

Department of Education/Office of Early Learning Q & A Guidance – April 13, 2020 Child Care Services for First Responders and Health Care Workers

The Florida Department of Education's Office of Early Learning along with local early learning coalitions throughout the state are prioritizing childcare for first responders and health care workers. Child care services for these personnel will be provided regardless of income.

School Readiness Program

1. Q: What is the School Readiness Program?

A: School Readiness is a statewide program that offers financial assistance for qualifying families for childcare.

Eligibility Requirements and Application Process

2. Q: What are the eligibility requirements for first responders and health care workers to receive care?

A: Florida has created a referral process, through employers, to apply for early child care services. The eligibility requirements are that the child is a U.S. citizen or qualified alien, the family resides in Florida and one or both parents are employed as a first responder or health care worker.

3. Q: What are the ages for children to receive care?

A: Children between the ages of birth up to 13 years are eligible.

4. Q: How long will services last?

A: Services will be authorized for three months or less. The continued need for child care will be reevaluated prior to the end of services.

5. Q: Will parents have to pay for a portion of care?

A: In most cases, child care providers may charge some additional fees for services.

6. Q: How do first responders and essential health care personnel apply for this service?

A: First responders and health care personnel can receive the available application (referral) from their employer's Human Resources department. Once approved by the employer, the parent creates a [Family Portal Account](#), completes an online application and uploads the referral form.

The early learning coalition will approve the application and the parent can select their child care provider through the Family Portal.

Services and Selection of Child Care Provider

7. Q: Which child care providers are accepting children for care?

A: Parents can request a list of available providers from their [local early learning coalition](#).

8. Q: How can I find out about licensing inspection reports?

A: Florida's Department of Children and Families has reports listed publicly online:
<https://cares.myflfamilies.com/PublicSearch>

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