



Alternative Payment Program

Children learning, parents earning, communities growing!

September 30, 2020

COVID-19 Update #5

On September 18, 2020, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 820 which made temporary law changes to the Alternative Payment program in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The California Department of Education has provided guidance to Alternative Payment Programs regarding these program changes which are outlined in this notice.

These changes will provide continued support to parents and child care providers and are effective until June 30, 2021, or until funds run out. If CDA or the State determine funding is insufficient to reimburse providers for the full fiscal year based on these changes, CDA will notify providers and parents as soon as possible.

Attendance records and Missing Parent Signatures

In situations where a parent is unavailable or unable to sign the monthly attendance record **due to the COVID-19 pandemic** providers may submit the original attendance record to CDA for reimbursement.

When a parent is unable to sign the attendance record due to COVID-19 providers **MUST:**

- Attempt to collect the parent's signature on the monthly attendance record and maintain records of their attempts. These records must be kept on file, by the provider, in the event a CDA or State representative requests to review the documentation.
- Write on the attendance record "**Parent unavailable to sign due to COVID-19**".
- Attest and sign the attendance record that the provider has made attempts to contact the parent and that the parent was not available for signature due to COVID-19. *(CDA attendance records will be updated to reflect this statement in the provider signature section)*

Parent signatures remain a requirement in all other situations and warning letters will be sent if signatures are missing and it is not noted on the attendance record the signature is missing due to COVID-19.

Reimbursement for school-age children

Senate Bill 820 officially allows Alternative Payment Programs to reimburse child care providers for services (child care and supervision of remote learning) they provide during the time a school-age child is participating in distance learning.

- **CDA will reimburse based on the child 's maximum certified non-school (vacation) schedule**

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If a school-age child is participating in a hybrid model (combination of in-person instruction at the child's school and distance learning) the provider may only be reimbursed for the time the child is not receiving in-person instruction at the child's school and is in the provider's care.

- **CDA will reimburse based on the child's maximum certified school and/or vacation schedule whichever is highest based on the care used (in-person and distance learning)**

Parents may voluntarily report if their child has returned to in-person instruction (whether it be full time or part time) to ensure their child care provider is reimbursed correctly and the correct family fees are assessed. Parents who would like to report a change should contact their Child Care Eligibility Specialist and CDA will update their authorized child care schedule.

Reimbursement to be based on certified need regardless of attendance

As a reminder, CDA will continue to reimburse based on each child's certified need regardless of attendance as follows:

- For children certified with a variable schedule, reimbursement shall be based on the maximum authorized hours of care as reflected on the certificate. The actual reimbursement will be the provider's invoiced amount or the RMRC, whichever is less.
- For children with a license-exempt provider, reimbursement shall be based on the maximum authorized hours of care as reflected on the certificate. The actual reimbursement will be the provider's invoiced rate or the RMRC, whichever is less.
- For children certified with a set schedule, policies have not changed, reimbursement shall be based on the maximum authorized hours of care as reflected on the certificate. The actual reimbursement will be the provider's invoiced amount or the RMRC, whichever is less.

14 non-operational (closure) days due to COVID-19 (Effective September 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

All providers may be reimbursed for up to 14 non-operational (closure) days if they are required to close due to a state or local public health order or other official guidance related to COVID-19. These 14 COVID-19 related closure days are in addition to the 10 non-operational days currently allowed for providers who have contractual terms requiring non-subsidized families to pay for closures days.

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To receive reimbursement for a COVID-19 related non-operational closure day providers **MUST:**

- Report to their Provider Specialist the dates they are closed due to COVID-19
- Note on the attendance records the COVID-19 related closure days with “**Closed due to COVID-19**”

Alternate Providers when the Primary Provider is closed due to COVID-19

- A parent may use an Alternate provider if their primary provider has to close due to COVID-19. The parent must notify their Childcare Eligibility Specialist immediately to request an Alternate Provider. CDA is not able to approve child care retro-actively, including an alternate provider when needed due to COVID-19.

Family Fees Waived for Families Sheltering in Place

Effective September 2020 Family Fees are waived **ONLY** for families who shelter in place for the whole month and do not use child care. At this time CDA has not received guidance on how to implement these limited waivers and providers must continue to collect family fees for September for all families who are assessed a family fee and attending their child care program.

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