

## FAQ's from Providers – Updated 3/25/2020

### ***General Information***

#### If we get an order to close, where will it come from?

There is no current statewide or national order to close all child-care programs. Until we receive something from the Governor or the President, it is an individual business decision. For guidance on how to make that decision, see the attached flowsheet document from Child Care Aware.

#### We think we may have to close--where should we send our families for information on a new place to go?

If your families are in need of child care, please ask them to contact the CCR&R Child Care Information Line at 1-800-308-9000 or online at [www.azccrr.com](http://www.azccrr.com).

#### What happens if I run out of supplies?

We are working on a more official system for supplies but in the meantime,

- Try to contact any local Head Start programs that have closed to see if they can loan/give supplies that they are not using while they are closed.
- Try to contact local school districts that are closed to see if they can loan/give supplies that they are not using while they are closed.
- Are there any local businesses like restaurants that have closed dining rooms and could support providing supplies...and/or are the businesses that the families are working at that can provide some supplies so that their staff can still come to work because child care can continue to operate.

#### What families should I be serving? Should we prioritize First Responders?

At this time, there has not been specific statewide guidance about serving children of first responders or emergency personnel only. Providers should follow their program's policies related to serving children and families including collecting the appropriate registration paperwork, documents required by licensing, and service-related information. According to the letter from Governor Ducey and Superintendent of Public Instruction Hoffman, "the safest place for children during this time is at home. They should not be cared for by elderly adults or those with underlying health conditions, including grandparents and other family members. We understand many parents have questions about childcare options. It is the recommendation of public health officials that kids who are not at school remain at home to the greatest extent possible. For families for whom that's not an option, we are coordinating with partners in the non-profit, faith-based and education communities to make available childcare options to families who need it."

## ***DES Child Care Assistance Information***

How will DES child care reimbursement work? Will providers get reimbursed on authorizations, current utilization, or on our licensed capacity?

Child care providers contracted with DES will continue to receive child care reimbursement payments no less than those provided in January 2020. All provider emergency reimbursement payments will be based on January 2020 units billed and paid. All units will be reimbursed at the full day rate minus the parent co-pay. Payments for services provided in March will be issued to providers soon after April 1, and payments will continue to be distributed after the first of the month until the end of the state of emergency. For more information, please see the DES Provider FAQs.

Can families move their DES assistance to any participating provider at this time in case mine closes?

DES is working with other state partners to develop a network of child care options for the community need, prioritizing care for the children of first responders and emergency personnel. If your child care provider has closed and you are in need of child care, please contact the CCR&R Child Care Information Line at 1-800-308-9000 or online at [www.azccrr.com](http://www.azccrr.com).

Will DES child care providers have to reapply as a DES provider?

No, providers will not have to reapply to maintain being a DES child care provider.

Reauthorizations for DES Child Care Assistance

If you are currently receiving DES Child Care Assistance, and your case is up for your 12-month redetermination, you will automatically be authorized for an additional 3 months of assistance. That is: for a March 2020 redetermination, the service authorization will automatically be extended to June 30, 2020. For an April 2020 redetermination, the authorization will automatically be extended to July 31, 2020.

DES Contracts

DES contracts that are ending during this time will be evaluated individually to determine action. DES contractors that are impacted will be contacted by the CCA Contracts team.

## ***DHS Child Care Licensure***

Can I turn people coming to my center away? (Surveyors, therapists etc.)

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, DCS implemented new social distancing guidelines for services that are in effect until April 5<sup>th</sup>. They are now doing visits virtually and by phone. Please note: in the event of an investigation, DCS staff may still need access to your program. The new guidelines can be found here:

<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>

We aren't licensed but we want to help how does that work?

While we know everyone is trying to help and pitch in where they can the early childhood community agrees, it is not the time to eliminate or suspend licensing rules or stand up new, untested, and

unmonitored childcare programs that will compromise the health and safety of children, their families, and the community at large. Providing childcare in the best of times requires complex skills. In times of uncertainty and trauma, skilled and trusted early childhood educators are needed more than ever.

Do we have to close if someone (youth or staff) gets sick that has been at our site?

If you are concerned that a child or staff member could have COVID-19:

- Immediately contact your local health department if a child, staff member or volunteer meets exposure and symptoms criteria.
- Your Local Health Department will help assess the situation and provide guidance for further actions.

