

DRAFT - ECE Provider Conference Call #8  
July 29, 2020  
1:30pm

The call began at 1:30 p.m. by the conference operator. The operator informed the callers to press \*1 if they wished to ask a question and # if they wished to remove their question from the queue.

**Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE:** Kim welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining the today's call. She noted there would be agency updates and a Q & A period. She indicated that the following individuals would provide updates today:

**Jon Sheehan, Office of the Governor**

**Kim Klein, Director of Finance, DOE**

**Betty Gail Timm, Administrator, DOE, Office of Child Care Licensing**

**Thomas Hall, Deputy Chief, Division of Social Services, POC Office**

**Jamie Mack, Division of Public Health**

**Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor:** Jon thanked everyone for their work and commitment to the early learning field. He noted that Enhanced Reimbursement (ER) is continuing at its normal rate for August. We (Governor's Office) continues to work through the issue of schools reopening and what that will look like, as we know this will certainly impact the early learning community. Please stay tuned and look for that announcement in early August.

**Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE:** Kim thanked everyone for the work they do during these challenging times. Your dedication, resilience and passion continues to show and has been outstanding. In terms of resources, we continue to update the [Reopening Child Care Safely in Delaware guidance document](#) when possible, and will send our any updates via our listservs when available.

This morning there was a Delaware Early Childhood Council call and a provider brought up the Community of Practice sessions that Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) and DE Stars have been conducting. We want everyone to know about these sessions, which are for any licensed provider. The focus of the sessions lately has been on COVID-19, child care regulations, public health guidelines, and use of funding. Recently, there has been specific scenarios presented which has been helpful for providers. Sessions are scheduled on Mondays at 1p.m. They provide peer support, which is so instrumental to programs' success. You can attend when you can, and are not required to attend every meeting. Email [DelawareStars@udel.edu](mailto:DelawareStars@udel.edu) to get on the list to receive info about these sessions.

**Kimberly Klein, Director, Director of Finance, DOE:** Kim provided an update on Enhanced Reimbursement, including some reminders:

- ER will continue in August at the existing rate
- Programs that are eligible for ER are any licensed programs that were opened as of July 1 and who continue to remain open
- The online application will be updated for August to be paid for 4 weeks (July's payments were based on five weeks), therefore there will be an adjustment to your payment amount even if your enrollment didn't change from July to August
- The application will be available on Saturday, August 15 at 8 a.m.

- Enrollment is your POC roster number as of August 15 and any private pays paying you as of that date
- If you have questions after you received your payment, or if there is a delay or error, please send email to [enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us).

## **OCCL Update**

### **Betty Gail Timm, Administrator of the Office of Child Care Licensing, DOE:**

- Thank you to providers for the conscientious work you are doing. OCCL receives many questions from providers, which means you are thinking and wanting to get correct information in order to protect your staff, and the children and families you serve. Thank you for all that you are doing.
- OCCL moved to DOE on July 1. We are learning a great deal about our new department, and appreciate the warm welcome we have received, including the opportunity to work even more closely with the Office of Early Learning.
- OCCL continues to receive many calls from providers asking for guidance on how to handle certain COVID-19-related situations. I appreciate the assistance that I have received from Jamie Mack in being so very responsive to my questions, as I contact him with the questions when licensing specialists elevate them to me. We receive questions that are new to us nearly every day, and I appreciate the guidance that Jamie and others in DPH provide.
- Administration of medication training and certification is available online free of charge at [DEPDNow.com](http://DEPDNow.com). More persons have been trained in the last six weeks than have trained in the last six months in person.
- Because of the move to DOE, OCCL regulations needed revision. They are currently published as proposed in the Register of Regulations ([101](#), [103](#) and [201](#)). We made changes to provide clarity to existing regulations and to eliminate references to DSCYF. Comments on the proposed regulations are due on or before August 3 to DOE via mail or email. That address is: Department of Education, Office of the Secretary, Attn: Regulation Review, 401 Federal Street, Suite 2, Dover, Delaware 19901 or email to [DOEregulations.comment@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:DOEregulations.comment@doe.k12.de.us).

**Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services (DSS):** Tom thanked everyone for allowing him this time. DSS continues to provide updates to providers through our Provider Portal, Listserv, and the MyChildDE.org website, and provide direct assistance to providers through the Resource mailbox, and the POC helpline. The following is the POC Office update:

July Provider billing instructions for POC providers will be sent out this week. and is included with these minutes.

