



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

Washington received \$58.6 million in supplemental CCDBG funds through the CARES Act.

To support providers facing lost revenue due to low attendance, the state used \$29 million of its supplemental funds to offer one-time grants ranging from \$6,500 to \$14,000 to providers that remained open, based on licensed capacity. Small providers were given \$6,500, medium-sized providers received \$11,500, and larger providers received \$14,000. These grants were intended to pay for ongoing rent or mortgage payments, the salaries of personnel, utilities, health and safety supplies and cleaning or food purchases. All licensed providers that remained open were eligible to apply for these grants in mid-May.

Additionally, Washington waived parent and family copayments and paid subsidies to providers based on enrollment, rather than attendance, through April, May and June. The state also relaxed requirements for unemployed families to regain eligibility when their 12-month subsidy eligibility expires.

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families estimated that such payments would exhaust most of the state's CARES funds by the end of June.

Washington's Department of Children, Youth, and Families issued guidance on August 27 indicating that

child care providers could receive subsidies for school-age care offered during remote learning hours.

During the final week of September, Gov. Jay Inslee (D) announced phase II of the state's child care support program to continue assisting families. During this phase, the state waived parent copays from October 1 through December 31, and further capped copays at \$115 per month until June 2021.

On November 5, Washington announced a second round of stabilization grants to providers that were open and had either not received a first-round grant or had since begun to care for school-age children. Grant awards ranged from \$6,500 to \$40,000 per provider based on licensed capacity and could include bonuses of up to \$4,000 for providers in "communities of concern". The state funded the grant payments with \$30 million from the state's federal Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars. The Department of Children, Youth and Families estimated that this phase of assistance cost \$78 million in total. As of September, the state reverted to attendance-based subsidies payments.

At the time of publication, the state had not announced any plans to continue supporting child care providers into 2021.