



## Alaska's Response to COVID-19: Child Care Actions

*Fact Sheet | January 2021*

On March 27, 2020, the CARES Act was signed into law, including \$3.5 billion in supplemental appropriations for the Child Care and Development Block Grant to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. This funding represents a 60% increase in total discretionary appropriations for fiscal year 2020, which amounts to \$9.326 billion. States were given broad flexibility for how to use this funding and have therefore taken a variety of approaches to help address needs of working families and providers through COVID-19. However, as the funds ran out during the ongoing crisis, many states began pulling from other sources to continue supporting parents and providers alike. This fact sheet explains the actions Alaska took to support the child care industry and working parents through 2020.

Alaska received \$6.4 million in supplemental CCDBG funds through the CARES Act and distributed the full amount by the end of April 2020.

The Alaska Child Care Program office used the funding to offer grant payments for March, April, and May to child care providers that were closed due to the pandemic. The goal of the grant program was to support a program's ability to keep staff, afford necessary supplies, pay utilities and rent, and cover other costs necessary to remain operational or to reopen. Furthermore, due to high demand, an additional \$2.6 million of Alaska's Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars were utilized for the program.

Further, Alaska invested an additional \$10.5 million out of the state's \$1.25 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund to help licensed providers cover lost revenue from lower attendance rates. These payments were offered for the duration of April and May and were calculated by the age of each child receiving care during those months. For example, during April, providers received \$100 for

each infant, \$75 for each toddler, \$50 for each preschooler, and \$25 for each school aged child in care. CCPO also announced that it would pay providers for the revenue lost from private payment sources, using a provider's licensed capacity multiplied by a flat rate. If a provider was open at any time during the month of April and/or May, the flat rate per child was \$400. If a provider was closed for the entire month of April and/or May, the flat rate per child was \$200. This program ran through June 2020.

While half of the licensed child care facilities in Alaska closed temporarily due to COVID-19 and anticipated needing additional funding to reopen during the later summer months, further funding was not approved within the state to support the stability of providers.

At time of publication, Alaska had not announced any plans to provide further support to child care providers, or additional funding to meet demand for school-age child care during the 2020-2021 school year.