

Issued April 9, 2020

COVID-19 Foster Care – Childcare Highlights

The Department has offered state licensed/self-declared childcare settings the opportunity to apply for relief funds through the Childcare Emergency Operating Grant (CEOG). North Dakota licensed and self-declared childcare providers who are open and providing services will be eligible and are encouraged to apply for the CEOG. Complete details can be found at <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/covid-19/provider-resources.html>. Reminder at this time, childcare slots are available throughout North Dakota on a temporary emergency basis with many licensed/self-declared providers. Case managers should assist foster care providers in locating a reimbursable childcare provider as outlined in foster care policy. To inquire on available childcare options, please contact Childcare Aware of ND at www.ndchildcare.org or by calling 1-800-997-8515.

All children receiving care from a licensed or self-declared childcare provider are subject to the same billing standards set forth in the individual provider's operating policy and contract/agreement. Effective March 30, 2020, childcare providers that are accepting CEOG can bill a maximum of \$50 per month for absent children based on CEOG guidelines. To bill the \$50 cap, childcare providers must complete the required SFN 920, Foster Care – Child Care Invoice. The \$50 amount must be noted in the "Describe Additional Fees" located under the Billing Method section of the SFN 920. In addition, childcare providers who are accepting CEOG remain eligible to receive foster care reimbursement for all hours in which the foster child received childcare.

Foster care case managers must:

- Assist foster parents in reviewing the need for childcare, securing alternate childcare if the primary childcare provider has closed or is limiting service to essential or life-line workers only.
- Review the childcare fees billed on the SFN 920, Foster Care Child Care Invoice. The following fees are billable through the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement Request funding. These fees cannot be paid with current foster care funds:
 - ✓ The \$50 cap billed for licensed or self-declared childcare providers accepting the Childcare Emergency Operating Grant (CEOG).
 - ✓ Daily or weekly rate billed for the time a child is not in attendance at the childcare as a result of a decision made by the foster parent/case manager or as a result of a COVID-19 childcare setting temporary closure.
 - ✓ Billed emergency childcare by an approved individual that is not licensed or self-declared.
 - ✓ Childcare billed by a licensed/self-declared childcare provider that is not accepting the Childcare Emergency Operating Grant.
- Complete and submit the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement Request form of costs accrued from **March 15 – May 15, 2020 (nine weeks). Submit requests by June 5, 2020.**

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Any bills that may have already been paid for March 2020, which included non-reimbursable childcare fees noted above, must be submitted to CFS at dhscfs@nd.gov for adjustment along with the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request.
2. Daily, weekly or monthly childcare costs submitted by licensed/self-declared childcare providers providing uninterrupted care to a foster care child, should continue to be reimbursed according to policy.
3. Childcare payments cannot be made in advance of the service; all foster care costs must be "reimbursed" to the foster parents after the service is rendered.

Questions can be directed to Deb Lachenmeier at dlachenmeier@nd.gov or Kelsey Bless at kmbless@nd.gov

1. **Licensed Foster Parent – Licensed Childcare due to school closing**
 - a. Zone case manager should review childcare bill for accuracy
 - b. Zone eligibility workers can reimburse through CCWIPS the amount for the days/weeks the child was in attendance as per policy.
 - c. Match symbol based on eligibility and reimbursability (FM, NA, EA, RM, etc.)

2. **Licensed Foster Parent – Licensed Childcare closed in March 2020, but billed for days closed**
 - a. Zone eligibility workers can reimburse through CCWIPS the amount for the days/weeks the child was in attendance as per policy.
 - i. Match symbol based on eligibility and reimbursability (FM, NA, EA, RM, etc.)
 - b. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov for days billed when childcare was closed
 - c. CFS will review non-reimbursable charges and if approved, will authorize payment through CCWIPS under match symbol RM to foster care placement.

3. **Licensed Foster Parent – Licensed Childcare charged \$50 to hold a spot**
 - a. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request form and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
 - b. CFS will authorize payment to foster care placement through CCWIPS under match symbol RM to foster care placement.
 - c. CFS will authorize payment to foster care placement.

4. **Licensed Foster Parent – Primary Licensed Childcare/Alternate Licensed Childcare**

Primary licensed childcare

 - a. Zone case manager must verify childcare provider is accepting CEOG requiring \$50 to hold the spot.
 - b. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
 - c. CFS will authorize payment to foster care placement through CCWIPS under match symbol RM to foster care placement.

Secondary licensed childcare

 - a. Zone eligibility worker can reimburse through CCWIPS the amount for the days/weeks the child was in attendance as per policy.
 - b. Match symbol based on eligibility and reimbursability (FM, NA, EA, RM, etc.)

5. **Licensed Foster Parent – Primary Licensed Childcare/Alternate Unlicensed Childcare**

Primary licensed childcare

 - a. Zone case manager must verify childcare provider is accepting CEOG grant requiring \$50 to hold the spot.
 - b. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
 - c. CFS will authorize payment to foster care placement through CCWIPS under match symbol RM to foster care placement.

Secondary unlicensed childcare

 - a. Zone case manager must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
 - b. CFS will review non-reimbursable charges.
 - c. If approved by CFS, 50% of the childcare cost will be authorized by CFS in CCWIPS to the foster parents under match symbol RM.

6. Licensed Foster Parent – Unlicensed Childcare (relative/neighbor teen/etc.)

- a. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
- b. Caregiver and childcare provider must complete the SFN 920, even if the childcare provider is not licensed. This provides necessary details for review.
- c. CFS will review
- d. If approved by CFS, 50% of the childcare cost will be authorized by CFS in CCWIPS to the foster parents under match symbol RM.

7. Unlicensed Relative Caregiver – Licensed Childcare

- a. Zone foster care case managers must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
- b. Caregiver and childcare provider must complete the SFN 920.
- c. CFS will review
- d. If approved by CFS, 100% of the childcare cost will be authorized with Fiscal Administration (after receiving a W-9 from the relative caregiver).

8. Unlicensed Relative Caregiver – Unlicensed Childcare

- a. Zone foster care case manager must complete the COVID-19 Foster Care Childcare Reimbursement request and send it to dhscfs@nd.gov.
- b. Caregiver and childcare provider must complete the SFN 920, even if the childcare provider is not licensed. This provides necessary details for review.
- c. CFS will review
- d. If approved by CFS, 50% of the childcare cost will be authorized with Fiscal Administration (after receiving a W-9 from the relative caregiver).

Out of State: ND children placed in foster homes or relative caregiver homes out of state are eligible. If the childcare provider has a process in place and the out of state foster care agency has directive, ND will follow the state of residence rules. However, if the state does not have a process in place to offer additional assistance to foster parents or relative caregivers, the foster care case manager can follow North Dakota COVID-19 foster care childcare procedures. The use of the SFN 920 can be utilized to help provide necessary details.