

SENATE, No. 2898

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Addiego

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Emergency Child Care Assistance Program for School Staff in DHS throughout duration of coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/14/2020)

1 **AN ACT** establishing the Emergency Child Care Assistance Program
2 for School Staff.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. There is hereby established in the Department of Human
8 Services, with the cooperation of the Department of Children and
9 Families, the Emergency Child Care Assistance Program for School
10 Staff. The goal of this program shall be to support the child care
11 costs of teachers and other school staff throughout the duration of
12 the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. To effectuate this program,
13 the departments shall:

14 (1) implement and administer an application process, provided
15 that the departments shall not establish an income standard to
16 determine eligibility for the program;

17 (2) determine if an applicant is eligible for the program as a
18 school teacher, educator, administrator, or support professional,
19 such as cafeteria worker, security guard, and paraprofessional, who
20 requires child care for a dependent in order to perform the
21 responsibilities of the applicant's job;

22 (3) pay the following rate per week directly to participating
23 child care agencies for each applicant determined to be eligible for
24 the program: infant weekly rate equals \$450.35; toddler weekly rate
25 equals \$415.70; preschool weekly rate equals \$415.70; and school-
26 age weekly rate equals \$336.00. The school-aged rate shall include
27 dependents who are between the ages of five and 13, or the ages of
28 five and 19 if the dependent has special needs, as certified by the
29 Department of Human Services;

30 (4) apply for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be
31 necessary to implement the program and to continue to secure
32 federal financial participation for subsidized child care programs for
33 qualified low-to-moderate income households; and

34 (5) provide for any other actions as deemed necessary to
35 implement the provisions of this section.

36

37 2. There is appropriated such amounts as determined by the
38 Commissioner of Human Services and the Commissioner of
39 Children and Families as necessary for the implementation of this
40 act. The amounts appropriated shall be funded first from assistance
41 provided from the federal government, to the extent not prohibited
42 by federal law. The remaining amounts necessary to fund the
43 provisions of this act shall be appropriated from the General Fund.

44

45 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire at the
46 end of the Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency
47 declared by Executive Order No. 103 of 2020 regarding the
48 coronavirus disease 2019.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes the Emergency Child Care Assistance Program for School Staff in the Department of Human Services, with the cooperation of the Department of Children and Families. This program is similar to the Emergency Child Care Assistance program administered by the departments in April, May, and June of 2020 for essential workers, except that the goal of this program is to support the child care costs of teachers and other school staff throughout the duration of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. As schools open for the 2020/2021 school year with remote and hybrid learning plans in place, school staff are faced with difficult decisions in performing their work duties, while also caring for their children. The sponsor's intent is for this bill to support schools and school staff by providing financial assistance regarding the child care needs of staff.

To effectuate this program, the bill directs the departments to:

1) implement and administer an application process, provided that the departments shall not establish an income standard to determine eligibility for the program;

2) determine if an applicant is eligible for the program as a school teacher, educator, administrator, or support professional, such as cafeteria worker, security guard, and paraprofessional, who requires child care for a dependent in order to perform the responsibilities of the applicant's job;

3) pay the following rate per week directly to participating child care agencies for each applicant determined to be eligible for the program: infant weekly rate equals \$450.35; toddler weekly rate equals \$415.70; preschool weekly rate equals \$415.70; and school-age weekly rate equals \$336.00. The school-aged rate includes dependents who are between the ages of five and 13, or the ages of five and 19 if the dependent has special needs, as certified by the Department of Human Services;

4) apply for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to implement the program and to continue to secure federal financial participation for subsidized child care programs for qualified low-to-moderate income households; and

5) provide for any other actions as deemed necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

The bill appropriates such amounts as determined by the Commissioner of Human Services and the Commissioner of Children and Families as necessary for the implementation of the bill. The amounts appropriated are to be funded first from financial assistance provided through the federal government, to the extent not prohibited by federal law. The remaining amounts necessary to fund the provisions of the bill are to be appropriated from the General Fund.

S2898 RUIZ, SINGLETON

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1 The bill is to take effect immediately and expire at the end of the
2 Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency declared by
3 Executive Order No. 103 of 2020 regarding the coronavirus disease
4 2019.