



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)



### GENERAL

- Q. My child is no longer attending preschool or the child care provider because my children are at home with us. Can I get a refund? Am I required to pay for another 30 days of care?**
- A. Child care facilities/providers specify their payment, termination notice, and refund policies in the written policies that are provided to families. Please review your child care facility's/provider's handbook regarding required notice for termination of child care services and the written agreement that you have signed with the child care facility/provider.
- Q. How do I find out about current updates on the COVID-19 situation and recommendations to help my family?**
- A. Families and child care facilities/providers can check the websites below on an on-going basis for updated information and guidance:
- Department of Health's [COVID-19 website](#) and [guidance for child care providers](#).
  - [Department of Human Services' COVID-19 Information Resources \(Community, Providers, Vendors, and Contractors\)](#).
  - Centers for Disease Control's [COVID-19 website](#) and [guidance for child care providers](#).
- Q. I am interested in ways to support my family and children during this emergency COVID-19 situation. Do you know of any resources?**
- A. The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) has developed a list of helpful resources for families for [Recommendations from the Executive Office on Early Learning \(EOEL\) for the COVID-19 crisis and beyond](#).
- Q. My organization is interested in providing child care for essential workers. What do we need to do?**
- A. For organizations that are interested in operating emergency child care for essential workers and are not already licensed by DHS to operate a group child care facility, they may submit an inquiry at

[BESSD.CCPO@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:BESSD.CCPO@dhs.hawaii.gov) and provide information for DHS to determine whether the program will need to be licensed by DHS.

**Q. A family has not adhered to the 14-day self-quarantine requirement after returning from travel and has sent their child to our child care provider. To whom do I report this?**

A. Please contact your County's police department at its *non-emergency* line (see below) to report any individuals who have violated the mandatory 14-day self-quarantine requirement and to request enforcement.

Honolulu Police Department	(808) 529-3111
Hawaii Police Department	(808) 935-3311
Kauai Police Department	(808) 241-1711
Maui Police Department	(808) 244-6400
Molokai Police Station	(808) 553-5355
Lanai Police Station	(808) 565-6428

**Q. I am an essential worker and need child care while I am working. Is there a list of licensed and registered child care facilities that are continuing to operate?**

A. Yes, the department's contractor, PATCH, is maintaining and updating [this list](#) of licensed and registered child care centers and homes that continue to provide care for children of essential workers.



## CHILD CARE LICENSING OR REGISTRATION

**Q. My child is no longer attending preschool or the child care provider because my children are at home with us. Can I get a refund? Am I required to pay for another 30 days of care?**

A. Child care facilities/providers specify their payment, termination notice, and refund policies in the written policies that are provided to families. Please review your child care facility's/provider's written policies and the written agreement that you have signed with the child care facility/provider regarding required notice for termination of child care services.

**Q. Does DHS have any guidance for regulated child care facilities/providers regarding requirements for continued operations during the COVID-19 situation?**

A.

- Department of Health's [COVID-19 website](#) and [guidance for child care providers](#).
- [Department of Human Services' COVID-19 Information Resources \(Community, Providers, Vendors, and Contractors\)](#).

- Centers for Disease Control’s [COVID-19 website, guidance for child care providers](#), and [supplemental guidance for child care programs that remain open](#).

**Q. Can child care facilities and providers continue to operate during the COVID-19 situation? I am an essential worker and need child care while I am working.**

A. Continued operations of DHS regulated child care facilities and homes are allowed under essential functions in Counties that have issued emergency rules or proclamations. Each individual child care facility or provider assesses whether it will continue to operate and offer child care services. Some facilities and providers are continuing to provide child care to essential workers during this time of need, and the list can be found [here](#).

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) has provided [guidance for child care providers](#) and the Centers for Disease Control have [guidance for child care programs that continue to operate](#) as well.

**Q. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, our child care facility has decided to suspend operations. Do we need to notify DHS?**

A. DHS understands that facilities may make the hard decision to suspend child care during the COVID-19 situation. After you’ve notified the families, please notify your assigned [child care licensing unit](#) and worker know that you will be closing operations and the tentative date you intend to reopen child care operations.

