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MEMORANDUM

To: Child Care Providers and Child Care Subsidy Program Families and Providers

From: Office of Child and Family Services

Date: February 26, 2021

Subject: **Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSA)
Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Spend Plan**

In December 2020, Congress approved the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSA). The CRRSA included \$10 billion in additional funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to provide additional support to families and providers as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and to assist with recovery. Of this amount, Maine is receiving \$30.5 million

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) will be implementing the following strategies with the CCDBG funds from the CRRSA by utilizing a three-prong approach to the spending, focusing on supporting the **child, family, and child care provider**.

We thank the many stakeholders for their valuable feedback and input in our planning. To name only a few, the Children's Cabinet Early Care Advisory Council, the Right from the Start Coalition, Maine Association for the Education of Young Children, and Family Child Care Association of Maine. In addition, OCFS has been part of a collaborative work group with the ACF Region I (New England) States to develop a common framework for providing support with the CCRSA funds.

1. **Child:**

- Shifting reimbursement for children with a Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) award to enrollment-based versus attendance-based for a six-month period.
 - **CCSP families and providers will be contacted with specific information and dates.**
- Expanding the Maine's Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) to three additional sites for the duration of the pilot. The sites will be Washington/Hancock, York, and Franklin/Oxford counties which were selected by overlaying data regarding demographics and service utilization from Child Welfare, Department of Education and Children's Behavioral Health.

2. **Family:**

- Waiving the parent portion of the child care payment for low-income parents meeting the CCSP work/school requirements for a twelve-month period.
 - **CCSP families and providers will be contacted with specific information and dates.**
- Improving the Child Care Choices website to assist families in locating child care. This includes the creation of a mobile application to allow greater access for families through their phones.

3. Child Care Provider:

- Providing support to providers for technical assistance, resources, and additional professional development opportunities including support to providers to strengthen their business practices.
- Providing grants to aid child care providers in continuing operations throughout the pandemic and recovery phase in alignment with the New England states' framework. This framework includes obligating a minimum of 65% of the total funds to stabilization grants for providers. States will consider the following factors when establishing their grants: community need and equity, cost of living, capacity to serve, quality, and impact of COVID-19. Maine is estimating an obligation of 75% of the \$30.5 million directly to providers.
 - Grants amounts will be based on licensed capacity and open to licensed Child Care Facilities, Family Child Care, and CCSP License-Exempt Nonrelative Providers.
 - Grants will include increased amounts for providers who are providing quality care (Steps 1 through 4 on the QRIS system) and who are accepting CCSP.
 - Grants will be disseminated quarterly in 2021 to stabilize programs who are open and serving children in-person.
 - Grants will be provided through a one-time application and will allow for new programs to apply for future quarterly payments.
 - Grant funds are meant to cover COVID-related costs for PPE and supplies, provide hazard pay or bonuses to staff, and prevent hardship due to closings in response to positive cases of COVID within their programs or decreased enrollment.
 - **Additional guidance, the link to the application, and instructions will follow this memo.**