



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

SAMANTHA L. AIGNER-TREWORY
COMMISSIONER

Exempt Emergency Child Care Program

Subject: Clarification on the Reimbursement Process for Participating Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs EECCP

Date Issued: March 25, 2020 (Revised July 11, 2020)

For Use By: Approved Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs

Further Info: eec.emergency.childcare@mass.gov

The following guidance provides clarification on the reimbursement policies and process for participating Exempt Emergency Child Care Programs (EECCP). These policies apply to all providers unless otherwise specifically exempted or modified by EEC. Providers may choose not to accept funding if other arrangements have been made.

EECCP funding is not designed to cover the entire cost of operating an emergency childcare program. The intent of the EECCP is to help ease the financial burden on programs that have stepped forward and partnered with EEC to provide assistance to families in this unprecedented global health care crisis.

I. Definitions

- **Approved Closure:** An Approved closure is determined when a provider has been notified and received acknowledgment from EEC that it is approved to close the program. The determination of allowable closures are to be defined by EEC staff.
- **Days of Operation:** A Day of Operation is defined as when the program is verified by EEC Licensing staff as open and available for Emergency Care. A program is considered verified whether children are in attendance or not.
- **Non-Approved Closure:** A Non-Approved Closure is determined when a program closes without EEC Licensing notification and approval. This determination may be made when an EEC Licensor is unable to contact a provider when verifying attendance, or the program requests to close for a reason not included as an Approved Closure. A provider will not receive funding for a Non-Approved Closure.
- **Request For Funds (RFF):** The Request for Funds form must be completed by the provider and sent to EEC's Fiscal Unit at a designated mailbox at: eec.emergency.childcare@mass.gov. A provider cannot be reimbursed without a completed and signed RFF. Your RFF should only go to the designated mailbox and should not be sent to an EEC staff person or to your CCRR.

II. Rates

The Department of Early Education and Care will provide a flat rate based on the approved number of classrooms at the program. The rate will not be adjusted for actual number of children served. EEC is purchasing capacity for drop-in care, so specific classroom configuration will be negotiated at the regional office, with approval from the Commissioner. Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCRRs) will distribute funds to programs on behalf of EEC.

- **Center-Based Programs** will receive \$2,500 per classroom per week for up to 2 classrooms, with a maximum of \$5,000 per site per week. Additional classrooms may be offered with EEC approval, but no additional funding for these additional classrooms will be available. Providers may solicit funding from alternative contractual arrangements to cover expenses for the number of classrooms above what EEC is funding.
- **Home-Based Providers** will receive \$1,000 per site per week for up to 8 children maximum. Programs wanting to offer services for fewer children should seek approval from EEC Regional Offices. Please direct any specific questions on program configuration to EEC Regional Offices as we work to support the specific needs of each community.

Note:

- If the provider chooses not to accept funding from EEC, this must be indicated during the time of approval. **Programs that accept EEC funding are not permitted to charge parents for emergency services and any additional funding must be targeted to supporting the operations of the emergency services or to fund additional capacity beyond EEC funded classrooms.**
- If programs operate a closed-referral network that targets access for specific employers of essential workers, providers may have specific contractual relationships with those employers for funding. However, programs are not allowed to charge families for services without specific approval by EEC. This will only be allowable in cases where the employer has previous specific arrangements with employees to pay fees for a service that will be sustained through the duration of the State of Emergency, such as an employer-sponsored child care benefit.

III. Eligibility for Reimbursement

- **Verification of required documentation:** An approved ECCP must have submitted an RFF to EEC in order to be determined eligible for reimbursement.
- **Verification of Operations:** An Approved EECCP must meet the definition of “Days of Operation” in order to be considered for Reimbursement. EEC Licensing will provide EEC Fiscal with a weekly reporting verifying EECCPs eligible for reimbursement.
- **For initial week of operation:** An approved EECCP must be open for at least two (2) days of operation in the initial week of starting operation to be eligible for the applicable full week reimbursement rate.
- **Subsequent weeks for operation:** After the initial week of operation, an approved EECCP must be open for at least five (5) days of operation or a combination of days of operation and Approved closure days that total five (5) days to receive the applicable full week reimbursement rate.
- **If an EECCP does not meet the minimum requirements during the initial or subsequent weeks, they shall be paid a prorated portion of the applicable weekly reimbursement rate. The only exception to this provision is if an EECCP receives a written exemption from the Commissioner.**

- EECCPs will continue to be paid through the last day of operations. Additionally, to support the transition to regular enrollment, EECCPs will be supported for a ‘bonus’ week of cleaning and preparation time between emergency services and regular care:
 - Programs that operate through June 29, June 30, July 1, or July 2 will be paid through July 3, 2020 as approved closure days.
 - Programs that continue to operate July 3, 2020 or beyond will be paid a bonus week pay in addition to the weekly amount (as calculated in section II).

IV. Payment Schedule

- CCRRs will distribute funds to programs on behalf of EEC. Each EECCP will be assigned a CCRR and the CCRR will contact the EECCP to establish vendor verification or work with EECCP on required documents from approved vendor in order to issue payment to provider.
- EECCPs will be reimbursed every two weeks. The first payment to an EECCP will reflect the first two weeks of operation of the program (Monday, March 23, 2020 through April 3, 2020) and will be disbursed on or around April 6, 2020.
- Every other Monday, EEC will certify an operating EECCP and payment amount for the previous two weeks and submit a disbursement schedule to each CCRR.
- CCRR will disburse funds to EECCPs within two (2) business days of receipt of disbursement schedule for EEC.
- Below is the anticipated payment schedule for EECCPs:
 - April 6, 2020 (covers the service period of March 23, 2020 through April 4, 2020).
 - April 22, 2020 (covers the service period of April 5, 2020 through April 18, 2020).
 - May 6, 2020 (covers the service period of April 19, 2020 through May 2, 2020).
 - May 20, 2020 (covers the service period of May 3, 2020 through May 16, 2020).
 - June 3, 2020 (covers the service period of May 17, 2020 through May 30, 2020).
 - June 17, 2020 (covers the service period of May 31, 2020 through June 13, 2020).
 - July 3, 2020 (covers the service period of June 14, 2020 through June 27, 2020).
 - If the EECCP operations extends beyond this period the schedule will maintain two week payment structure.
- If an approved EECCP has questions or concerns regarding their reimbursement, they should contact EEC Fiscal at eec.emergency.childcare@mass.gov. EECCPs should not contact the CCRR to discuss payment amount or discrepancies.