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MEMORANDUM

To: Early Childhood Programs and Staff
From: Office of Child and Family Services
Subject: **CCAP Child Care Employment Award**
Date: June 26, 2024

Purpose

The Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP) Child Care Employment Award is a 2-year pilot program designed to provide a workplace benefit for staff working in licensed child care programs in Maine. The CCAP Child Care Employment Award works in tandem with the Child Care Affordability Program to support access to affordable child care for the children of staff working in Maine child care programs.

Funding

\$2.5 million per year in State General Funds for two years, July 2024-June 2026.

Timeline

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning on July 1, 2024. Payments are tentatively scheduled to begin in August 2024.

**An application is not needed for those currently working in child care who are already enrolled in the Child Care Affordability Program.*

Eligibility

All staff employed by licensed child care programs are eligible to apply for the CCAP Child Care Employment Award to help cover the cost of child care for their child(ren). This includes all staff roles and all types of licensed programs, including family child care, small facilities, and child care facilities. An applicant's child(ren) can be enrolled at the child care program where the staff member works or at another licensed child care program in Maine. Applicants may apply for the award to cover all their children enrolled in licensed child care, except for:

- Owners of licensed child care programs, where children are enrolled in the same program where the owner works, the employment award can support no more than two of the owner's children.

Both the parent and their child(ren) need to be working at/enrolled in licensed child care programs in Maine that:

- Are in good standing with licensing;
- Are part of Rising Stars for ME;
- Have all staff in Maine's ECE Workforce Registry;
- Are participating in the Salary Supplement Program; and
- Are qualified CCAP child care providers.

Application

A parent who is employed at a licensed child care program can apply for the CCAP Child Care Employment Award by:

- Applying for the Child Care Affordability Program (if not already enrolled in CCAP). [Fill out the full application](#) and check the box that says, “I work in a licensed child care program.” A parent who is already enrolled in CCAP may notify their Financial Resource Specialist that they work in a child care program and would like to receive the Employment Award. Office of Child and Family Services staff will begin processing the Child Care Employment Award if all other criteria are met.

Waiting List

The CCAP Child Care Employment Award pilot program has funding capped at \$2.5 million per year and implementation of a waiting list may become necessary. If so, the wait list will first prioritize children with special needs, children experiencing homelessness, and families with income up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. Next, the wait list will prioritize families with income up to 85% of the State Median Income. Among these priority groups, families will be selected for the CCAP Child Care Employment Award on a first-served basis based on the date that a completed application was submitted. Department staff will contact families when space opens with information about steps needed to move off the waitlist, which may include a reapplication to CCAP.

Award Process

Families where at least one parent works in a licensed child care program are eligible to apply. They will begin the process by applying to the Child Care Affordability Program or, if already enrolled, by notifying OCFS that they would like to receive the Employment Award. CCAP makes the first eligibility determination and sends an award letter to the family. This process is designed to make sure that families who are already eligible for CCAP can receive that benefit first and the CCAP Child Care Employment Award can add additional funding to help pay for child care.

For families not already enrolled in CCAP, a letter from CCAP will state whether the family is eligible and is now enrolled in the Child Care Affordability Program. An additional letter will be mailed at the same time with information about the CCAP Child Care Employment Award. When a family is not eligible for the Child Care Affordability Program, and one parent works in a licensed child care, they can still receive support to pay for child care through the CCAP Child Care Employment Award pilot program.

Award Amount:

For child care staff who are already enrolled in CCAP or are determined eligible for CCAP, the CCAP Child Care Employment Award covers the parent fee, as determined by the Child Care Affordability Program.

For child care owners and staff that are not eligible for CCAP, this award helps cover the cost of child care for their child(ren). Families will be eligible for the following award amounts per child, with biweekly payments sent to the child care provider based on the county location of the program, the age of the child and the type of program they are enrolled in.

Families Not Eligible for CCAP, Child Care Employment Award Payments Per Child									
County Group	Age of Child	Child Care Facility Bi-Weekly Payment				Family Child Care Bi-Weekly Payment			
		Full Time	Part Time	Half Time	Quarter Time	Full Time	Part Time	Half Time	Quarter Time
Cumberland, Sagadahoc, York	Infant	\$330	\$247.50	\$165	\$82.50	\$245	\$183.75	\$122.50	\$61.25
	Toddler	\$320	\$240	\$160	\$80	\$230.77	\$173.08	\$115.39	\$57.69
	Preschooler	\$300	\$225	\$150	\$75	\$225	\$168.75	\$112.50	\$56.25
	School Age	\$214	\$160.50	\$107.00	\$53.50	\$175	\$131.25	\$87.50	\$43.75
Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, Washington	Infant	\$275	\$206.25	\$137.50	\$68.75	\$210	\$157.50	\$105	\$52.50
	Toddler	\$250	\$187.50	\$125.00	\$62.50	\$200	\$150	\$100	\$50
	Preschooler	\$244	\$183.00	\$122	\$61.00	\$190	\$142.50	\$95	\$47.50
	School Age	\$180	\$135.00	\$90	\$45.00	\$170	\$127.50	\$85	\$42.50

Hours Per Week a Child Attends a Licensed Child Care				
Age of Child	Full Time	Part Time	Half Time	Quarter Time
Infant, Toddler, Preschooler	30+ hours	20-29 hours	10-19 hours	1-9 hours
School Age	30+ hours	11-29 hours	6-10 hours	1-5 hours

- Infant means a child six (6) weeks through twelve (12) months of age
- Toddler means a child thirteen (13) months through thirty-six (36) months of age
- Preschooler is a child more than thirty-six (36) months of age but not yet enrolled in kindergarten
- School age is a child enrolled in kindergarten or higher

Award Payment Process

Child Care Employment Award payments will be processed manually on a biweekly basis and sent to the licensed child care program where the child is enrolled. For children enrolled in the Child Care Affordability Program, regular CCAP payments will be dispersed separately from the Child Care Employment Award payments.

Length of Award

For families enrolled in or determined to be eligible for CCAP, the CCAP Child Care Employment Award will match the length of the CCAP subsidy and will be renewed at the time of CCAP redetermination, as funding is available. For families not found to be eligible for CCAP, the CCAP Child Care Employment Award period will be one year, with the opportunity to renew for an additional year, as funding is available.

For More Information

Join us on Monday, July 1st at 1:00pm for an information session about the CCAP Child Care Employment Award (will be recorded and shared): <https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/89215777017>

Meeting ID: 892 1577 7017

One tap mobile: +16468769923,,89215777017#

For questions and inquiries about the CCAP Child Care Employment Award, contact the Department at ccemploymentaward@maine.gov or (207) 624-7938.