

Frontline Child Care FAQ (Main Page)

FAQ Parents

1. Do I qualify for financial assistance to help pay for child care?

If you work in one of the following industries and make less than 150% of State Median Income (see chart below), then you may qualify for financial assistance.

- Healthcare and pharmacy workers
- First responders
- Workers in child care services, in support of workers in other essential functions
- Critical infrastructure workers in grocery, utilities, and trucking
- Other identified infrastructure workers, which include critical state and local government staff; mail/delivery services; nursing homes, home health care and other direct care providers; banks; gas stations; military; and restaurants and other food delivery

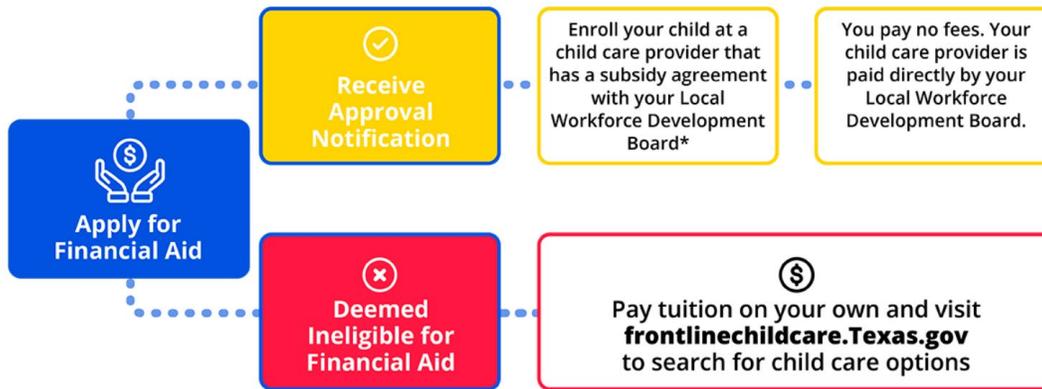
If your industry is not listed, contact your [Local Workforce Development Board](#) to see if your industry qualifies.

Family Size	Annual Household Income (Approx. 150% SMI) at or below	Monthly Household Income (Approx. 150% SMI) at or below
1	\$61,000	\$5,100
2	\$80,000	\$6,700
3	\$99,000	\$8,200
4	\$118,000	\$9,800
5	\$136,000	\$11,300
6	\$155,000	\$13,000
7	\$159,000	\$13,200
8	\$162,000	\$13,500
9	\$166,000	\$13,800
10	\$169,000	\$14,100

2. How can I apply for financial assistance to help pay for child care?

The following graphic details the financial assistance eligibility process.

I want to see if I'm eligible for child care financial assistance



*If your provider does not have a subsidy agreement, then it's easy for them to sign one!
Contact the Local Workforce Development Board in your area to start the process.

Additional information, and application process, can be found [here](#) as well as through the [Local Workforce Development Boards](#).

3. Should I care for my child at home if I am able to do so?

Yes. Texas is working hard to ensure the health and safety of all of its citizens. It is important that we all work to practice social distancing and limiting our contacts with others during this time. If you are able to have a family member, relative, or trusted neighbor care for your children in your own home, in lieu of a childcare provider, we encourage you to do so. While our childcare facilities will follow the safety guidelines provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and the Center for Disease Control, the simplest way to avoid COVID-19 is to limit your children's exposure to others.

4. How do we know child care is safe during this pandemic?

Regulated child care providers (licensed centers, licensed homes, and registered homes) must continue to follow Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards.

Additionally, regulated child care providers must follow:

- [Emergency Rule Certain Day Care Operations in Response to COVID-19](#)
- [Child Care Regulation Guidance for Open Day Care Operations](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Open Child Care Operations](#)
- [HHSC COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care Providers](#)
- [HHSC COVID-19 Guidance to Daycare Child Care Providers about Variances](#)
- [DSHS COVID-19 Informational Page](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Local Health Entities](#)

Many city and county governments are issuing new health and safety guidance each day. Please check with your local authorities to understand what new policies they have enacted that might relate to child care operations.

You can also ask your child care provider what health and safety precautions they are following during this pandemic.

