

Child Care

This page contains resources for both parents and child care providers related to services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Read on for more information that may fit your needs, including answers to frequently asked questions.

Child Care Services plans, implements, and coordinates activities and programs to ensure quality, and the health and safety of children in licensed care. Child Care Services includes Child and Adult Care Licensing, Child Care Payment Assistance (Smart Steps and the Child Care Certificate Program), Child Care Assessment and other partner programs.

***NEW* COVID-19 Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance Program**

The COVID-19 Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program is designed to help support essential workers so they can stay on the job during the COVID-19 emergency. Through payment assistance and a network of temporary care locations, parents who work as essential employees can access child care at no cost, during the COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency until June 15, 2020.

To be eligible for the program, parents must be employees of a healthcare entity, law enforcement, first responders (EMS, Fire Departments, etc.), corrections officers, military, activated national guard, human and social services workers, postal workers, transportation employees, restaurant workers or grocery workers. [Click here for an expanded list of eligible employee categories.](#)

After an essential employee enrolls in the program, TDHS will make arrangements to pay for child care at the TDHS licensed program where the child is served.

TDHS is partnering with the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs in Tennessee to establish free child care for **school-aged children** of essential workers. Through this partnership, the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs will establish a network of temporary/emergency child care locations across the state. Essential employees with school aged children who need care will be able to register at these locations and access care at no charge during the COVID-19 state of emergency.

For additional information: tn.gov/humanservices

Child Care information for parents and for providers