

**Department for Children and Families
Child Development Division**NOB 1 North, 280 State Drive
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[fax] 802-241-0846*Agency of Human Services*

March 17, 2020

Dear Child Care Community Support Agency Director,

Thank you for continuing to provide the critical supports families and children in Vermont need during this time. We have developed the following guidance and requirements to help you in your agency's decision making around the Community Child Care Support activities provided.

Child Care Financial Assistance Eligibility Adjustment

Families require a service need to be eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP) families. Due to Covid-19 families may not be able to provide necessary service need documentation due to temporary layoffs or school closures. To ensure continuity of care for families currently enrolled in CCFAP we are implementing the following:

- All families whose eligibility is due to expire March 21 through April 25 will have their current authorizations extended until August 29, 2020.
- Families will be expected to reapply with all new documentation when their extended eligibility ends in August.

Community Child Care Support Agency Services

The Child Development Division's expectation is that the CCCSAs continue to provide eligibility and referral services during this time. The CCCSA grants state that eligibility may not be conducted from home as case files may not be removed from the agency. Due to the confidential information contained in a client's file, this requirement will not be waived. To assist CCCSA's during this time with telework options, CDD is authorizing the following modifications to grant requirements:

- Referral work is conducted only in BFIS therefore Referral Specialists may conduct referral services from home. This work must occur on an agency laptop and the Referral Specialist must have access to the agency's phone line and respond to calls live, meaning they are able to pick up a phone that rings. This reduces, as much as possible, a family's need to leave voicemail.
- Families whose eligibility is ending March 21, 2020 - April 25, 2020 will receive an extension of their current eligibility until August 29, 2020. As these cases only require reentering the prior year application into BFIS, these redeterminations may be done from home provided the specialist is utilizing an agency laptop. Certificates must be sent to both the parent and the provider, so they are aware of the new child care end date. A note must be entered into BFIS stating this is a Covid-19 extension.
- Requests, from a client, for a change in certificate may also be completed from home.



- New Child Care Financial Assistance applications must be fully processed at the agency. Paperwork may not be taken home for processing. The agency must ensure that new client applications are processed on a weekly basis.
- Eligibility calls must be returned within 24 hours. These phone calls may occur at home provided that conversations are conducted in a confidential location.
- To reduce workload on agencies, Approved Relative Child Care (ARCC) applications may be sent to the Waterbury State Office complex for processing.

This situation is continuing to evolve, and we will update you if/when there are any changes in guidance.

Again, thank you for continuing to support families during this time.

Sincerely,

Steven Berbeco
Deputy Commissioner