**Q. Some of our families receive DHS child care subsidies through Child Care Connection Hawaii or Preschool Open Doors programs. Will families be able to continue to receive child care subsidies once our facility resumes child care operations?**

A. Families that receive child care subsidy assistance through either the [Child Care Connection Hawaii](#) or Preschool Open Doors program would continue to be eligible for child care subsidy assistance and would continue to receive child care subsidy assistance when their selected child care facility or provider resumes child care operations.

**Q. My child care facility continues to operate and provide care for essential workers. Can the County emergency rules be more strict than the department’s child care licensing requirements? Is my program required to enact social distancing measures with the children in care? How many children are allowed to be in a group?**

A. Yes, the County emergency rules can be more strict than the State’s DHS [licensing or registration requirements](#). The County requirements do not directly conflict with the DHS requirements and may prescribe social distancing and other preventive measures. All child care facilities/providers that continue to operate in their respective County would need to adhere to both the County’s requirements as well as the DHS child care licensing or registration requirements. Enforcement would be up to the County for violations of its emergency rules. DHS advises child care facilities that they comply with their respective County’s requirements.

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) in consultation with the Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) would be the lead agencies to identify whether a case or person under investigation (PUI) is associated with a child care facility or provider. If it is determined whether anyone at a child care facility or provider may have been exposed, HIEMA and HDOH would work closely with the affected child care facility or provider on next steps.

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) has provided [guidance for child care providers](#) and the Centers for Disease Control have [guidance for child care programs that continue to operate](#) as well.

**Q. My organization is interested in providing child care for essential workers. What do we need to do?**

A. For organizations that are interested in operating emergency child care for essential workers and are not already licensed by DHS to operate a group child care facility, they may submit an inquiry at [BESSD.CCPO@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:BESSD.CCPO@dhs.hawaii.gov) and provide information for DHS to determine whether the program will need to be licensed by DHS.

**Q. I am a registered family child care (FCC) home and continue to operate child care. Can I provide care for essential workers' children during this time when my regular families are keeping their children at home with them? If so, what do I need to do?**

A. FCC providers that are willing to stay open and provide child care to essential worker's children are able to do so, as long as the FCC provider does not exceed the maximum capacity of children in care on the certificate of registration or the maximum number of children as indicated by your County's emergency requirements.

If the FCC provider wants to take a child that is above the age range on the certificate of registration, the FCC provider would have to notify the assigned [child care licensing unit](#) and worker to amend the FCC certificate.

**Q. I heard that there is additional funding being provided to Hawaii from the CARES Act for child care. How does my child care business access these additional funds?**

A. DHS understands the importance of supporting Hawaii's families, children, and child care providers through this challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Hawaii, along with all other states and territories, is currently awaiting guidance and grant award notices from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care (ACF OCC) for Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds and CARES Act funding provisions and requirements as to how they complement and supplement the existing CCDBG grant awards that Hawaii DHS receives. DHS contacted ACF OCC requesting information as to the availability of the CARES Act funding and guidance for Hawai'i. Once DHS receives further guidance from the ACF OCC regarding the CARES Act funding and provisions, we can consider if there are other complementary strategies DHS can utilize that are in alignment with the flexibilities and provisions of the additional CCDBG funding.

DHS will continue to communicate and work with Hawaii’s child care community as we receive more guidance and information in the next steps for utilizing the CARES Act additional CCDBG funding.

**Q. My licensed child care facility continues to operate to provide care for essential workers. I have hired a new staff person but the DHS offices are not conducting fingerprinting appointments currently. What do I do?**

A. Please notify the assigned [child care licensing unit](#) and worker and have your new hire complete the “Authorization for Background Check and to Release Information” form [DHS 948](#) and submit it to DHS within five days of hire. DHS will conduct the name-based background records checks and will contact the individual for a fingerprinting appointment when the DHS offices resume fingerprinting services.



