



Child Care for COVID-19 Essential Workers in Fresno County

JUNE 29, 2020

Overview

Access to quality child care is vitally important for essential workers and all families in Fresno County. When parents have access to quality child care they can work, financially support their families and contribute to the prosperity of our region. Child care providers are community anchors that strengthen neighborhoods and create the environment for early learning. Children who receive quality early education are ready to enter school and ready to succeed in work and life. The lasting impacts of access to quality child care for parents, children and the local economy is impossible to overstate.

During the 2008 Great Recession, the county lost over 405 licensed child care homes and centers that have never been regained. This means that approximately 7,000 child care slots were lost in a county that was already significantly short of childcare. It is imperative that we do not lose more child care slots due to the pandemic. This proposal focuses on both the immediate need for essential workers and the retention of the currently operating childcare homes and centers. As background, 61% of Fresno County's total 17,117 child care slots are in the City of Fresno (10,441 child care slots) and the remaining 39% are in the rest of Fresno County.

Quick Summary

To ensure that essential workers who are parents or guardians of young children can continue to do their jobs at full productivity, despite the shutdown of schools and some child care centers, and the variable school re-opening plans, **we propose a two-pronged response to bridge funding for child care through December 31, 2020. We are prioritizing utilization of the existing system of care providers, for safe, rapid, and no-cost access to child care to augment the emergency child care actions taken to date:**

1. **Essential Worker Child Care Vouchers** - Provide 190 child care vouchers to essential workers, with top priority for frontline healthcare workers, to enable them to secure no-cost child care. Voucher value will be sufficient to cover hazard pay for child care workers and the extra costs of providing care during the pandemic. **The first priority is bridge funding for 40 City of Fresno children now utilizing these child care services and another new 150 children added for July 1 through December 31, 2020.** This is especially important with schools re-opening and the increased need for child care for all levels of school personnel and families returning to work in a variety of essential services, often with non-traditional hours. This includes the agricultural industry. A voucher follows the child, so if a child starts in a center for most of the day but then moves to a license-exempt home for the evening, the child is covered.

Families can select any of the following care providers:

- a. licensed child care center or licensed family child care home;
- b. license-exempt school-age care for children in community settings;
- c. care by a professional caregiver, if the caregiver meets Trustline background check, in the family's home or in the caregiver's home for children from only one family; or
- d. by a family member, friend or neighbor, if the caregiver meets Trustline background check and care for only one family.

Total Funding Requested: \$ 1,506,390 for a total of 190 children for six months.

Funding would be provided to Central Valley Children Services Network for distribution to the child care homes and centers or parents for continuity of care.



2. **Child Care Provider PPE and Cleaning Supplies:** To meet the safety precautions, child care providers utilize PPE and cleaning supplies beyond the scope of their contracted reimbursement. This expense is becoming an issue for retention of child care homes and slots. A request is included to provide the per child cost of \$65.89 to providers one time. The funding requested is based on 10,103 children in child care.

Total Funding Requested: \$665,663 for licensed and license-exempt homes and centers.

Funding would be provided to Children Services Network for distribution to the child care homes and centers.

Total Program Cost: \$2,172,553

Indirect at 10% of total. Indirect covers a portion administration of vouchers, accounting, IT, reporting and other operational costs.

City Indirect = \$217,255

GRAND TOTAL REQUESTED FROM CITY OF FRESNO: \$2,389,808

Desired Impact

- Desired Impact for Employers
- Increased availability of workers in critical roles
- Reduced absenteeism
- Reduced time spent trying to solve employees' child care struggles

Desired Impact for Essential Workers

- Reduced cognitive load on working parents/guardians to figure out child care arrangements, worrying about their children in unstable child care arrangements and worrying about child care expenses
- Reduced child care costs

Desired Impact for Children

- Happy, safe, learning and loved
- More predictable routines, which add resiliency during traumatic times
- Support to complete school work

Desired Impact for Child Care Providers

- Support resilience of child care providers through the crisis so that child care capacity is available when the crisis abates and parents/guardians are able to go back to work

Developed by members of Fresno Cradle to Career in partnership with Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership, Fresno DRIVE and The Children's Movement representing the sectors of early childhood, health, K-12 education, higher education, government agencies, housing, justice, philanthropy, economic development, business, workforce upskilling and development, and neighborhood development.