

February 25, 2021

Ellen C. Wheatley, Ph.D.
Acting Director, Office of Child Care
Administration of Children and Families

Dear Ms. Wheatley,

This letter serves as the Planned Use of Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) Funds Report for the State of Illinois. Please find below a description of how the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois' CCDF lead agency, plans to spend funding provided by CRRSA as of the date of this report submission.

Direct Child Care Services (Subsidies)

Not applicable.

Implementation of Virus Mitigation Policies and Practices

Not applicable.

Grants or Assistance (Other than Subsidies) to Stabilize Child Care Providers

IDHS will use the majority of CRRSA funds to support the stability of the child care sector to help child care providers pay for increased operating expenses and cover decreased revenues during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Illinois will use its Child Care Restoration Grants, a program created in 2020 to stabilize child care providers, as the basis for determining stabilization support amounts for providers using this portion of CRRSA funds.

IDHS will provide monthly grants and one-time stipends to child care providers based on capacity, geographic region, quality rating, and location in an area disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Licensed centers will receive tapering grants to stabilize operations between January and September 2021, while licensed family child care homes, group child care homes, and license-exempt centers will receive stipends to stabilize operations between January and March 2021 as data indicates enrollment declines may be less severe for these provider types.

IDHS will also offer training and technical assistance to support providers' ability to apply for and successfully leverage funds to support their continued operations.

Assistance to Providers Not Participating in the Subsidy System Prior to the Pandemic

The monthly grants and stipends to child care providers described above will be available to CCDF-eligible child care providers both participating and not participating in the subsidy system prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency. This was the case for the initial Child Care Restoration Grants as well.

Other

IDHS plans to use the remaining minority share of CRRSA funds to support investments designed to help providers maintain or resume operations and improve access to high-quality child care through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

IDHS will invest a portion of these funds in a marketing and outreach campaign designed to raise awareness of the subsidy program, encourage participation by eligible families, and provide families with information and resources to support their participation, ultimately supporting providers in building back enrollment to maintain operations.

To further support access to high-quality child care for hard-to-reach families and build back enrollment in the subsidy system, IDHS will invest a portion of these funds in strengthening and scaling up local and regional coordination and outreach collaborations which exist in several communities across Illinois.

Similarly, IDHS will invest a portion of these funds in expansion of existing family child care networks to strengthen the family child care system through training, technical assistance, and providing the tools and resources to support family child care provider operations.

Finally, DHS will invest a portion of these funds in data systems improvements to modernize and streamline Illinois' antiquated billing, tracking, and data systems. Such investments will improve the state's ability to efficiently and effectively manage its subsidy system, which will ultimately support providers' operations.

Illinois is grateful for opportunity to leverage much-needed CRRSA funds to support its child care system through the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bethany Patten
Associate Director, Office of Early Childhood
Child Care and Development Fund State Administrator
Illinois Department of Human Services