## CHILD CARE CONNECTION HAWAII (SUBSIDIES)

**Q. Are families that receive DHS child care subsidies through Child Care Connection Hawaii or Preschool Open Doors programs be able to continue to receive the assistance once their child care facility/provider resumes child care operations.**

A. Families that receive child care subsidy assistance through either the [Child Care Connection Hawaii](#) or Preschool Open Doors program would continue to be eligible for child care subsidy assistance and would continue to receive child care subsidy assistance when their selected child care facility or provider resumes child care operations.

**Q. Can I receive DHS child care subsidies when I am using a babysitter found on Care.com?**

A. Families who are receiving or apply and are determined eligible for DHS child care subsidies through the Child Care Connection Hawaii program would choose the provider that best meets the needs of their family and child(ren). Eligible families would need to provide information to the DHS child care subsidy staff regarding the provider selected, and the provider would need to complete the requirements, including the background checks, for DHS in order for child care subsidies to be paid to the eligible family. For [more information](#) or to [apply](#) for the department’s Child Care Connection Hawaii program, go [here](#) and applications may be sent to the [office](#) nearest you.

**Q. Do I need to provide parents participating in the Child Care Connection Hawaii program with a child care receipt even though my child care facility is closed?**

A. Yes, please ensure that families receiving DHS child care subsidies are mailed or provided their child care receipts for every month that you have been paid by the family or through payments forwarded on behalf of the family to your Designated Provider Payment account.

DHS must ensure that child care subsidies are used for the correct purpose, and receipts must be provided by families to DHS to ensure their continued participation in the DHS child care subsidy program.

**Q. My child was attending a registered family child care (FCC) home provider, and I was laid off from my job. I will need child care to find a new job, and I need to hold my child's space at my provider. Can I apply for the Child Care Connection Hawaii program, even though I have lost my activity?**

A. Yes, you may [apply](#) for the [Child Care Connection Hawaii](#) program even though you have lost your employment activity and you need child care subsidy assistance to hold your child's space at your licensed or registered child care facility or home, so that you can resume searching for a new job when the "stay at home" orders are lifted throughout the State. [Applications](#) may be submitted via fax, email, postal mail, or placed in the drop box to the [office](#) nearest you. If you have any questions about your application status, please call the [office](#) that you submitted your application to.

**Q. Are families that receive DHS child care subsidies through Child Care Connection Hawaii or Preschool Open Doors programs be able to continue to receive the assistance while their child care facility/provider is closed to "hold" the children's seats at the facility/provider when child care operations resumes?**

A. Yes. However, if a family has notified their child care subsidy worker that the family has disenrolled their child from the selected child care facility/provider, the child care subsidy assistance will not continue until the family selects a new child care facility/provider.

**Q. I am an essential worker and need child care, but make more than the current monthly gross income limits. Can I apply for child care subsidy assistance through the Child Care Connection Hawaii program?**

A. Yes. The [monthly gross income eligibility limits](#) for the Child Care Connection Hawaii program are being lifted temporarily until the pandemic emergency situation is declared over. Families who normally do not qualify due to their income but are essential workers can [apply](#) for child care subsidy assistance to help pay for the current child care costs now while they are working. Applications may be submitted via fax, email, postal mail, or placed in the drop box to the [office](#) nearest you. If you have any questions about your application status, please call the [office](#) that you submitted your application to.

**Q. We currently receive child care subsidy assistance through the Child Care Connection Hawaii program, and have a high family co-payment. We have had a reduction in our family's income due to the pandemic emergency situation. Can we get our family co-payment waived?**

A. Yes. Child Care Connection Hawaii families who previously had some portion of a co-payment on a [sliding fee scale basis](#) while receiving DHS child care subsidy assistance may have the family co-payment amount waived on a case-by-case basis temporarily until the pandemic emergency situation is declared over. The DHS child care subsidy payments may be increased to cover the usual family co-payment amount.

