



DHS Child Care Partners and Advocates:

Our vision in the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) is for all Oregonians to be healthy, safe and independent. The Governor recently declared a statewide emergency through Executive Order No. 20-05 due to the virus that causes COVID-19 to protect the health and livelihood of Oregonians. DHS is doing its part to stem the spread of COVID-19 and at the same time, expand its supports of families who must work and the providers who care for their children. We wanted you to be aware of the **temporary** rule changes and measures DHS is taking during this state of emergency period beginning March 16, 2020 and ending the last of the month in which the Governor redacts the declared state of emergency:

**Expanded absent day policy (TANF and ERDC):** Providers will be able to bill for all eligible children who were scheduled to have been in care who are unable to attend due to the virus. This will allow providers to have confidence in their finances during unprecedented demand.

**Emergency billing for temporarily closed facilities (TANF and ERDC):** Child care facilities may have reason to believe they need a thorough cleaning, but are afraid of losing the state reimbursement. Both licensed providers and license-exempt centers are able to bill DHS in the event of a temporary shutdown during the state of emergency period.

**Increased initial income limit for ERDC:** Currently, working parents may enroll in ERDC if their income is below 185% of the federal poverty level. Parents whose income increases remain eligible up to the exit limit of 250% federal poverty level or 85% of the state median income (whichever is higher). DHS is increasing the initial income limit to allow more working parents to enroll their children in safe child care facilities.

**\$0 copay for families receiving ERDC:** Eligible families will have no copay amount for the duration of the state of emergency. Families who have already paid their copay for the month of March may arrange reimbursement privately with their provider; DHS is unable to reimburse families directly.

These proposed rule changes went into effect on March 16. The expanded absent day policy and \$0 copay for families will be made retroactively to the first of the month. DHS will continue to work with the Early Learning Division, child care providers, and stakeholders to ensure as many families can continue to receive safe, quality child care during this state of emergency.

For questions around eligibility, families may contact their local DHS office. Phone numbers for local offices can be found at: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/offices/pages/self-sufficiency.aspx>.

For questions around billing and payment, families and providers may contact the Direct Pay Unit Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm at 1-800-699-9074.