

State of New Mexico

CHILDREN, YOUTH and FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

HOWIE MORALES
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



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CABINET SECRETARY

TERRY L. LOCKE
DEPUTY CABINET SECRETARY

April 1, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As COVID-19 continues to impact our communities, we're committed to doing what's best for our clients and providers. As you are aware, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued a [Public Health Emergency Order](#) closing all businesses and non-profit entities except those deemed essential. If your employment allows you to work from home or you can stay at home with your child, we highly encourage you to do so.

Some New Mexicans have been deemed "[essential employees](#)" and must continue going to work. Some childcare facilities have remained open to care for and provide a safe place for the children of these employees.

In order to support families and providers during the NM Public Health Emergency, the Department has made several commitments that we would like to share with you. We hope these temporary policy changes will help eliminate some of the stress that you and your family may be experiencing during this time.

- **Copays:** The Department will waive your copay starting March 1, 2020 and will pay your copay amount directly to your childcare provider. You do not need to take any action. At this stage, the Department is prepared to cover copays for March and April.
 - **Does it matter if my child is attending child care or staying home?** No, the Department will pay your copay in either case. **What happens if I have already paid my copay?** If you have already made a payment to your provider for the month of March or April, we are asking providers to credit your account for that amount to be used once the Public Health Emergency is over.
- **Contract Recertifications: If your contract is due to expire in March or April 2020,** the Department will extend your current contract for three (3) months. We will call or email each client who has a contract that is about to expire. If you have not received a call from your eligibility interviewer, we ask that you make contact with us through the contact information listed at the end of this letter; we need to confirm that you want to extend your contract. After that, we will notify each client and provider through a Notice of Action that the contract has been extended.
- **Changes to Current Contract:**
 - **My employer is requiring me to work more hours. How do I change my contract to add additional hours?** If you currently have a part-time contract and due to COVID-19 you now require full time care for your child, we will increase your hours as needed. Please expect a call from us to determine if you need additional hours. If you have not been contacted, please notify us.
 - **My employer has closed, and I am staying home with my child. Do I have to report this change? Will I lose my contract?** You do not have to report this temporary change to the Department. The Department will continue to pay your provider for March and April per your childcare contract, even if your child remains at home and does not attend the childcare facility.
 - **My employer has allowed me to work from home. Do I still need to take my child to child care?** If your employer allows you to work from home or you can stay at home with your child, please keep your child home with you. The Department will continue to pay your provider per your childcare contract, even if your child remains at home.

- Please visit our New Mexico Kids website for wonderful resources to support home learning activities. You'll find material on everything from STEM to indigenous culture to mindfulness to de-stressing. We have also partnered with [Parentivity](#) to offer free resources on health, education, child development, and much more to all New Mexico families for thirty days.
- There are also [meal sites](#) available in your community for you to grab and go.
- **My child care provider has chosen to close. Can I move my child to another child care provider?** If you still need care for your child, you are still eligible for assistance. You may choose another provider and receive a contract for your new provider. We will continue to pay your previous provider to ensure your child can return after the emergency, if you choose to do so. Please notify us at the email address provided at the end of this letter if you need an additional provider during this time. There is a [list of current providers](#) who are remaining open to care for children of first responders, health care professionals and other essential workers. If you need assistance finding a child care provider, please contact New Mexico Resource and Referral at 1-800-691-9067 or e-mail child.care@state.nm.us.

The State of New Mexico is committed to decreasing the widespread community transmission of COVID-19. We have implemented precautions to keep you, your family and our staff healthy. Our staff are diligently working to assist you, and we continue to process paperwork; however, we are not offering public access to our childcare offices at this time. Below are some alternative ways you may contact us as needed:

- You may contact your local childcare office by phone. Attached is the contact list.
- You may submit documentation via email, fax or mail. Email addresses are listed below:
 - If your case is handled from one of the Southern Regional Offices (Alamogordo, Anthony, Carlsbad, Clovis, Deming, Hobbs, Las Cruces, or Silver City), please submit documents to: CYFD-ECS-CCA-SouthernRegion@state.nm.us
 - If your case is handled from one of the Central/Northern Regional Offices (Santa Fe, Farmington, Gallup, Grants, Las Vegas, Raton, Espanola, Taos, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Los Lunas, and Socorro), please submit documents to: CYFD-ECS-CCA-Central-NorthRegion@state.nm.us
- Phone interviews will be conducted.

Stay Healthy!

Sincerely,

Kimberly Brown
Bureau Chief