5. *What is a temporary emergency child care operation?*

A [temporary emergency child care operation](#) is an operation that has completed the application process and received a temporary permit to provide child care for essential/frontline employees during the COVID-19 disaster. These operations are required to establish procedures that ensure compliance with health and safety rules outlined in Chapter 745, Subchapter X. These operations are not routinely monitored by Child Care Licensing. These permits are valid for 60 days and can be renewed for an additional 60 days.

- [Emergency Child Care Operations Chapter 745. Subchapter X](#)
- [Form 2840 Application for a Temporary Emergency Child Care Operation](#)
- [Form 2842 Temporary Emergency Child Care Operation – Plan of Operation](#)

FAQ Providers

Financial Assistance

1. How can I serve essential/ frontline employees who are receiving financial assistance (subsidy) through Workforce Solutions?

[Complete the Availability Form](#) to indicate the number of seats you have available and update it each week. The search results are sorted by providers with the most current data, so the more frequently you update the higher up on the list your center will appear.

Contact your [Local Workforce Development Board](#) to let them know you can provide care for essential workers and to set up an agreement to accept child care subsidies.

2. What reimbursement amount would I receive for serving essential/frontline employees through the subsidy program?

Each Board sets rates based on the operation types (licensed center, etc.), the child's age, and the operations TRS status.

Below are some examples of rates that are currently in effect. If you don't see your operation type's specific rate, contact your [Local Board](#).

- [Link to Board's Full-time Licensed Child Center Base Rate](#)
- [Link to Boards Full-time Licensed Child Care Center TRS 2, 3, and 4-star rates](#)

3. Are all essential/frontline employees eligible for financial assistance?

No, only certain essential frontline employees are eligible to receive financial assistance (see Question #1 under the Parent FAQ).

4. Do I have to set up an agreement with Workforce Solutions to provide child care to children of essential/frontline employees?

No, you only have to sign an agreement with Workforce Solutions if the essential frontline employee is receiving financial assistance through Workforce Solutions.

5. How can I participate in the Frontline Child Care Portal if I do not want to participate in the financial assistance (subsidy) program?

All providers can participate in the portal, regardless of subsidy participation. [Complete the Availability Form](#) to indicate the number of seats you have available and update it each week. The search results are sorted by providers with the most current data, so the more frequently you update the higher up on the list your center will appear.

Enrollment Eligibility

6. Which families can I provide child day care services to?

To be in compliance with the [Executive Order \(GA-18\)](#) issued by Governor Abbott, you can only provide child day care services for children:

- of essential service employees, or
- receiving protective day care services authorized by the Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS)

7. Who is considered an essential frontline employee?

An individual is considered an essential frontline employee if they are providing essential services as specified by the [US Department of Homeland Security](#) or the [Texas Division of Emergency Management](#)

8. Are my child day care staff considered essential frontline employees?

Yes, your staff are considered essential employees and can bring their own children to your child day care operation.

9. Are child cares in Texas allowed to care for children of non-essential workers?

No. Public health needs indicate that child care operations may remain open only to serve children whose parent is considered an essential frontline employee under the Governor's executive order. The Governor's announcement on April 27th pertaining to newly re-opened businesses on May 1 does not change the requirement that a parent must certify that they work for an essential industry in order to be eligible to access child care. Just because a business is now open does not necessarily mean that it is considered essential. For more guidance on who is considered an essential employee, see question #11.

10. Do I have to confirm a child's eligibility status prior to providing child day care?

Yes, you must ensure you are only providing child day care services for children:

- of essential service employees, or,
- receiving protective day care services authorized by DFPS,

For instruction on confirming a child's eligibility to be in care, see question #11.

11. How do I confirm if a child is eligible to be in care?

At least one parent for each child in care needs to complete the following to attest to how they meet the eligibility determination.

- [Form 7265](#) to indicate which approved essential service they are providing as specified by the [US Department of Homeland Security](#) or the [Texas Division of Emergency Management](#), or
- [Form 7264](#) to indicate they are receiving protective day care services authorized by DFPS

12. If a child is eligible to be in care but they have a parent working from home, do they still qualify for care?

Yes, the child qualifies for care. The eligibility for care lies on the parent’s employment status, not *where* they are performing the essential duties.

