



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

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Brian P. Kemp
Governor

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April 1, 2020

Announcing New CAPS Priority Group: Essential Services Workforce

In response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has established a new priority group for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) effective April 1, 2020: Essential Services Workforce.

The Essential Services Workforce Priority Group was created by CAPS to support certain members of Georgia's workforce during the public health emergency. This support will help essential workers pay for child care so they can help stop the spread of COVID-19 and serve the medical needs of Georgians. To help determine eligibility for this new priority group, Georgia's CAPS program has identified the occupations below as belonging to the *essential workforce*. (Other entities may define *essential workforce* differently.) Families who qualify for the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group, and meet other CAPS eligibility requirements, will be eligible to receive child care subsidy for three months and potentially longer if the COVID-19 public health emergency continues.

Essential Services Workforce Priority Group

The Essential Services Workforce, as defined by DECAL, includes those employed in the critical job categories below.

- **Law enforcement, public safety, and first responder personnel** (including police officers, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, 9-1-1- call center staff, dispatchers, and National Guard)
- **Medical personnel who provide direct care to patients and the personnel who support direct care to patients** (including sanitation staff, lab technicians, and reception staff)
- **Pharmacy personnel** (including pharmacists, technicians, pharmacy assistants)
- **Child care personnel**

To be determined eligible for CAPS under the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group, families must:

- Complete the [Essential Services Workforce Application](#).

- Provide verification from current employer verifying applicant's occupation, job title, and description of duties. The verification should also include the employer's name and contact information.
- Meet and verify the following eligibility requirements:
 - Family's income cannot exceed 50% of the state median income (SMI). [See Appendix A – Maximum Income Limits.](#)
 - Parents must participate in state-approved activities (including employment, education, or combination of employment and education) for an average of 24 hours per week.
 - Parents must provide proof of their identity.
 - Families must be Georgia residents.
 - Children must be 12 years of age or younger, or 17 years of age or younger with qualifying disabilities.
 - Children must be a U.S. citizen or lawfully admitted qualified alien and meet immunization requirements.
 - Families may receive a **grace period** of up to 90 days from the date of their application to provide verification for child's citizenship and immunization. The grace period for providing verification will not postpone the eligibility determination. However, if the verification documents are not received by the end of the 90-day grace period, the case will be determined ineligible for ongoing child care services.

Payment Authorizations

CAPS will pay up to the state maximum reimbursement rate for each eligible child, less the family fee (refer to [Appendix C – CAPS Reimbursement Rates](#) and [Appendix D – CAPS Family Fee](#) for details) for three months.

For more information, families should call 1-833-4GACAPS (1-833-442-2277).