

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition

Stabilization Program – General Information

- 1. Which financial support programs require me to pay my staff during a closure? What form do I use to submit for payment?**

The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition requires that you pay your staff to qualify for the program. The guidance for the Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is available here:

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Docs/COVID/COVID-Private-Tuition-Payments-Stabilization-Guidance.pdf>

The Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) payments during closure do not require you to pay your staff to submit for payment. Please see this guidance for CCFAP billing instructions: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Docs/COVID/Guidance-Related-to-CCFAP-payments-COVID-19-Child-care-closures-absence.pdf>

- 2. Do families request funds from this program? Or do we (the child care provider) request the payment?**

Child care programs must apply for the program. This stabilization program is intended to support child care programs to maintain their businesses during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis. It is meant to ensure that the spaces for children enrolled in child care prior to the crisis are maintained and available for those same children and families when the crisis is over.

- 3. Does this program pay for new children that enroll in my program that are children of essential persons?**

No. This program is intended to support child care programs to maintain their businesses during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis and this closure period. It is meant to maintain the spaces for children enrolled in child care prior to the crisis, and to ensure they are available for those same children when the crisis is over. This is not a program to support newly enrolled essential persons' children that need child care during the closure.

- 4. If we offer a modified schedule for Essential Persons, can any family still apply for the get COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payments for Private Tuition? Or do we have to operate at our normal business hours?**

The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is intended support child care programs regardless of closure, being open or schedule status, to maintain tuition payments to hold spaces for the children enrolled prior to the COVID-19 crisis. You do not need to operate your normal business hours to be eligible for this

program. For the eligibility requirements please see the guidelines for the program here: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/CDD/Docs/COVID/COVID-Private-Tuition-Payments-Stabilization-Guidance.pdf>

5. Will the COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition pay for families who do not receive Child Care Financial Assistance?

Yes. The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is intended to support families that do not receive subsidy. We have addressed families who receive Child Care Financial Assistance through the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).

6. When will guidance be coming out for the program that tells parents they must communicate with my program that they are unable to pay their tuition payment?

The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition requires your program to request tuition payments to maintain slots. You can also request families tell you if they are unable to pay the tuition payment.

7. If parents are home with their children and still partially employed, but paying for child care is difficult given that their hours are cut/they are supplying more food, is the state covering my program's tuition rate? Or is it prorated?

The program will cover the amount of your tuition that parents are unable to pay.

The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is intended support child care programs regardless of closure, being open or schedule status, to maintain tuition payments to hold spaces for the children enrolled prior to the COVID-19 crisis.

8. If a parent indicates they are unwilling to pay their child's tuition, what impact, if any, would that have on the state making said stabilization payment for that child?

The program will cover the amount of your tuition that parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is intended support child care programs regardless of closure, being open or schedule status, to maintain tuition payments to hold spaces for the children enrolled prior to the COVID-19 crisis.

9. What are the guidelines for parents to qualify for stabilization payments? Would a parent now working from home and getting paid qualify?

The program will cover the amount of your tuition that parents are unable or unwilling to pay. The COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition is intended support child care programs regardless of closure, being open or schedule status, to maintain tuition payments to hold spaces for the children enrolled prior to the COVID-19 crisis.

10. If we keep our program closed, should we apply for stabilization funds?

Programs that are closed may apply for stabilization funds if they charge families tuition, are not receiving the full tuition being charged, and pay staff during the closure. This program is intended to support child care programs to maintain their businesses during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis. It is meant to ensure that the spaces for children enrolled in child care prior to the crisis are maintained and available for those same children when the crisis is over.

11. If we have no children onsite, are we allowed to use these funds to pay staff for the duration?

Yes, programs may use these funds to pay staff.

This program is intended to support child care programs to maintain their businesses during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis. It is meant to ensure the spaces for children enrolled in child care prior to the crisis are maintained and available for those same children when the crisis is over. Programs that are closed may apply for stabilization funds if they charge families tuition during the closure, are not receiving the full tuition charged, and are paying staff.

12. If one of our families seeks care at another center as emergency personnel, will that other provider claim for the tuition relief or will I be able to claim for it at my center in order to hold her spot? This parent does not want to unenroll from my program.

This program is intended to support child care programs to maintain their businesses during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis. It is meant to ensure that the spaces for children enrolled in child care prior to the crisis are maintained and available for those same children and families when the crisis is over. This is not a program to support newly enrolled essential persons that need child care during the closure. In the scenario above your program would be eligible to apply for payment as the child was previously enrolled. The new program is not eligible to apply for payment for the child.