It is important to note, guidance varies slightly on receiving financial assistance for child care. Limitations apply for two-parent families: if one parent is available to care for the child, or is not an essential frontline worker, then he or she will be considered to be available to care for the child at home, and the family will not be eligible for financial assistance. No financial assistance limitations have been set on single-parent families working from home.

13. For a child to be eligible for care, do both parents have to meet the employment status criteria?

No, only one parent for each child in care needs to meet the eligibility determination.

It is important to note, guidance varies slightly on receiving financial assistance for child care. Limitations apply for two-parent families: if one parent is available to care for the child, or is not an essential frontline worker, then he or she will be considered to be available to care for the child at home, and the family will not be eligible for financial assistance. No financial assistance limitations have been set on single-parent families working from home.

14. How will a parent know when their child is eligible to attend child care?

In coordination with the Governor’s Office, Child Care Regulation will continue to update child care providers on new guidance in relation to child care. Child care providers will be responsible for notifying their families when they can return to care.

Health & Safety

15. Where can I find additional guidance for health and safety during this pandemic?

Regulated child care providers must follow:

- [Emergency Rule Certain Day Care Operations in Response to COVID-19](#)
- [Child Care Regulation Guidance for Open Day Care Operations](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Open Child Care Operations](#)
- [HHSC COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care Providers](#)

- [HHSC COVID-19 Guidance to Daycare Child Care Providers about Variances](#)
- [DSHS COVID-19 Informational Page](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Local Health Entities](#)

16. Are child care providers required to follow CDC guidelines?

Yes, all providers must follow UPDATED CDC guidelines for [Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) in conjunction with [Emergency Rules](#), CCL Guidance at [COVID 19](#) and local and state orders.

17. Are child care providers required to have smaller classroom sizes if there are no local control orders in place limiting group size?

Child care programs in areas with local control orders must follow those orders; child care programs in areas without local control orders must follow the UPDATED CDC guidelines for [Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) in conjunction with [Emergency Rules](#), CCL Guidance on [COVID 19](#) and local and state orders.

CDC recommends the following social distancing strategies in their UPDATED CDC guidelines for [Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#).

County judges and mayors with questions on the application of Executive Orders and how they work with local orders can email the Office of the Attorney General at disaster-counsel@oag.texas.gov.

18. Are staff and children required to wear masks while at the child care facility?

In accordance with the [CDC Guidance](#), staff members and older children should [wear face coverings](#) within the facility when feasible. However, as emphasized in the CDC Guidance, DO NOT put cloth face coverings on babies and children under age two because of the danger of suffocation.

Resources

19. Can child care programs get grants to help provide for food assistance?

Child care programs have the option to serve meals under Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All CACFP eligibility rules would still apply as these regulations have not been waived by USDA.

If a facility does not currently participate or has been newly opened, visit www.squaremeals.org/coronavirus for eligibility requirements and application.

The following resources are also available:
[CACFP Application Guidance](#)

[CACFP FAQ](#)

[Guidance for CACFP Facilities](#)

20. I don't have enough teachers to operate with extended hours or smaller group sizes right now. How can I get assistance with this?

If you are looking for child care teachers, please follow [these simple steps](#) to register with www.WorkInTexas.com to search for and hire child care teachers.

In addition, should the need arise for temporary emergency child care staff, districts can look to hire furloughed child care teachers. Simply follow [these simple steps](#) to register with www.WorkInTexas.com to search for and hire child care teachers.

Child care teachers can follow [these steps](#) to register in www.WorkInTexas.com and indicate their availability for employment.

School Districts

21. Can school districts assign teachers to child care centers to help provide the educational support that students at child care centers need during this national crisis?

Unless the child care program has applied to operate a Temporary Emergency Child Care Operation, the different requirements in staff qualifications still stand, specifically in background clearance. The following table details the difference in requirements of a Licensed Child Care Center vs. Temporary Emergency Child Care Operation.

