Early Childhood Provider Town Hall

Discussion on COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan and Federal Relief Funding

Grace B. Hou, Secretary
Housekeeping
Welcome & Overview

• Welcome by Secretary Grace B. Hou

• Overview of Today’s Webcast

• Who is on the call today?

• Introduction of new Associate Director for Early Childhood, IDHS
Remarks by Bethany Patten

Audience for Today’s Webcast

Guest Presenters

• Theresa Hawley
• Lori Weiselberg
• Bethany Patten
Overview of the State of Early Learning

• Child Care
• Early Intervention
• Home Visiting
• Pre-K and Head Start
• Role of CCRRs
Child Care Today in Illinois

- Most providers are open and providing care
- Providers are implementing important health and safety precautions, and these have been largely successful in preventing COVID transmission in child care settings
- Group sizes and ratios are now back to pre-pandemic levels
- However, enrollment continues to be down considerably for many providers, especially:
  - Infants and toddlers
  - Centers
  - Providers in the Chicago Metro region
Early Learning Continues in New Ways

- Early Intervention has been successfully implementing Live Video Visits ("Telehealth"), as well as some in-person services
  - Participation in EI and referrals for services are down significantly
- Home Visiting has largely been done virtually since March
  - Learning where this works well for families, as well as where in-person is really needed
- Preschool for All and Head Start have been a mix of in-person, hybrid or all remote this school year
  - Enrollment is down, especially for three-year-olds
- The P-20 Council and Early Learning Council are helping the State think through what will be needed to support re-engagement in these critical early learning services in the coming months and years
COVID-19 Vaccine: the Light at the End of the Tunnel
Overview Of Early Vaccine Distribution

- Limited vaccines coming into the State
- Instituted a phased distribution for priority populations that seeks to balance the goals of:
  - Preventing Illness/Death and
  - Preserving Societal Functioning

- Phase 1a – Health Care Workers, Long Term Care/Congregate Care
- Phase 1b – Over 65 years old and Front-Line Essential Workers
Supply Expected to Increase in the Coming Weeks

- State will quickly move to Phase 1b population
- Key Provider Partners
  - Local Health Departments
  - Large Pharmacy Chains
  - Other examples: Hospitals, Community Health Centers, Large Employers, National Guard
Vaccine for the Early Childhood Workforce

In Phase 1b, when your community announces it is providing vaccine to teachers/essential workers, **this includes early childhood providers** who are unable to work remotely (or who are preparing to return to in-person services), such as:

- Home child-care provider (licensed or license-exempt)
- Child-care teachers, school-age providers, assistants, and support staff
- Early intervention providers
- Home visitors

Note: Please keep your Gateways Registry profile up to date—this is one important way we will provide updated information.
Safety is top priority - large clinical trials proved the vaccines receiving EUA to be safe and effective.

Efficacy - Pfizer and Moderna Vaccines 95% effective

Side Effects - None of the vaccines contain live virus; the vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID. Mild flu-like symptoms/fever is a normal sign that your body is building protection.

Cost - Vaccine is purchased by the US Government, distributed at no cost to the individual
Maintain Safety Precautions

The vaccine is one of the many important tools to help stop the pandemic.

Even after getting vaccinated, continue to:

- Wear a mask,
- Socially distance,
- Avoid crowds,
- Wash your hands often.
Vaccine Information: What & Where

- [www.DHS.Illinois.gov/COVIDvaccine](http://www.DHS.Illinois.gov/COVIDvaccine)
- [Illinois Department of Public Health](https://www.dhs.illinois.gov/)
  - COVID-19 Vaccination Plan, V4.0
  - Phases 1A and 1B

Vaccine FAQs: [https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/vaccine-faqs](https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/vaccine-faqs)

Vaccine Plan – also available in Arabic, Polish, Chinese, Spanish, Hindi, Tagalog


#VaxUpIL - upload a picture of yourself getting the vaccine to encourage others
Federal Relief Funding for Small Businesses 2021

Supports for **small businesses**, including child care providers, EI providers, etc.

- Paycheck Protection Program
  - New set-asides for very small businesses
  - Round 2 loans for businesses that have experienced greater than 25% loss of revenue in at least one quarter in 2020
- Economic Injury Disaster Loans
  - Simpler than PPP
  - Up to $10,000 in forgivable loan
  - New provisions allow combining with other relief like PPP
  - If you only received $1,000 previously, you may be eligible for increased amount
- Tax credits for small businesses
  - Employee Retention Credit
  - Tax credits for paid sick leave (including for quarantine) and family leave
Federal Relief Funding for Early Childhood in the Latest Package

Unprecedented level of federal funding for early childhood!

Head Start: $250 Million in additional relief funding
   This funding will be distributed directly by HHS to Head Start grantees

Education Relief
   • K-12 schools: $2.25 Billion for Illinois, 90% passed-through to local school districts
   • Set aside for private K-12 schools
   • Higher education: $706 Million, directly to institutions of higher education
   • GEER Fund: $47.8 Million – Illinois will allocate some of this to early childhood priorities

Child Care Development Block Grant: $10 Billion nationally—about $340 million for IL
   • Same flexibility that was provided in the CARES Act
   • State will need to submit its plan in the coming weeks
   • Focus: sustaining providers AND “building back better”
IDHS Policy Changes in Response to COVID 2021

Child Care Assistance Program:
- Parents pay no more than $1.25 in monthly co-pays through February 2021.
- Providers will be paid for all eligible days of child care regardless of attendance through February 2021.
- Automatic extension of eligibility for cases ending December 2020 – February 2021.

Early Intervention:
- Issuing credits for Family Participation Fee monthly installments beginning in March 2021.

Home Visiting:
- Most services remain virtual.
- Continuing to follow county-by-county mitigation plans.
Recap of the 2020 Child Care Restoration Grants Program

**Child Care Restoration Grant Payments**

- **Programs Receiving Payment:** 4,993
- **Counties Represented:** 95
- **Amount Awarded:** $290.0M
- **Percent Funding Awarded:** 100.0%
- **Pending Expenditures:** $0.0M

**Total Expenditures and Targets**

**DIA Expenditures and Targets**

**Downstate Expenditures and Targets**
2021 Federal Relief Funding - Priorities

We will build on the success of the CCRG program to continue to help sustain child care providers through the coming months
• Adjusting our approach based on what we have learned
• Awaiting federal guidance on the relief funding to understand parameters of supports allowable

Our focus will be on:
• Supporting child care providers who are open and providing care, including those that are not part of the Child Care Assistance Program
• Sustaining support through the spring and summer, with a tapering off instead of a “cliff”
• Keeping applications and reporting as simple as possible
The audio recording and Power Point slides will be available on the IDHS, INCCRRA and GOECD website later this afternoon.

The Spanish language webcast will be held today at 1:15pm.

Continue to check the websites provided earlier in this webcast re: updates on vaccine distribution.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document will be created based on all the questions submitted for today’s webcast.

https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/Resources-for-Providers.aspx

www.inccrra.org

https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx