

Subject COVID-19 Public Health Support Funds for Child Care Programs

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Summary

Since July 2020, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has provided monthly support funds to eligible child care providers. The support funds are intended to help child care providers with the cost of implementing state and federal public health guidance related to COVID-19. The support funds are available on a non-competitive basis to licensed family child care providers and child care centers (including those that are tribally licensed) and certified, license-exempt child care providers. Eligible child care providers could apply in July to receive funding in July, August, and September; a second application was available for funding in October, November, and December. Funding for the July and October rounds of support funds came from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund, and this federal funding is available only through December 2020.

This bill would appropriate \$53.1 million from the state general fund to DHS for additional support funds for eligible child care providers. The state funds would be available in December 2020 and January and February 2021. To be eligible to receive the state funds, child care providers must: (1) have applied for the October support funds; (2) attest and agree in writing that the provider intends to remain open and serving children through February 15, 2021, with exceptions for service disruptions due to public health guidance and planned temporary closures; (3) continue to comply with DHS requirements for the October support funds; and (4) prioritize the use of the state funds during the monthly award period and use the state funds to cover costs related to COVID-19.

The state funds available in December 2020 would be in addition to what the provider has already received in support funds from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund. The maximum amount of support funds under this bill is as follows:

- an eligible licensed family child care provider may receive no more than \$1,200 each month (including funds from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund in December 2020);
- an eligible licensed child care center may receive no more than \$8,500 each month (including funds from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund in December 2020); and
- an eligible certified, license-exempt child care center may receive no more than \$3,000 in each of January and February 2021 (and will not receive any state funds for December 2020).



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