



HENRY McMASTER, GOVERNOR  
MICHAEL LEACH, STATE DIRECTOR

April 20, 2020

As part of the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) funding, DSS is offering child care assistance for parents who have been deemed essential staff and are required to report to work during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In order to qualify, you must be currently working at an essential business or government agency, you must need child care so you may continue to work, and you must complete a child care application. You do not have to meet any income guidelines for this time-limited program. A list of essential staff/qualifying occupations is attached.

If you have questions about the voucher or whether you meet the criteria for assistance, please contact Christi Jeffcoat at (803) 898-2741 or [christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov](mailto:christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov).

To apply, please complete the attached application and email it to [christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov](mailto:christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov). In the email, please include your first and last name, the best phone number to reach you, and the occupation/business where you work.

If you need help finding available child care, please contact our Child Care Resource & Referral Network at 1 (888) 335-1002 or go to the website after hours at [www.sc-ccrr.org](http://www.sc-ccrr.org) and submit a referral indicating your need to find an opening in a child care facility and someone will assist you.

For more information about DSS' response to COVID-19 related to child care, please visit our child care website at [www.scchildcare.org](http://www.scchildcare.org).

COVID-19 Child Care Assistance for Essential Workers  
Frequently Asked Questions  
April 20, 2020

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**1. How do I get help with child care?**

In order to qualify, you must be currently working at an essential business or government agency, you must need child care so you may continue to work, and you must complete a child care application. You do not have to meet any income guidelines for this time-limited program. A list of essential staff/qualifying occupations is attached.

To apply, please complete the attached application and email it to [christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov](mailto:christi.jeffcoat@dss.sc.gov). In the email, please include your first and last name, the best phone number to reach you, and the occupation/business where you work.

**2. How does this program work?**

If a parent qualifies, vouchers will be paid directly to the child care providers. The SC Voucher system has a maximum weekly provider rate that can be paid. Providers that are in the ABC Quality program already have an established weekly rate based on their quality level. DSS will not charge a weekly co-pay per child, however parents may be asked to pay for the difference between what the child care provider charges and the voucher rate.

**3. Does the child care provider have to be licensed for the parents to receive the vouchers?**

All license-exempt child care programs operating during this time of COVID-19 Emergency and serving children all day, must have an emergency temporary license to operate. Please contact Child Care Licensing at (803) 898-9020 or email Cynthia Lara at [cynthia.lara@dss.sc.gov](mailto:cynthia.lara@dss.sc.gov) to start this process. License-exempt providers that have received a temporary license to operate during this time of emergency are able to receive vouchers for eligible children.

**4. Where can I find a list of essential employees that would be covered by this?**

Please see the attached list of essential staff by occupation.

**5. Will this cover payments for child care when the facility is closed but parents are essential and still have to work?**

The purpose of this program is to provide child care assistance to essential workers so that they are able to place their kids in child care while they report to work during the COVID-19 emergency. If a parent's child care provider is closed and they need to choose another provider so they can continue to report to work, they can apply for this category of child care.

**6. How long will the voucher cover?**

This category of child care is being provided from the point of approval through August 30, 2020.

**7. How will parents be compensated if they have already paid for child care directly to the provider?**

This category of child care is not retroactive. DSS will pay from the point of approval through August 30, 2020.

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Child care assistance is available to workers in the following occupations who are required to report to work during the COVID-19 emergency.

<b>COVID-19 List of Essential Occupation Categories</b>	
<b>Emergency Services</b>	
➤ Police Officers	➤ Firefighters
➤ Paramedics	➤ 911 Call Center Workers
➤ EMTs	➤ County and City Jail staff
<b>Health Care and Public Health Workers</b>	
<b>State Government Programs</b>	
➤ Essential staff who are required to report to work.	
<b>Financial Services (essential in-office staff)</b>	
➤ Banks	
➤ Lending offices	
<b>Food and Agriculture</b>	
➤ Grocery Store employees	➤ Farmers
➤ Pharmacy employees	➤ Food processing employees
➤ Some restaurants	➤ Food and beverage service staff
<b>Gas Station Workers</b>	
<b>Mechanics</b>	
<b>Water and Wastewater Employees</b>	
<b>Energy</b>	
➤ Utility workers	
➤ Engineers	
➤ Telecommunications	
<b>Chemical Section</b>	
➤ Lab workers	
➤ Pharmaceuticals	
➤ Distribution facilities	
<b>Transit Services</b>	
➤ City Bus Drivers	