13. I have questions about the program, who can answer my questions?

Please read the guidance for the program and these frequently asked questions. If you still have questions after reading this information Katie Lavalley, Communications and Outreach Coordinator at the Child Development Division can answer your questions. Please email questions to: katie.lavalley@vermont.gov

Staff Questions

14. If we apply for the program, are we required to back track and pay staff from the point we closed? Or can we start paying staff going forward?

Programs are required to pay staff for the weeks they invoice the COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition. If you stopped paying staff, you will need to back track and pay staff in order to bill for 3/15/2020 – 3/28/2020. If you start paying staff the week of 3/29/2020, you may not submit for the pay period starting 3/15 and must wait until the pay period starting 3/28.

15. Could you please offer more detail on "regular staff"? All teachers full and part time, kitchen person, floaters, art or enrichment person?

Regular staff are the staff that typically receive a pay check each pay period from your program. This may not include staff that does not regularly work in your program.

16. To be eligible for the COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payment Program for Private Tuition do all staff have to be paid in full or could it just be the ones offering care getting full time pay? While others get 50% pay or collect unemployment?

To receive the COVID-19 Child Care Stabilization Payments for Private Tuition program all regular staff need to be paid their typical salaries/pay.

Invoice Questions

17. I don't understand what weeks to bill, can you explain?

You can bill for up to two weeks per invoice. The billing periods align with the Child Care Financial Assistance pay periods. The following are the pay periods for March and April 2020:

3/15/2020 – 3/28/2020
3/29/2020 – 4/11/2020

The first period that billing can be made is 3/15/2020 – 3/28/2020.

18. What is the timeline for payment to programs?

Invoices that are submitted for the current pay period will be processed within two weeks after a correct invoice is received.

19. When should the invoices be submitted? Can we submit invoices now? Or do we have to wait until the end of next week?

Invoices can be submitted anytime during the pay period. Invoices that are submitted for future pay periods will be held until that pay period. For example, if an invoice was submitted to include the week of 3/29 prior to 3/29, it will be held until 3/29 for payment.

20. If an essential person has a child enrolled in my program, but my program is closed; can I submit for tuition and indicate that the family is paying a different program for child care during my closure period?

Programs must request the tuition payments from families for their closure period to be eligible for payment. If a family indicates that they are unable to afford payment to your program, due to paying another program during your closure you may provide that information and invoice for the tuition the parent is unable to pay.

21. Where I put in how much I charge towards tuition, would it be for the 2-week span? And additionally, where I put in how much they have paid, would it also be for that?

In the field called "Rate Charged for Child," enter the amount total amount you charge for tuition for the two week pay period.

In the field called "If applicable, Child Care Subsidy Payment Received," enter the amount you received or will receive from Child Care Financial Assistance for the child (if the child is eligible for the program) for the two week pay period.

In the field called "Amount Parent has paid towards tuition," enter the amount the family has paid. If the parent has not paid anything, enter a zero in this field.

22. I have a family who has paid for last week, but not for this week. We charge this family \$220 weekly. Would I put that we charge \$440 for the 2 weeks and \$220 for paid?

Yes, please enter the total amount charged for the two weeks, and the amount received in that period.

23. I made a mistake when I submitted my invoice, should I resubmit it?

Katie Lavalley, Communications and Outreach Coordinator at the Child Development Division can support you with your invoice. Please email her the information and she will provide instructions. Katie's email is katie.lavalley@vermont.gov

24. When entering the start date for child care included on this invoice, is it the day they started care with me? Or first day of the two-week invoice?

This field is a drop-down menu that will allow you to pick dates that are allowable. You should pick the date that is the start of the billing period for which you are invoicing.

25. We send out one tuition bill per family for the entire school year. They then have the option to pay in full or to pay in ten monthly installments (each payment pre-pays for the upcoming month). All our families have either pre-paid for the year or have pre-paid for the entire month of March. I will not know if families are going to make their April payment until a week into April. Can I wait until I know what families are able to pay before submitting an invoice?

Yes, please wait until you have information on all families' ability to pay before submitting an invoice.

26. I have families that pay in advance either monthly or quarterly. Can I invoice tuition relief for them now if they have already paid in advance but are now experiencing financial uncertainty or loss of income? It seems that only weekly payers are getting the benefit of the tuition relief.

You may apply for tuition on behalf of families that request a refund from their advance payment or would like to apply that payment to a period following the closure period.

27. I own several child care programs, can I submit one invoice for all the licenses?

An invoice must only contain the children for one license. Please submit one invoice for each of the licenses.

28. We have nearly 200 families to enter the invoice as requested. Will you accept a spreadsheet with the same fields you were requesting in the invoice? We are worried that when we enter it there is no save button and this is an enormous amount of work and could be lost during the entry process.

An Excel file (.xlsx) with all required fields can be uploaded into your invoice if you have a large number of children enrolled in one licensed program. Any other file types will be rejected, and you will need to submit each child in the invoice itself.