



Office of Children and Family Services

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE
Commissioner

March 16, 2020

Dear Commissioners:

This e-mail is to inform local social services districts that districts can expand the child care services they provide to families affected by the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, for the duration of the disaster emergency – provided that the district continues to have funds available under either the district's New York State Child Care Block Grant or any local funds appropriated for such purpose.

Districts may select from the following options: extend the eligibility period, expand the definition of a child needing protective services, expand the number of allowable absences, expand the number of program closures, extend eligibility up to 85% of the state median income level, waive family shares, and make other requests related to eligibility and/or administration of the child care subsidy program. The choice of any of these options will require that the district amend its Child and Family Services Plan. In order to expedite amendment submission and approval, OCFS has streamlined the amendment process for those districts affected by the disaster, for the duration of the emergency period.

Each district is responsible for evaluating which waiver(s) apply to each individual family, child, or provider's situation on a case-by-case basis. Waivers will be valid for a period of 30 days, and districts will be required to resubmit a new waiver request to extend the waiver period unless directly notified by OCFS that an existing waiver is being extended. Waiver requests can be submitted using the attached form via email to ocfs.sm.districtsupport.subsidy@ocfs.ny.gov or by fax to (518) 474-9617 Attn: Merideth Infantino.

We commend you and your staff for your extraordinary efforts in continuing to serve children and families during this challenging and difficult time. We at OCFS stand ready to assist in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janice Molnar". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Janice Molnar, Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services