### July POC payments

- All sites that were open before July 6 will be paid 100% of July enrollment. July Enrollment is defined as July POC authorized children at 100% attendance
- Sites that remain closed during the entire month of July will not be eligible for POC payments
- Sites that opened after July 6, will be paid based on the actual POC attendance for the month of July
- The State paid the parent co-pays

### August POC

- All open providers will be paid 100% of August enrollment. August Enrollment is defined as August POC authorized children at 100% attendance
- Closed providers will not be eligible for POC payments
- DSS will be paying the parent co-pay
- Earlier this month families received a system generated letter, reporting to them their expected co-pay amount for the month of August. Since that time, the decision was made that the state will cover the co-pay costs. Families will be receiving a letter that will be mailed tomorrow telling them that they will not be responsible for paying their August co-pay. Please do not collect co-pays, and please reimburse any families that have paid in advance for the month of August

Additionally, families who are due to renew in August, have had their POC certification period extended so that they will not need to come to the office to renew their POC benefits.

As always I thank you for your hard work and dedication to Delaware's families. At DSS the POC staff are on duty and ready to accept calls and POC questions via the POC Helpline which is 302-255-9670 or via email at [POCResource@delaware.gov](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov).

### **Questions and Answers**

*(Some questions edited for ease of reading or clarity. Topics groups by subject.)*

#### **Enhanced Reimbursement**

Q. Caller – If we were overpaid for ER, how do we get this corrected?

A. Kim – Send an email to [enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us) with specific information related to the payment and a team member will assist you.

Q. Caller – The ER application will be available on Saturday, August 15, is that correct given it is not a business day?

A. Kim – Yes, that is correct. I will be available Saturday, August 15 at 8 a.m.

Q. Caller – I have concerns with the short notice that is being given to providers regarding ER availability, as it is very difficult for the child care business to plan ahead. Why is the notice so short and is there anything you can do about that in the future?

A. Tom – In early July we decided to pay for attendance, but given where we are now, leadership made the decision to pay for enrollment in August. Although a decision was made late, it ultimately benefited providers. We do understand decisions need to be made quicker for businesses.

#### **Purchase of Care (POC)**

Q. Caller – Regarding POC, when school starts will we be able to claim a full-time payment for school-age children?

A. Tom – A decision on this has not been made at this time. We will consider this issue when developing further guidance.

Q. Caller - Regarding POC parents not having to pay their co-pay, does that also include POC plus? Would they be responsible for paying their plus fees?

A. Tom – POC plus is an arrangement between your program and the parent. We have not restricted you from collecting that POC plus payment.

Q. Caller - I am a center without any POC slots, so I just received ER during Phase 1. If I was open on July 6, which was mid-week and around a holiday, would I not be eligible for ER because you said it was only available to programs that were open as of July 1?

A. Kim – That is accurate. Our reasoning is that providers were allowed to open on June 15, so the cutoff date of July 1 gave providers two weeks to open.

Q. Caller - We are noticing on the POC website that the expiration dates are off by one day, and we wonder if that is because of leap year. It is the same for new contracts as well as existing ones.

A. Tom – I will share that information with other in POC and adjust if necessary.

Q. Caller – For POC, we received an email last month advising us to send in the information/MCI number for the child to get their half days switched to full time. The status is still at half days in the system.

A. Jackie – We will need to do a correct action. This will be updated in August and the system will issue out the difference to the provider.

Q. Caller – I received my POC roster for August and it is showing that parents who have a parent fee will be responsible for that effective August 1, but is that now not true? Will the portal be updated to reflect that? And will the parents receive additional information advising the fee is \$0.

A. Tom – Yes, POC will be mailing letters to parents telling them what their co-pay amount was and that they are now not responsible to pay that co-pay. We ask that providers also share that information with parents.

Q. Caller – For POC, if you coded the system for a child to be part-time, as long as you have extended care we would be paid for a full time day?

A. Tom – On the last call we stated that if you have children who were coded part-time and were not attending, we will pay you for that child, but we would only pay part-time rate. The child could be authorized for full-time care and then we will be paying them for full-time care. In terms of school returning and what that means for rates paid, it is too early to determine how POC will handle it. If a provider is seeing the child full-time and attending school is not an option, we would pay you full-time rate.

Q. Caller – My understanding is that if parents have POC they were going to be extended without having to renew. In June and July, we had three kids kicked off POC because they couldn't get renewed. Can you please assist us?

A. Tom - Generally, that is correct. There are occasions when we have to get information from a parent to ensure children remain eligible for POC. In this case, please send the children's names and MCI number to [POCResource@delaware.gov](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov). Also, Jackie noted that there are other reasons why a parent would not be eligible, which is not able to be shared with the provider.

### **Sick Children/Quarantine Guidance**

Q. Caller - What is the guidance regarding the need for a child to quarantine if they are suspected of having COVID-19 or have similar symptoms; if they have been in close contact (within six feet for more than 10 minutes) with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19; or if they have a sibling who has tested positive?

