



## New Hampshire'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 New Hampshire took to support the child care industry and working parents through 2020.

New Hampshire received \$7 million in supplemental CCDBG funds. The state primarily used these funds to establish an Emergency Child Care Program (ECCP) that provided child care for essential workers, and to cover parent copayments and subsidies, regardless of a program's operating status.

By May 1, 243 child care centers were designated participants in the program, with almost 400 by May 11. About 6,000 children attended these child care programs each week, and about 1,000 more spots became available as more businesses reopened.

In May, Gov Chris Sununu (R) authorized \$25 million of the state's federal Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars for additional child care support. Of these funds, \$16.6 million were offered to providers in June through Child Care Recovery and Stabilization Program grants. The state received 419 applications—only 5 providers did not apply—and granted awards to all but one of these applications. The state distributed a second round of funding in September to providers who received the first round of grants at a total cost of \$3 million. Also in September, \$2.9 million of the Coronavirus Relief Funds were used to cover staff incentive payments. In September, the state reported \$2.5 million remained of the \$25 million in CRF funds for child care support.

New Hampshire funded an emergency child care response telephone line and website to determine the current and future capacity of child care professionals to provide emergency child care services and match

employers and parents. The state also distributed cleaning supplies to all open child care providers including boxes containing soap, bleach, masks, and toilet paper.

Throughout the summer, the state covered 50% of parent copayments. This policy ended in September. Beginning August 3, New Hampshire updated its subsidy payment policy to allow providers to receive full payments each month for children who attended care at least 85% of the time. Providers were also paid for 10 days of COVID-19 related absences each month.

In order to support providers through the increased demand for school-age care this fall, the state paid full-time subsidies to providers who cared for school-age children during remote learning hours from September 7 through November 30.

Recognizing that child care and school-age care providers would need continued support through the fall and winter, in October, Gov Sununu (R) authorized an additional \$10 million of the state's federal Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars for providers who participated in earlier rounds of stabilization funding. This round of funding offered payments based on expenses related to income losses incurred between March 1 through December 30. Applications were open from October 15 to November 6 and providers were required to expend all funds by December 30 to comply with CARES Act deadlines.