

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock  
GOVERNOR



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

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**Governor Bullock Announces \$10 Million Available for Child Care Facilities  
in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced \$10 million in federal CARES Act funding is now available to Montana childcare providers to continue serving Montana families with essential workers and assist with efforts to reopen after closing due to COVID-19.

The \$10 million dollars is funded through the CARES Act Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG). It is not part of the \$1.25 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund allocated to Montana.

**“We know many Montana families have been balancing working and caring for children at the same time over the last several weeks and need sustainable and safe childcare options to continue working or to go back to work,”** Governor Bullock said. **“This funding will provide much-needed financial assistance to providers, as well as support Montana families.”**

The \$10 million in Child Care and Development Block Grants will provide support for existing childcare providers, assistance for low-income families participating in the Best Beginnings Scholarship Program, and will fund emergency temporary childcare for essential workers.

Approximately half of the funding will provide assistance to existing licensed and registered childcare providers. Funding can be used to continue paying staff or go toward increasing sanitation and other measures to operate safely.

**“Childcare providers do an excellent job of ensuring safe and healthy environments for Montana’s children,”** Sheila Hogan, Director of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, said. **“I appreciate all they do to meet the needs of families in their communities, and I’m hopeful this funding will help them through this unique and challenging time.”**

Providers registered to care for up to six children are eligible for a \$3,000 emergency payment. Group providers that care for 7-12 children can receive \$5,000 and centers licensed for 13 or more children are eligible for \$8,000. Providers will be able to apply for this assistance through their local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies.

About 30 percent of the funding will benefit low-income and at-risk children through Best Beginnings scholarships. DPHHS will continue paying for Best Beginnings childcare through the scholarships even if the child is not in attendance during the statewide emergency. These scholarships will allow families to resume care when they can return to work, and keep childcare providers open long term.

**“This is particularly important because we want to support the continuity of care for children,”**  
Jamie Palagi, Early Childhood and Family Support Division Administrator for DPHHS, said.  
**“Maintaining relationships between a childcare teacher and the child is crucial for children’s security and positive development.”**

DPHHS will reimburse childcare facilities that are temporarily closed once they reopen.

The remaining 20 percent of the funding will be available to support temporary childcare needs. For example, this funding can help health care facilities establish temporary emergency childcare for their employees.

Specific information about how to access or apply for this funding is online at [BESTBEGINNINGS.MT.GOV](http://BESTBEGINNINGS.MT.GOV).

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