A. Jamie – Please follow this guidance:

- If a *suspected* COVID-19 illness or if a child has been exposed to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19, they must quarantine for 14 days.
- If a child has a positive COVID-19 test result, they need to quarantine for 10 days.
- Any sibling of a child (assuming they have been in close contact within a shared home) who has COVID-19 symptoms, should be quarantined for 14 days.
- If not positive COVID-19 test but symptoms arise, the child should be seen by a healthcare provider and not return to child care until they have been symptom free for 7 days.
- Only those children who have been directly exposed to a positive case need to quarantine.

Betty Gail - If not a confirmed COVID-19 illness, OCCL regulations would prevail, which is that the child cannot return to child care setting until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours, unless the program has a more stringent policy in place (which then must be followed).

Q. Caller – If we do have a confirmed case of COVID-19 and we report it to OCCL and CDC, how quickly will we get a response? Maybe we need a flow chart to show what providers should do.

A. Betty Gail – You are not required to inform OCCL of a positive case, but we do prefer it so we can assist you through it.

Jamie – You are not a required to contact DPH or CDC. If you do have a positive COVID-19 case, the individuals would go through contact tracing through DPH. If a provider has questions about how to identify close contacts quicker, or what to do with the positive case, they can reach out to the DPH call center at 1-866-408-1899, or if there is a concern about someone violating mask orders, they can email [HSPContact@delaware.gov](mailto:HSPContact@delaware.gov).

Q. Caller – It is possible for the state to put information out to put families at ease. Some parents don't feel comfortable bringing their children to child care, so they are staying home.

A. Jon – At the Governor's press conference (July 27, 2020), there was a chart of COVID-19 cases by age, which showed that youngest children are the least susceptible to this virus. We can try to share the science of it to a little wider audience. Jon will discuss further with his team.

Q. Caller – I take children's temperatures with both a forehead and ear thermometer and get different readings, which one should I be relying on?

A. Betty Gail – Taking a temperature with an ear thermometer is prohibited under licensing guidelines. Rectal and ear temperature are only valid when taken by a licensed health care professionals. You would rely on the forehead thermometer.

### **Future Funding/Unemployment**

Q. Caller – Do you have information on a possible second stimulus package possibly including hazard pay for child care workers?

A. Jon – It is still too early to know what would be included in a second stimulus package. If we do receive something from our federal delegation, we will certainly send out that information.

Q. Caller – I required by staff to have COVID-19 test as I had two cases in my center. Everyone else came back negative. Staff is now saying that they do not have transportation or they need to stay home to care for a parent or that they are scared to come to work because of the threat of COVID-19. They are saying I should pay them and are threatening to call Department of Labor. What should I do?

A. Kim - In past months we had different categories for programs who were closed and paying staff or closed and not paying staff or open. During Phase 1, if you applied as closed and paying staff, you were responsible for paying 100% for your staff. As of July, there is only one option for which you can be paid for and that is open. While we strongly encourage you to pay your staff, there is not a

requirement to do so. Additionally, I would encourage you to reach out to the Department of Labor via their [online link](#), as they are currently experiencing high call volumes.

*(Note: Contact information for Department of Labor updated per their website.)*

### **School-Age Children/Schools Reopening/Virtual Learning**

Q. Caller - If we are a center that does not have school-aged children now, but we are receiving requests from parents who are interested in having us enroll their school-aged children for care (depending on what happens with children going to schools this fall), would we need a different license? Would we follow that 34 page document regarding Reopening Schools that was sent to districts? Do we have to register with DOE as a private school?

A. Betty Gail – You would only need an OCCL license. OCCL would need to determine if you are eligible (space, staffing) to be licensed for school-age children. Contact OCCL or your licensing specialist for more information on becoming licensed for school-age children. You would not need to follow the guidance for school districts. You would not need to register with DOE as a private school. Kim – If you decide to offer a private (kindergarten) school for school-age children separate from your child care business, then please review [DOE's Nonpublic / Home school/ Private School webpage](#) for steps to set that up. Most likely you would fall under OCCL licensing, but a full private school is an option.

Q. Caller – If school does not resume in person, are you saying that centers are not allowed to accept children for the full day unless we apply for private school status?

A. Kim - No. You potentially could accept school-age children (if not already licensed for them) through OCCL licensing. See question above.

Q. Caller – Regarding virtual learning in Delaware, is there any law against the children doing their virtual learning while in child care and having the child care provider assist them with it?

A. Betty Gail – As a family child care provider, children who are homeschooled count in the licensed capacity. However depending on what the return to school looks like, we will reevaluate to determine if a relaxation or modification of regulations is necessary. Additionally, there are restrictions on screen time while in child care - for both center and home family care - and this too might need modification.

Dr. Kimberly Krzanowski closed the meeting and recognizing that there are many scenarios that we were unable to cover today. She advised if there were any further questions to please email them to email addresses listed in the minutes. Thank you. Call concluded at 2:36 p.m.