

## Child Care Subsidy Program – COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

April 15, 2020

On April 15 2020, Pete Ricketts, Governor of the State of Nebraska, signed Executive Order No. 20-18, suspending several state regulations regarding the Child Care Subsidy Program. The Department has developed this FAQ to provide information to child care subsidy providers and households about the Executive Order. The FAQ will be updated as new questions are received.

### Subsidy Providers:

**Can licensed child care subsidy providers who are open and staffed bill DHHS (child care subsidy) if parents/caretakers keep their children home due to the COVID-19 emergency?**

Yes, under Executive Order No. 20-18, DHHS will allow licensed child care providers who have a current child care subsidy agreement to bill DHHS for days when the provider is opened and staffed and the child is absent because the child's parent or legal caretaker keeps the child home or is unable to utilize care due to the COVID-19 emergency. The provider must complete and comply with the terms of the Child Care Subsidy Provider Enrollment to Bill for Absent Days. The form can be found [here](#).

### How do I become eligible to bill for absent days?

To become eligible to bill for absent days, current providers must complete the Child Care Subsidy Provider Enrollment to Bill for Absent Days form available on the DHHS website at [dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Care-Providers.aspx](https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Care-Providers.aspx) and return it DHHS by emailing the Provider's Resource Development Worker or [dhhs.ccsubsidy@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.ccsubsidy@nebraska.gov).

### When can I start billing for absent days?

Providers' enrollment will be effective starting on the date when the provider emails or otherwise transmits the completed (signed and dated) form to DHHS. DHHS will not be contacting providers individually to confirm receipt. You may begin billing for absent days without such confirmation.

### How will billing for absent days work?

The provider must continue to bill in-line with the child's regular attendance schedule and current child care subsidy authorization.

- EX 1: Child usually attends M-F 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM and is now absent. Billing when the child attends would be 1 DAY UNIT each day. Billing when the child is absent would still be 1 DAY UNIT.
- EX 2: Child usually attends 3 hours a day, 3 days a week and is now absent. Billing when the child attends would be 3 HOUR UNIT for 3 days each week. Billing when the child is absent would still be 3 HOUR UNIT for 3 days each week.

## Can child care subsidy providers bill DHHS for days when the child was absent in the past?

No, billing for absent days became effective the date the Executive Order was signed and issued. Absent days prior to April 15 are not eligible for reimbursement.

## Are child care subsidy programs that are closed able to bill DHHS?

No, closed programs are not able to bill DHHS for days when they are closed.

## Is there a different reimbursement rate for COVID-19 absent days?

No, you will bill the same contracted rate you regularly bill.

## Do absent days need to be documented on attendance calendars?

Yes, you need to enter an "A" to indicate that it is an absent day and write in the total number of HOUR UNITS or ONE DAY UNIT billed.

## As a subsidy provider, do I have to collect co-pays (family fees) from families?

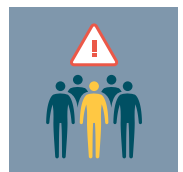
At this time, the collection of co-pays from families can be your choice as a business. All income changes (either temporary or permanent) of subsidy families should be reported to [ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov](https://ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov) or by telephone via the Customer Service Center at: 1-800-383-4278. A decrease in income may reduce or eliminate families' subsidy co-payment for future months.

## I am not currently a subsidy provider, but would like to become one. What should I do?

The Child Care Subsidy program is referral based. If you are interested in providing care to a Subsidy eligible family, have them contact Access Nebraska at 1-800-383-4278 to make the request. You will then be contacted by a Resource Development worker to complete the contract process.

## The Child Care Subsidy Provider Enrollment to Bill for Absent Days form requires me not to reduce the number of slots in my program for children receiving subsidy during the state of emergency. What if a subsidy child drops out, or if a child of a first responder applies?

Providers who enroll to bill for absent days must make good faith efforts to keep the same number of slots available for subsidy children during the state of emergency. However, there may be times when a subsidy child drops out and another subsidy child is not immediately available to take the slot. Providers are not absolutely required to hold that slot for a subsidy child, but should consider how they may continue to serve the same number of subsidy children throughout the entire state of emergency. Both subsidy children and the children of first responders are to be given priority placement whenever possible. Providers are encouraged to think broadly about available child care resources, including temporary alternate location child care centers and how these could be used to meet children's and families' needs for care.





## Parents/Caretakers:

### Can I have someone come into my home to watch my child(ren) while I work and have subsidy pay them?

Yes, Executive Order 20-18 allows families that are eligible to participate in the child care subsidy program to obtain in-home child care when other child care options are unavailable.

### Who can I choose as my in-home provider?

A family member, friend, or neighbor may be paid as an in-home child care provider. Parents are not eligible to be in-home subsidy providers for their children. Families or providers interested in learning more about in-home child care provider opportunities should contact ACCESSNebraska at: 1-800-383-4278. DHHS will conduct background checks on the referred individual.

An in-home provider must be at least 19 years old and meet background check requirements and some health and safety requirements.

### Can an in-home provider be someone who lives with me?

If a child has a special need as defined by Department regulations, the Department may allow in-home provider subsidy payments to an eligible provider who lives in the child's home. For all other situations, the in-home provider cannot live in the same household as the child(ren) needing care.

### Where can I find a list of child care providers?

A list of licensed child care providers is available at: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Documents/ChildCareRoster.pdf>. You can also call the Child Care Resource and Referral Line at: 1-800-892-4453 (messages left on this line are returned daily).

### How do I apply for a child care subsidy?

Applications are available online at: [ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov](http://ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov). Or you apply by telephone via the Customer Service Center at: 1-800-383-4278.

### I currently have a subsidy co-pay but cannot afford to pay my provider. What should I do?

All income changes (either temporary or permanent) should be reported to [ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov](http://ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov) or by telephone via the Customer Service Center at: 1-800-383-4278. A decrease in income may reduce or eliminate your subsidy co-payment for future months.

### I had child care subsidy for my job, but was recently laid off. Can I use child care subsidy to job search?

Yes, your current child care subsidy authorization should allow you to roll into job search status for up to three (3) months if you lose your employment. Child care for those in job search status is authorized for the same provider up to the same level of care previously received.

### I have been directed by my employer to work from home. Am I still eligible for childcare?

Yes, parents/caretakers are still able to utilize child care if working from home.