



Updated July 1, 2020

Child Care and COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

Note: This information will be updated frequently. Please check back regularly for updates.

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CHILD CARE OPTIONS

Where can we find child care if our child's school or child care center have closed?

Utah's child care resource and referral system, Care About Childcare, is available to help families locate child care for their children. Families can contact Care About Childcare at careaboutchildcare.utah.gov. If you don't have access to the internet, please call 1-800-670-1552.

If I am unable to work because I am sick or need to care for my child, what resources are available for my family?

Visit jobs.utah.gov/assistance to learn about assistance programs you may qualify for through Workforce Services. You may also call 2-1-1 or go to 211utah.org to learn more about supportive services available in your community.

Should I still send my child to child care?

That is a decision that your family will need to make given your concerns and your needs. For more information regarding COVID-19, visit coronavirus.utah.gov.

If my child's school closes, is it appropriate to put my child in a child care program? If not, what should I do?

If your child is exhibiting any signs of illness, the child should stay home and your family should find a responsible adult to watch the child in your home. If you need to pay for child care, Workforce Services provides child care assistance to working families to help offset the cost of child care. Specific income limits and work requirements must be met. To apply online, go to jobs.utah.gov/mycase.

If your child is healthy, families are strongly encouraged to first try to arrange care from friends, families and others in your community who may not be working during this time. The capacity of the child care system will be focused on meeting the needs of the state's essential employees, such as first responders, health care professionals and others working to meet the health needs of Utah's sick and vulnerable residents. If formal child care is your only option, contact Care About Child Care at caraboutchildcare.utah.gov. If you don't have access to the internet, please call 1-800-670-1552.

SUBSIDIES

Are there resources available to me to cover the costs of child care, which is a new expense for our family now that school is closed?

Workforce Services provides child care assistance to working families to help offset the cost of child care. Specific income limits and work requirements must be met. During this time, Workforce Services has temporarily increased the income limits to qualify for child care assistance. This will allow more families to qualify for child care assistance.

To apply online, go to jobs.utah.gov/mycase.

What happens if I already received a child care assistance payment (subsidy) for this month and need to find a new provider?

Contact your Workforce Services case worker to report the change in providers. A new payment may be issued to your new provider for the remainder of the month.

Will I lose my eligibility for Workforce Services child care assistance if I am unable to work or unable to use child care services temporarily due to health concerns?

If you are currently receiving Employment Support Child Care, you will remain eligible through the end of your 12-month certification period. Please be sure to complete any upcoming child care reviews if you have any that are due.

What if I need full-time care for a child that is now out of school but their subsidy payment is only for part-time afterschool care?

Payment increases may be available for children increasing from part-time to full-time care; however, a family will not receive additional funds if the child is already receiving the maximum amount of care allowable on their case. Please contact Workforce Services to report this change.

Do I still need to pay my child care subsidy program co-payment?

Beginning May 1, 2020, the Department of Workforce Services will temporarily stop assessing co-payments to families receiving child care subsidy payments. Workforce Services will evaluate this temporary policy change on an ongoing basis and evaluate when it will return to its policy of assessing co-payments. Although this change applies to co-payments assessed by Workforce Services, it does not apply to any additional charges assessed by child care programs.

SAFETY MEASURES

Can I trust emergency child care programs open in my area?

There are many types of child care settings that are beginning to address needs of our families given the current circumstances. If you have questions regarding a program in your community, contact Child Care Licensing at 888-287-3704 or visit childcarelicensing.utah.gov to make sure the program is in compliance with the state rules.

Is the government shutting down facilities with more than 10 children in care?

No. Child Care Licensing issued protocols that all regulated child care providers are required to comply with that explains the group size restrictions in place during this temporary period. Families are able to view the [letter online](#).

What practices are Utah’s licensed child care programs putting in place to protect the health of my child?

On May 28, 2020, the Child Care Licensing (CCL) program instituted revised health and safety protocols that apply to all child care providers to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Those protocols were outlined in CCL’s [letter](#) issued on that date. These requirements include the following:

Daily Screenings for the following signs:

- Fever
- Dry coughing
- Shortness of breath

Adults, children and visitors presenting any of these symptoms must contact their health provider before entering the program to determine if they are related to COVID-19 or any other illness.

Daily Health and Social Practices:

- Constant and proper hand washing for adults and children
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of materials, toys, bathrooms and surfaces
- Safe practices when sharing toys and materials
- Safe practices when coughing and when touching their faces

Can I send my other children to child care even if another family member is confirmed sick with the Coronavirus?

Your local health authority or your family doctor will give you instructions about who in the household should be quarantined and how to proceed. With these questions and other health related concerns, please contact the Utah Coronavirus Information Line at 1-800-456-7707.

ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES

On April 8, 2020, the Office of Child Care notified child care providers that it will temporarily cover the costs of child care for school-aged children of essential employees while school is closed. Is this program still available to essential employees?

No. The enrollment for this temporary program closed on April 15, 2020. This temporary program will conclude on June 30, 2020.

How is a “school-aged” child defined in order for my child care expenses to be covered temporarily by the Office of Child Care?

A school-aged child is one who is between the ages of 6 years old and 12 years old. The child needed to be 6 years old during the enrollment period, which began April 8, 2020, and continued through April 15, 2020.

How long will the Office of Child Care cover the costs of child care for school-aged children of essential employees?

This temporary program was established to support essential employees with a new, unanticipated child care expense that occurred when Utah schools closed. The benefit will remain in place until June 30, 2020. At that time, families needing assistance to pay for the costs of child care for their school-aged children should visit the Department of Workforce Services website, jobs.utah.gov/mycase to determine if they are eligible for child care assistance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, income eligibility thresholds to receive assistance are temporarily raised.

I am an essential employee but working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, my child care provider is requiring me to continue to pay for my monthly child care tuition. Am I eligible to have my child care costs covered through the temporary program to pay for the child care costs for my school-aged child if I am not bringing my child to care?

No. This temporary benefit provided to Utah's essential employees with school-age children is designed to support those workers who had a new child care need and expense when schools closed and, without it, would not be able to work. If parents are working from home, even if essential employees, this temporary benefit is not available.

I am an essential employee participating in the temporary program paying for the child care costs of my school-age child. Will my child care program get paid for my child's care if I don't bring them that week?

No. The child care programs that are being compensated for your child's care will only get paid for the weeks that you bring your child in for care. The payments are based on the attendance sheets the programs submit to the Office of Child Care to receive payment. If your child's name does not appear on the attendance sheet for a particular week, your child care provider will not receive payment that week. When you bring your child in later weeks, those payments will be made.