

May 4, 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER (ACWDL)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWD) regarding child care services for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program), and other at-risk populations during the Coronavirus Disease or (COVID-19 or Novel Coronavirus) emergency.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

May 4, 2020

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

SUBJECT: CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19 OR NOVEL
CORONAVIRUS) GUIDANCE RELATED TO ON GOING CHILD
CARE FOR AT-RISK POPULATIONS

REFERENCE: [ACL 19-18 \(February 20, 2019\)](#); [Executive Order N-33-20](#);
[Executive Order N-45-20](#); [Executive Order N-47-20](#)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWD) regarding child care services for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program), and other at-risk populations during the Coronavirus Disease or (COVID-19 or Novel Coronavirus) emergency.

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order directing all residents to immediately heed current State public health directives to stay home, except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors and additional sectors as designated critical by the State Public Health Officer to protect health and well-being of all Californians. In accordance with this order, the State Public Health Officer issued a list of [“Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers”](#) to help state, local, tribal, and industry partners as they work to protect communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. Listed among the essential critical infrastructure designation were workers who provide support to vulnerable populations to ensure their health and well-being including child care providers.

As we face the COVID-19 crisis as a state and in our families, we must support our most vulnerable populations. This includes meeting the immediate needs of children who are placed at even greater risk for long term adverse effects on their physical, emotional and cognitive development during this time. Early learning and care programs are a critical support and source of continuity for at-risk children and their participation should not be interrupted if possible.

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Access to subsidized child care is essential to maintaining safety and stability for vulnerable children. Therefore, children at-risk should continue receiving child care at the request of the caregiver and/or parent even if the caregiver and/or parent are not employed in jobs designated as essential. More information regarding subsidizing child care priorities in the California Department of Education (CDE) [Management Bulletin 20-06](#).

If a Bridge Program voucher is scheduled to expire (either at the 6- or 12-month limit) during this emergency period, counties have the discretion to extend voucher services for an additional 60 days. This flexibility is in place until June 30, 2020, or when the State of Emergency has officially ended, whichever is earlier. When the family secures a long-term child care placement, the Bridge Program voucher shall be terminated.

Guidance on how to prioritize enrollment for children of essential critical infrastructure workers will be posted on the CDE Early Learning and Care Division COVID-19 resources website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/elcdccovid19.asp>. Additionally, counties should refer child care providers and families to guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#), and [local health departments](#) for direction on how to provide care that is safe. The California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division has developed specific guidance for child care providers on group size, ratios, social distancing, and how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in child care settings which can be found in [PIN 20-06-CCP](#).

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the Child Care Intergenerational Services Bureau at (916) 657-2144 or at ChildCareBridge@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division