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Governor

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DATE: March 16, 2020
TIME: 3:00 PM
TO: Maine Child Care Providers
FROM: Crystal Arbour, Child Care Services Program Manager
SUBJECT: Maine DHHS Child Care Emergency Plan

This information is subject to change.

The Office of Child & Family Services (OCFS) has put the DHHS child Care Emergency Plan into effect as of Monday March 16, 2020. The plan is posted and can be found at the following link:
http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/child-care/12.30.19_Child%20Care%20Emergency%20Plan.pdf

At this time, OCFS is assessing the situation related to COVID-19 and making plans to support Maine children and families across the state. This includes, but is not limited to, expediting licensure of new facilities, flexible staff (child ratios and increasing capacities), and waivers of certain licensing rules. More detailed updates will be forthcoming.

For the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP), OCFS will be implementing the following:

- Paying providers for CCSP children as “excused absences” during closures due to COVID-19;
- Waiving the 12-day notice required of parents who need to change providers and want to pay the new provider using their subsidy. OCFS will send notice to the current provider and switch to begin paying the new provider. Unfortunately, CCSP cannot pay two providers at same time;
- Extending all current awards that are due for renewal for 90 days allowing for additional time for families to submit their documentation;
- Assessing and covering the cost of parent fees on an as needed basis for 60 days;
- Increasing a parent’s award authorization when they are in need of more hours of care; and
- Bringing new families onto CCSP on an emergency basis and allowing them 60 days to provide the necessary eligibility documentation.
- To search for a child care provider, visit <https://childcarechoices.me/>
- To apply for CCSP visit <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/step.htm>

For questions contact OCFS at 1-877-680-5866 or 207-624-7999 or by email at: CCSP.DHHS@Maine.gov