsible for the first 20 hours of care if they are using a new provider because their previous provider is closed due to COVID-19. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-16 (a) (5).
- b. Payments for the service months of March, April, May and June will be paid based on enrollment for invoices submitted by providers and each month a reconciliation activity will be performed by issuing a manual payment to ensure providers are paid no less than the amount paid for March enrollments. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-15 (b) (1).
- c. Parents that are reporting a new provider, will have their previous certificate cancelled and a new one issued listing the new provider to ensure that no two providers are receiving payment for same child.
- d. If children are not in care with their provider, or an alternate temporary provider, and plan to resume care with the provider indicated on the Child Care Certificate, the following shall occur:
 - i. The certificate shall remain intact through the end of their eligibility period, or the end of the civil preparedness and public health emergencies in Connecticut, whichever is sooner; and
 - ii. Providers shall submit the actual charge (any amount, including \$0) for those children on their invoice.
 - iii. For redeterminations due in March, April or May, the changes outlined in Section A above shall be followed.
- e. There will not be a limit on the number of hours that may be approved for the same provider and/or an alternate temporary provider. Regs. Conn State Agencies § 17b-749-14 (a) (2), 17b-749-16 (a) (1), (2), (3), (5), (6), (8).

D. Home-based (licensed family child care and unlicensed relative) Health and Safety Orientation requirement (Effective March 1, 2020):

- a. The health and safety in-person pre-service Provider Orientation Program (POP), and the completion of First Aid, CPR and Medication Administration certifications for all home-based providers will be waived until the end of declared emergency. C4K-POL-14-06 & C4K-POL-18-01.
- b. Home-base providers will be required to complete these orientation and training requirements after the declared state of emergency has ended.

E. Fingerprint-based background checks (Effective March 1, 2020 through July 31, 2020):

- a. Care 4 Kids child care providers who are unable to access fingerprinting services for the purpose of any OEC background check shall not be required to submit fingerprints. Any such background check shall be processed without a fingerprint based criminal history records check. The submission of fingerprints will be required when the civil preparedness and public health emergencies in Connecticut are no longer in effect. Regs. Conn. State Agencies § 17b-749-12 (e).

F. COVID-19 bonus income (Effective March 1, 2020):

- a. Bonus income paid to essential workers for working during the civil preparedness and public health emergency shall not be included as countable income, unless the bonus income would cause the family to exceed 85% of the State Median Income level.

Questions concerning this transmittal can be referred to Office of Early Childhood at 860-500-4421.

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