Type of CCL	Background Check Requirements	Notes
Licensed Child Care Center	<p>Texas Administrative Code, Title 26, Part 1, Chapter 745, Subchapter F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fingerprint-based search of DPS and FBI databases for crimes committed in Texas and the US;Name-based search of the Texas Central Registry, which contains information about persons deemed responsible for the abuse or neglect of a child in Texas; andFor persons who have lived outside of Texas in the previous five years<ul style="list-style-type: none">Name-based or fingerprint-based criminal history search in the previous state(s) of residenceName-based child abuse/neglect registry search in the previous state(s) of residence	The background and fingerprint clearance process for child care licensing differs from that taken by TEA.

Temporary Emergency Child Care Operation	<p>A temporary emergency child care operation must meet the federal background check requirements listed in HHSC Chapter 745, Subchapter F, with the exception of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An employee who has had a prior fingerprint-based criminal history check with Child Care Licensing • If the operation is affiliated with an Independent School District 	<p>School district staff who have successfully completed background checks required by the district do NOT require an additional/different background check for employment at the temporary emergency child care operation.</p> <p><i>Note this only applies to operations under a temporary emergency child care operation.</i></p>
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In addition, should the need arise for temporary emergency child care staff, districts can look to hire furloughed child care teachers. Simply follow [these simple steps](#) to register with www.WorkInTexas.com to search for and hire child care teachers. Child care teachers can follow [these steps](#) to register in www.WorkInTexas.com and indicate their availability for employment.

22. What is the guidance to school districts on liability and insurance concerns in establishing emergency child care?

As stated in the [Emergency Child Care Guide for Schools](#) released by TEA, personnel assigned or reassigned to provide these services should have a current job description that incorporates the services to be provided or agree to a modification incorporating those services into their job description. A model job description has been provided by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and can be found [here](#). Districts should review their liability insurance policies to ensure that such policies include coverage of the operations and services to be undertaken.

23. Child care providers have questions around serving school-aged students who have online learning to complete. What are their roles? What supports will be provided, etc.

Child care providers and parents should communicate about any instructional activities that must be completed by school-aged children to determine the best plan for supporting children in completing their schoolwork while in care. It is the responsibility of the school district to ensure appropriate instruction is provided, child care centers can serve as a support in providing that instruction. The TEA [Home Learning](#) webpage includes sample schedules and weekly lessons by grade level.

It is an important note that current regulated child care licensing standards limit screen time for children. Child care providers can request a variance through their [Online Licensing Portal](#) to exceed screen time limitations, allowing school-aged children to complete online learning assignments. Temporary emergency child care operations do not need to take further action.

24. Are additional funding streams available to support temporary emergency child care operations in the ISD setting?

TEA is collaborating with TWC to explore additional funding sources like child care subsidy. At this time, the state is still seeking clarity and approval through a federal waiver. Although a temporary emergency child care operation can serve all children, additional funding support is not available at this time.

Frontline Child Care FAQ (Search Portal)

Parents

1. *When I search for child care programs, what order are they listed in the search results?*
Child care programs are listed by Texas Rising Star quality rating (4-star, 3-star, 2-star, not-rated), availability, and proximity to search location

Providers

1. *How can I update the number of child care seats I have available in the Frontline Child Care Availability Portal?*

Please take **1 minute** to [complete the Availability Form](#) and quickly update your availability. **You must update this at least once a week**, otherwise it will show that availability as unknown. We recommend you bookmark this webpage.

- If you are still open to care for essential service employees' children, please update the portal even if you have zero openings for any or all age groups.
- To keep the information as accurate as possible for parents, your available seats data is wiped clean seven days after you last updated the portal.
- If you update at least once a week, you won't receive reminder emails.
- It takes just [three easy steps](#) to complete the Availability Form!

2. *How can I change my hours of operation, ages served, or other information that is auto-populated in the Frontline Child Care Availability Portal?*

Child Care Regulation has supplied the Frontline Child Care Availability Portal with this information. At any time, you may make the following changes by contacting your licensing inspector as soon as possible:

- Adding services like night time care
- Changing your hours or the days you are operating
- Changing the ages served
- Moving to a temporary location

Please give it 1-2 business days to update on the Frontline Child Care Availability Portal. If you do not know who your current licensing inspector is, you can send an email to MSC@hhsc.state.tx.us