**Q. Will my unemployment benefits or the federal stimulus checks be counted toward my household's income for child care subsidy assistance?**

A. No, the Child Care Connection Hawaii child care subsidy assistance program will not be counting any emergency-related benefits, including emergency unemployment benefits or emergency stimulus benefits, toward the family's monthly gross income during the pandemic emergency situation.

**Q. With the new income limit waiver and activity requirement waiver, can families new to the Child Care Connection Hawaii subsidy program apply who need to "hold" their child's seat at our child care facility?**

A. Yes, new families can apply to receive child care subsidy assistance if they have been impacted by the pandemic emergency and need assistance with their child care costs, including "holding" their child's seat at the child care facility or home so that their child will have a provider to return to when parents resume working.

**Q. I receive child care subsidy assistance from the Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) subsidy program and my child's regular preschool is closed currently, and I need child care as I am an essential worker. Can I receive child care subsidy assistance to pay for my regular preschool and a second child care provider that currently is open and providing care for children of essential workers?**

A. During the emergency situation, if the family provides verification to the child care subsidy worker that the child's regular child care provider requires child care payments to hold the child's seat during the regular provider's closure and the family still needs child care and selects another child care provider for the interim period, yes, the family is able to receive child care subsidy payments to maintain the child's space at the regular child care provider and for the child to attend another child care provider that currently is open and providing care for children of essential workers. You will need to have your additional child care provider complete the required Child Care Provider Certificate and Confirmation form and background checks, if not already regulated by DHS.

**Q. How long will the expanded eligibility requirements for the Child Care Connection Hawaii program last?**

A. Once a family has been determined eligible or re-determined to continue to be eligible under the expanded eligibility requirements, the family would continue to receive child care subsidy assistance until the next six-month re-determination period, even if the disaster emergency relief period is declared over sooner. Therefore, families will have at least six months of assistance in covering the cost of child care and significantly support families with one of the most expensive budget items they have.

**Q. Are families that receive DHS child care subsidies through Child Care Connection Hawaii program able to continue to receive assistance for child care even if they are using a legally exempt provider?**

A. If a family receiving child care subsidy assistance through the Child Care Connection Hawaii program and is using a legally exempt provider and still needs child care because they are an essential worker or are teleworking, or provides verification to the child care subsidy worker that the child care provider requires child care payments to hold the child's seat during the legally exempt provider's closure, the family would continue to receive child care subsidy assistance.



## PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS (CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES)

**Q. Are families that receive DHS child care subsidies through Child Care Connection Hawaii or Preschool Open Doors programs able to continue to receive the assistance once their child care facility/provider resumes child care operations?**

A. Families that receive child care subsidy assistance through either the [Child Care Connection Hawaii](#) or Preschool Open Doors program would continue to be eligible for child care subsidy assistance and would continue to receive child care subsidy assistance when their selected child care facility or provider resumes child care operations.

**Q. Am I still able to apply for the Preschool Open Doors program?**

A. Yes, the deadline to apply for the Preschool Open Doors program has been ***extended until Thurs., April 30, 2020***. If your child was born between August 1, 2015 and July 31, 2016, your family is eligible to apply for the 2020-2021 POD year. The application can be found at [patchhawaii.org](http://patchhawaii.org) or [humanservices.hawaii.gov](http://humanservices.hawaii.gov) and may be submitted via mail, fax, email, or dropped off to:

PATCH – POD  
560 N. Nimitz Hwy, Suite 218  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
Fax: (808) 694-3066  
Email: [PODAdmin@patch-hi.org](mailto:PODAdmin@patch-hi.org)



**Q. My financial situation has changed, since I applied for the Preschool Open Doors program. Can I update my income information before April 30, 2020?**

A. Yes, please call the Preschool Open Doors program at (808) 791-2130 or toll-free (800) 746-5620 to discuss how you can update your application information.

**Q. Will my unemployment benefits or the federal stimulus checks be counted toward my household's income?**

A. No, the Preschool Open Doors child care subsidy assistance program will not be counting any emergency-related benefits, including emergency unemployment benefits or emergency stimulus benefits, toward the family's monthly gross income during the pandemic emergency situation.