



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
*Office of the Commissioner*

S. Duke Storen  
Commissioner

February 22, 2021

Director  
Office of Child Care  
330 C ST SW, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear OCC Director:

This letter describes how the Commonwealth of Virginia plans to use the Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) awarded under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA). We understand that this description will be used for the purpose of informing the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families and Congress how the Commonwealth anticipates using the funds to support the child care needs in our jurisdiction.

The Commonwealth has the following goals for the CRRSA funding:

1. Increase the supply of child care services to meet the additional operational costs from COVID-19 and to continue to stabilize child care providers. These goals will be accomplished by the continuation of direct grants to all open providers.
2. Increase and enhance resources for child care providers and families.
3. Expand eligibility requirements for subsidy families in an effort to provide assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Increase access to child care for underserved families and communities.

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) plans to use CRRSA funds for activities in the following categories:

**1. Direct Services/Subsidies**

- Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) Expanded Eligibility Criteria – Virginia will enroll additional families by expanding current eligibility criteria for the CCSP. Job search will be added as an allowable activity at the time of eligibility determination

for CCSP. Also, the current state income eligibility will be adjusted and set at 85% of the State Median Income instead of current guidelines that are more restrictive.

- Eliminating Parent Co-payments – Virginia will eliminate the parent co-payment for all parents participating in the CCSP.
- Increase the Number of Allowed Absence Days for Level Two Providers - Currently providers are limited to 36 days per fiscal year. The number of days would be increased to 100 days per fiscal year.
- Mixed Delivery Grants- Virginia will purchase preschool slots with private providers in hard-to-serve communities. These slots will help support families having difficulties finding providers that can meet their needs.

## **2. Implementation of Virus Mitigation Policies and Practices**

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Work with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to organize the distribution of PPE to all child care facilities in the Commonwealth.
- Statewide Mental Health Consultation Program – Fund intensive coaching support for child care educators coping with increased social-emotional needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

## **3. Grants or Assistance (Other than Subsidies) to Stabilize Child Care Providers**

- Support for Child Care Staff – Virginia will provide funds for child care staff to receive scholarships and retention bonuses.
- Support to Providers – Virginia will initiate a pilot program in unserved communities by providing start-up grants to help these communities that need additional child care.

## **4. Assistance to Providers Not Participating in the Subsidy System Prior to the Pandemic**

- Virginia will provide grants directly to child care facilities in the Commonwealth impacted by COVID-19. Eligible facilities are existing family day homes, voluntary registered family day homes, licensed child day centers, religiously exempt child day centers, licensed family day systems, certified preschools, and local ordinance-approved family day homes. The facilities listed above do not have to participate in the child care subsidy program to receive these grants. Facilities must certify that they are providing care for children and also that they are following COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

## **5. Other**

- Improve Customer Service- Virginia will replace the current swipe card system that records child attendance, implement a new payment processing system, new application processing system, and develop enhanced web portals for parents and vendors to enter and retrieve information.
- Background Check Reform – Virginia will build technology to enable the portability of child care background checks that will help address staffing issues faced by providers during the pandemic.

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- Research Policy Partnership- Virginia will partner with a state university to analyze and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on families and the CCSP and other benefit programs by conducting statewide surveys of families.

The Commonwealth of Virginia will amend our CCDF plan as a result of activities implemented under CRRSA funding not currently described in the plan, within 60 days of implementation.

Sincerely,

/s/

S. Duke Storen

cc: Agda Burchard, Regional Program Manager, Office of Child Care, Region 3  
Laverne Davis-Gay Program Specialist, Office of Child Care, Region 3  
Natasha Stovall, Program Specialist, Office of Child Care, Region 3