

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
May 12, 2020**

Second Amended IM 5385

TO: Human Service Zones
Policy and System Support
Economic Assistance Policy Quality Control Reviewers

FROM: Michele Gee, Director, Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Additional Absent Days

PROGRAMS: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

EFFECTIVE: March 1, 2020

**SECTIONS
AFFECTED:** 400-28-80-25 Absent Days

In response to public health concerns about COVID-19 and supporting families and child care providers during this time, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) has modified the current payment policy to allow greater than 40 hours in absences due to state and national emergencies.

Beginning the service month of March 2020 through April 2020, CCAP will allow billing for absent hours greater than 40 in response to absences for illnesses, quarantines and facility closures as a result of COVID-19.

CCAP can only be billed when all other non-CCAP, private pay families continue to be billed for services. CCAP cannot be billed for amounts not charged or amounts over what is charged to private pay clients.

The payment will continue to be issued based on the state maximum rate and the determined level of care for each child. Families will still be subject to co-pay requirements.

All payment requests for the service month of March 2020 are subject to the change in absent hours.

Childcare Emergency Operating Grant

Effective the service month of April 2020, providers who are accepting the Childcare Emergency Operating Grant (CEOG) are still eligible to receive and bill CCAP. Providers who are accepting CEOG can bill for all hours in which eligible children were present, however absent hours billed cannot exceed \$50 per eligible child. Providers who choose not to accept CEOG can continue to bill for all absent hours in response to absences for illnesses, quarantines and facility closures as a result of COVID-19.

Providers were asked to include "\$50 cap billed" in the additional comments section when submitting a request for payment through the SSP, however not all providers receiving the grant will do this.

The system will be enhanced to allow for a \$50 CEOG Absence Fee to be processed for these providers. Additional system processing will be included FYI 20-015 - Complied FYI Resource on COVID-19.

A listing of providers who are receiving the CEOG will be posted to the COVID-19 folder on the county intranet. This listing will need to be referred to when processing payments for each service month.

Approved Relatives, Tribal providers, and Out of State providers are not eligible to receive the grant.

An overview of CEOG, FAQs and other information can be found at <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/covid-19/provider-resources.html>.

The Department will continue to reassess the need for this payment process change as the situation continues to develop.

Example 1:

Situation 1: A child has increased need for child care due to school closure.

A child was determined at application to have a part time level of care due to being a school age child. Due to school closure, the child is now attending child care full time while the caretaker continues to be engaged in their allowable activity. The household must report an increased need in care before the level of care is increased to full time. The level of care is still determined based on the lesser of all hours when all schedules are compared.

Example 2:

A child care facility has closed.

When a child care facility has closed, the child care facility may bill for times when the facility is closed. On the Create Payment Request and/or on the Process Payment Request screens, enter the total number of absent hours in the 'Hours Billed when Child was Absent from Care' column. The system will process the payment appropriately. It is important to enter this correctly due to need for the correct tracking of hours.

Example 3:

Child Care Facility Remains Open but Child is Absent due to Illness or quarantine.

When a child care facility remains open but the child is absent for more than 40 hours due to an illness or quarantine, CCAP will allow all additional hours over the 40. On the Create Payment Request and/or on the Process Payment Request screens, enter the total number of absent hours in the 'Hours Billed when Child was Absent from Care' column. The system will process the payment appropriately. It is important to enter this correctly due to need for the correct tracking of hours.

Example 4:

Child Care Facility receiving CEOG, and child is attending - more than 40 absent hours

A request for payment is received for a child care facility who is receiving the grant, and is billing for hours present and absent hours. ~~The absent hours~~ Absent hours totaling more than 40 should not be included when processing the payment for the service month, and \$50 per child should be subtracted from the total billed amount if included in the overall billed amount. The \$50 per child, and the absent hours will need to be entered as a separate CEOG Absences Fee payment.

Example 5:

Child Care Facility receiving CEOG, and child is attending - 40 absent hours or less

A request for payment is received for a child care facility who is receiving the grant, and is billing for hours present and absent hours. Absent hours totaling 40 or less should be included as absent hours when processing the payment for the service month. No CEOG Absence fee payment should be issued.

Example 56:

Child Care facility receiving CEOG, and child is not attending.

A request for payment is received for a child care facility who is receiving the grant is only billing for absent hours. These payments will not be processed as a service month payment but will be processed as a CEOG Absence Fee payment for \$50, per child.

Absent Days 400-28-80-25

Up to 40 hours per calendar month can be allowed for a child who is absent from their child care setting for any reason when the provider requires payment of the absence.

The total number of hours that the child was absent must be listed on the Child Care Request for Payment form.

More than 40 hours per month can be allowed in situations that result in closures or absences due to inclement weather, **state and national emergencies, or other emergencies as determined by the department. The department will provide case processing guidance in these situations.**

~~These situations must be reviewed on a case by case basis, using prudent person judgment.~~ The reason for allowing payment for additional absent days must be documented in the **system** case **narrative** file.