



Oregon'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 Oregon took to support the child care industry and working parents through 2020.

Oregon received \$38.6 million in supplemental CCDBG funds through the CARES Act.

The state required all child care facilities to close, except those operating as Emergency Child Care Facilities. These emergency programs were required to prioritize care for essential workers, and the state expedited training and background checks for staff.

In May, the state used \$8 million of its CARES Act funds to offer providers Emergency Child Care grants in May. Providers received a base payment based on whether they were family- or center-based and received additional bonuses if they provided weekend or overnight care.

Oregon used another \$7 million to cover parent copays, pay subsidies for up to one month of absences per child, and to continue subsidy payments to temporarily closed providers. To assist parents who were essential workers, the state expanded access to Emergency Child Care by eliminating copays and increasing the income eligibility limits from 185% the federal poverty level to 250% (or \$54,300 for a family of four).

In June, the state dedicated \$33 million of its Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) federal dollars to support child care. Specifically, \$10 million was used to offer a second round of noncompetitive Emergency Child Care grants in July. Licensed and licensed exempt providers—including Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers—who agreed to care for children through the end of September, or agreed to reopen by September 1, were eligible to receive between \$700 and \$14,000 based on provider type. These funds

were intended to help providers cover the costs of reopening and implementing safety and health practices. The remaining \$23 million was used to offer another payment to providers who had already received a grant and agreed to remain open through December. These payments ranged from \$800 to \$16,500 according to provider type and were intended to cover operating expenses. To support communities at high risk of losing child care, the state distributed enhanced grant amounts to providers located in state-determined Opportunity Zones (not related the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017).

Oregon originally intended to cover parent copays through September 30, but the state extended the policy through December 31. Recognizing the need to support families and providers with school-age care costs through the fall, the state announced on September 25 that providers could bill for school-age care subsidy children during virtual school hours.

To support providers that had not opened by September, Oregon dedicated an additional \$4.6 million from the CRF in October to offer a third round of grants. This noncompetitive grant was available to providers that had not yet received support and agreed to open by December 30. On November 16, the state announced a fourth and final round of grant payments funded with CRF dollars: all licensed and operating providers received funds.

The state has not yet announced any plans to continue supporting the child care market in 2021.