

# Dept. of Children and Families: Additional child care counts payment programs coming soon

Posted on Thursday, Apr 8, 2021

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The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is launching another round of the Child Care Counts Payment programs to support Wisconsin's early care and education community. The programs will consist of two application periods, with the first period opening on Monday, April 19, 2021.

Funding for [new rounds of the Child Care Counts program](#) is provided by the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) of 2021. Wisconsin received \$148.8 million through CRRSA, credited to the state's Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) award. [DCF was granted approval to administer the Child Care Counts programs by the Joint Committee on Finance.](#)

"Wisconsin continues to set a strong example for other states when it comes to valuing early care and education," said DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson. "The past year solidified for families how important access to quality, affordable child care is to their daily lives, as well as our state's economy."

Each round of the new Child Care Counts: COVID-19 Response and Relief Payment Program will be distributed through two programs targeting the challenges early care and education providers are facing. Details about each program can be found below:

**Payment Program A - Providing Safe, Healthy, and High-Quality Child Care Opportunities** is intended to ensure that high-quality care is available across the state, specifically at younger ages where reasonable alternatives to child care do not exist.

**Payment Program B - Funding Staff Recruitment and Retention Efforts** is designed to support the costs associated with recruiting and retaining high-quality staff.

A total of \$60 million in funds will be available during the first period, with an additional \$46 million during the second funding period. Programs are open to child care programs that are currently open or temporarily closed, and are designed to support the need for increased access to high-quality child care slot availability. The application process will be similar to previous rounds of Child Care Counts Payment Programs. Additional program details will be available on the department's website beginning Friday April 16, 2021. The application period will open April 19, 2021, and close April 30, 2021. All eligible providers are encouraged to apply.

In addition to the Child Care Counts: COVID-19 Response and Relief Payment Program periods, DCF was also authorized by JFC to support early care and education providers through additional, new initiatives. Those include: a technology access program, a workforce recruitment and retention program, additional funding for shared services networks, a program for business to purchase child care slots, and improved workforce training and communications mechanism. Additional details about these programs are forthcoming.

To learn more about DCF, visit [www.dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov) and follow @WisDCF on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). [Data on provider payments from previous rounds of Child Care Counts programs can be accessed online.](#)