

UPDATE: 12/17/2020

Cherokee Nation Child Care & Development Subsidy Program COVID-19 Emergency Policy for **Parents**

Note: Revisions since October 22, 2020 are highlighted in yellow

POLICY

The Cherokee Nation Child Care & Development Subsidy Program will implement the following emergency policies beginning March 16, 2020 to remain in effect until **February 28, 2021**. These policies have been enacted due to the State of Emergency regarding COVID-19. **This policy and any extensions or changes to this policy and/or the effective dates will be posted on www.childcare.cherokee.org.**

Office locations were closed to the public until June 1, 2020. Limited staff returned to offices on June 1, 2020 and will continue to work staggered days until notified by Cherokee Nation Administration. Subsidy staff will continue to process client applications, recertifications, and other changes by email, fax and phone. **If you choose to come to an office location, please call in advance to insure staff are available.** *See staff contact information on page 2.*

Parents/guardians:

- 1) **ELIGIBILITY:** Clients unable to work or go to school as a result of illness and/or work/school closures will maintain their subsidy eligibility through June 30, 2020. All clients (*including new applicants*) will be able to complete applications by email and phone. Caseworker contact information is listed at the end of this policy.

Effective as of July 1, 2020 – Due to COVID-19 affecting our lives longer than anticipated, Subsidy must track and update files for **clients who are not working**. Clients should inform their Subsidy Caseworker ***immediately*** when there is a change in work status by email or phone as soon as possible. Caseworkers will place clients not working on *Job Search Status* effective the date the client became unemployed and go over the *Job Search Status* criteria.

- 2) **RECERTIFICATION:** Subsidy caseworkers will work with clients regarding child care recertification to determine if a time extension is necessary due to the pandemic and or work/school closures. Clients receiving a recertification notice who have had a work layoff or school closure, should contact their caseworker so we can extend your child's subsidy agreement or start a new agreement.

Effective July 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 - clients who have had a work closure or layoff may still recertify. Clients should inform their Subsidy Caseworker when recertifying and Caseworkers will implement a *Job Search Agreement*. Caseworkers will go over the *Job Search Agreement* details with the client.

Upon employment, clients must submit updated income documentation. If the client remains unemployed, at the end of the *Job Search Agreement*, eligibility will be determined on a case by case basis.

- 3) **CHILD ATTENDANCE:** Children will not be held to a minimum attendance requirement for Child Care Providers to receive payment during the months of March 2020 through **February 2021**. (School Age Children must meet different criteria – See #7 below)
- 4) **EMERGENCY ADD-ON RATE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS (STIMULUS FUNDS):** For the months of **April 2020 - June 2020**, Providers will receive the emergency add-on rate (\$10/day) per child, regardless of attendance, as long as they are open for 15 business days per month.

For the months of **July 2020 through February 2021**, Providers will receive the emergency add-on rate (\$10/day) when the child attends 8 days or more during the month and the provider is open at least 15 business days. *Child Care Providers may not charge clients for the \$10 add-on should the child not meet the attendance requirements for the emergency add-on rate.*

- 5) **PROVIDER CHANGES:** Subsidy will allow a temporary change of a Provider or an addition of a secondary Provider (if needed due to COVID-19) to meet your child care needs. Copayments to secondary Providers will be made by the Subsidy program. Parents must contact their subsidy caseworker for prior approval.
- 6) **COPAYMENTS:** The parent copayment to Providers will be made by Subsidy for the months of April 2020 through February 2021.
- 7) **SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN:** Clients needing child care for school age children should call/email their caseworker to discuss the child's approval status.
- Effective May 1, 2020 all school age children will go to full time status at their child care facility. If you are keeping your child home due to COVID after May 1, 2020 or will not need child care after May 1, 2020 please notify your caseworker immediately.
 - **Effective August 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 – School age children must be in attendance at their child care facility for a minimum of 8 days to be considered full time. All other schedules will be paid based on actual attendance.**
- 8) **BILLING FORM SIGNATURES:** Parents USING care MUST sign and date billing forms at the end of the month. Clients choosing to keep their children home or quarantined will not be required to sign the monthly billing forms, however Providers must write in the reason the parent was unable to sign with the words "COVID Emergency" in the parent signature line.

Subsidy Caseworkers Contact Information

Tahlequah Office:

andrea-cloud@cherokee.org or (918) 772-7022 or (918) 453-5061
donna-whitener@cherokee.org or (918) 772-7033 or (918) 453-5067

Sallisaw Office:

pauline-pettit@cherokee.org or (918) 772-7000 or (918) 775-6226

Pryor Office:

kim-bobb@cherokee.org or (918) 718-5753

Catoosa Office:

davina-jordan@cherokee.org or (918) 316-5295 or (918) 266-5626

Subsidy Supervisor:

alicia-ingram@cherokee.org or (918) 453-5075 or (918) 822-2461