



Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Andy Beshear, Governor

Eric Friedlander, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kentucky Receives \$195.5 Million in Federal Child Care Aid

Child Care and Development Block Grant will help build a better Kentucky with sustained payment funding for regulated child care providers; training and technical assistance, more

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 5, 2021) – Over 2,000 licensed child care centers and family child care homes in Kentucky will potentially benefit from federal funding received last month totaling \$195.5 million for child care aid, an appropriation of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021.

Governor Andy Beshear said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has created a crisis unlike any endured before on human services and has necessitated emergency measures that started nearly a year ago and will extend far into the future. This is why we are so appreciative of federal funding that will make a difference in every one of our commonwealth’s 120 counties.”

Components of the funding, the governor said, include sustainment payments for regulated child care programs; the cost of fingerprint background checks for child care providers; training and technical assistance on safe and healthy work

environments, and the cost of parent copayments for families benefitting from subsidies.

“Our providers have been struggling to stay open and serve Kentucky’s children and families coming up on a year now,” Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Eric C. Friedlander said. He noted that at the beginning of the pandemic, Kentucky had issued active licenses to 2,201 child care programs – centers and family child care homes – with the capacity to serve 165,314 children. Since then, 149 licensed facilities and 21 certified facilities have permanently shuttered, with nearly 150 temporarily closed.

Kentucky is among states planning for distribution of funding intended to support families and child care providers impacted by COVID-19, said Department for Community Based Services commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub.

“Simply said, we can’t name a family or child care provider in Kentucky who has escaped impact of this pandemic,” she said, describing the need as “urgent” to provide special attention to the most underserved communities and to meet the needs of providers and families.

These funds will be leveraged within the [Division of Child Care](#) to help Kentuckians weather the next several months, Miranda-Straub said. Statewide enrollment is significantly limited right now by the emergency child care regulations reducing maximum group size to 15 children, according to Sarah Vanover, director of the Division of Child Care.

“Currently, Kentucky is well below the national average for centers that have closed since the onset of the pandemic,” she said. “The National Association for the Education of Young Children anticipated that up to 40% of child care programs could close within the first six months of the onset of the pandemic. Currently, Kentucky has lost fewer than 8% of our centers since March 20, 2020. This new stream of federal funding may help prevent other programs from closing their doors.”

Public Health; the Department for Aging and Independent Living; and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.