Recommendations for COVID-19-positive children or staff at your facility:

- Laboratory positive COVID-19 cases should be immediately reported to your Local Health Department. Your staff, parents and volunteers should also be notified.
- Staff members and children should be excluded from the childcare facility if ill.
  - If staff or children have tested positive for COVID-19, they should remain under home isolation precautions for 7 days from specimen collection OR until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms of acute infection resolve, whichever is longer.
  - If staff or children have fever with cough or shortness of breath and have tested negative for COVID-19, they should stay home away from others until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms of acute infection resolve.
  - If staff or children have fever with cough or shortness of breath and have not been tested for COVID-19, they should stay home away from others until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms of acute infection resolve.
  - If staff or children have other non-compatible symptoms and have not been tested for COVID-19, they should stay home until 24 hours after all symptoms are gone without the use of medicine.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Can we legally keep parents from accessing the center as usual?

We serve school age only usually can we take younger kids (siblings) since this is an emergency?

For Additional Guidance from the Arizona Department of Health Services see this attached letter and check out [azdhs.gov/covid19](https://azdhs.gov/covid19).

## **Quality First**

### What happens to my Quality First enrollment if my program closes temporarily?

Quality First already has a policy for participants who need to close on a temporary basis (for example a fire in the building, a home provider who has a medical issue), but intend to re-open for services after a short period of time. We will use the same process and policy for participants who are closing due to the coronavirus (COVID 19). Messaging about this has been sent out to QF coaches so that they can support participants who inform them that they will be temporarily closing their doors. The participants will not lose their QF slot.

### What happens to my Quality First Incentive Funds if my program closes temporarily?

The temporary closure policy does indicate that if a program is closed temporarily, their access to their financial incentives is not available during the closure time. We have communicated to the QF Coaching and Incentives Grant partner that there can be flexibility in this so that programs that are closed can access the incentive funds to support deep cleaning of facilities while they are closed and/or support staff wages for those that are not working while the program is closed.

What will happen if, in order to limit the number of external people entering my child care program, I decline coaching or assessment?

### Coaching

During this time, coaches will honor the decisions of the program. We recognize that recommendations have been provided from health departments to limit external people entering the program. Coaches have been given guidance that include opportunities to check in with QF participants to see if phone consultation or other ways of supporting participants can be used at this time.

### Assessment

During this time, assessors will honor the decisions of the program. When assessors are given approval by the program to conduct an assessment, they will do so. However, we have noticed that program enrollment is low during this time and there are expectations for enrollment in order for an assessment to be valid. So, assessors may cancel assessments if enrollment doesn't meet the enrollment standards that have been set to conduct an assessment.

### Child Care Health Consultant

Please reach out to your assigned Child Care Health Consultant if you have any questions related to the health and safety of your staff and the children in your care. They have excellent resources on handwashing, daily health checks and classroom cleaning and disinfecting guidelines.

## **Quality First Scholarships**

### What will happen to a family's Quality First Scholarship if they fall below the attendance expectations?

There is an attendance expectation that families acknowledge when they receive a QF Scholarship. We know that during this time families may keep children home for illness or anticipated risk of illness. We do not want QF participants to remove scholarships from families during this time for any attendance anomalies so the following message has been sent out to all QF participants with scholarships:

*Dear Quality First scholarship participant:*

*Recent developments in the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19), including yesterday's declaration of emergency by Governor Doug Ducey, have prompted questions as to how a potential outbreak may affect QF scholarship availability and reimbursements.*

*As you are likely aware, the Quality First program recognizes the important role that consistent caregiver relationships and continuity of care play in the quality education for young children. Accordingly, our existing policies do not penalize the family or the provider for a child's absences.*

*We understand that public reaction to both the perceived and actual risks posed by Coronavirus (COVID-19) may cause you to be stricter in adherence to policies regarding student absence due to illness. It may also impact families' willingness to send their young children to their child care setting/preschool. We appreciate your work with families to encourage attendance of healthy children, while at the same time, preserving an absent child's access to early education, whether that absence is the result of illness or their family's concern about potential illness. To that end, we will continue to cover absences as part of our QF scholarships.*

*Thank you for your continued partnership in providing high quality education services to young children during these uncertain times.*

*VSUW QF Scholarships Team*

*3200 East Camelback Road, Suite 375*

*Phoenix, AZ 85018*

*Phone: 1-866-973-0012*

*Fax: 602-240-6326*

*Email: [regionalscholarships@vsuw.org](mailto:regionalscholarships@vsuw.org)*

*Website: <http://azftfscholarships.org/>*