



February 24, 2021

Ellen C. Wheatley, Ph.D
Acting Director
Office of Child Care

**ACUDEN PLAN FOR THE UTILIZATION OF CRRSA FUNDS
(Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act)**

Direct Child Care Services (Subsidies):

•Vouchers for First Responders:

ACUDEN will provide child care services, vouchers, to employees deemed essential to respond to the COVID-19 emergency. This initiative will be sponsored with CARES and CRRSA funds. The application for this service will be available through a web application to facilitate the application and eligibility process.

Implementation of Virus Mitigation Policies and Practices:

•Purchase of Equipment and Materials for Child Care Centers:

ACUDEN will delegate funds to licensed centers to promote health and safety practices and ensure adequate environment for children and employees. The funds will be available to providers to purchase equipment and materials for COVID-19 prevention. ACUDEN will establish the amount of funding to be delegated based on the enrollment approved by the Licensing Office. Also, providers will receive technical assistance to identify their needs and review their procedures to guarantee compliance with the Department of Health and Licensing.

In home and care network providers will receive technical assistance and guidance to identify their needs. ACUDEN will provide equipment and supplies to prevent COVID infections at the homes.

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

•Economic Stimulus for the reopening of licensed centers:

We are aware of the economic impact that the child care center industry has suffered due to the reduction of income and closures caused by the pandemic. To offer them an economic boost to help them reactivate their centers, an assessment of the childcare provider's needs will be made to determine an economic incentive to facilitate the reopening of their center.

•Hazard Pay program:

ACUDEN intends to make a risk payout to its employees while on duty during this COVID-19 pandemic. On March 2020, the Governor of Puerto Rico issued a lockdown, stating that no government employee was to report to work. Nevertheless, our staff, in an effort to continue offering the services, went to work, putting themselves at the risk of contracting this virus. Other states have authorized the offering of an incentive with CARES Act funds to these employees.

Periodic disinfecting and sanitization program for facilities:

ACUDEN will be implementing a periodic disinfecting and sanitization program once a week as part of the COVID-19 infection prevention campaign initiative.

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

We will identify licensed childcare centers that were not participating in CCDF prior to the pandemic to assist them with funding to resume operations and to obtain equipment or supplies to provide an adequate health and safety environment. In addition, help them identify children who could benefit from their services to increase enrollment.

Other:

•COVID-19 Prevention Campaign:

Education and re-education program for childcare centers:

This initiative encompasses a campaign of various informational efforts aimed at the childcare sector, providers, participants, and family members. This campaign is designed to address the issues of best practices to prevent transmission in childcare centers; raising awareness among children and parents about the COVID-19 situation; among other related topics. This campaign would be launched through various media and formats including, but not limited to informational material; social networks; print, radio, and television advertisements among others.

•Psychological support and trauma management program:

Psychological support program for stress and trauma management in our licensed care centers:

ACUDEN pretends to develop a psychological support program for the management of stress and trauma aimed at personnel working at their licensed childcare centers. Will provide this service also to children, family members (parents and/or caregivers). An MOU will be developed in close collaboration with the Mental Health and Addiction Services Administration.

•Minor renovations:

All Lead Agencies, in this case ACUDEN, may use CARES Act funds for minor renovations, as described in 45 CFR 98.56(b):

ACUDEN intends to expend funds for minor remodeling, and for upgrading their child care facilities to assure that providers meet State and local child care health and safety standards. A needs assessment and evaluation of the facilities will be carried out to ensure the proper upgrades to their centers and facilities.

/s/

Roberto C. Pagan
Administrator

cc. Shonda Laurel, MSA Program Manager, Audrey Neuhaus, MSW, MS, DCSW Program Specialist
Maritza Maldonado, Auxiliary Programs Manager
Sidnia Velez, Child Care Director

Ave. de la Constitución
Pda.2, San Juan, Puerto Rico
PO Box 15091, San Juan, PR 00902-5091
787.724-7474