Frequently Asked Questions
Related to Covid-19/Coronavirus
*(Revised **5-4-20**; most recent Q&A's or updated answers in **red**)*

This document is a compilation of questions that DECAL has received from child care providers, families, policy makers, and the public relating to the impact of COVID-19.

*The **most recent questions** and answers are in red font at the beginning of this document. For additional information, **scroll through** the questions and answers on **the following pages** organized by DECAL programs.*

Visit this webpage often because this document will be updated regularly as additional questions are submitted.

For Providers – Additional Resources for PPE:
A DECAL partner shared the following link as a resource for PPE and other supplies to help combat COVID-19: public facing COVID-19 Essential supplies access request page.

Governor Brian Kemp's Executive Orders Related to COVID-19

On April 23, 2020, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued an Executive Order titled *Reviving A Healthy Georgia*, effective May 1, 2020, at 12:00 a.m. through May 13, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Among other instructions, this Executive Order addresses how licensed child care learning centers and family child care learning homes will operate under Section VII Education and Children. The complete Executive Order can be found at: https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/executive-orders/2020-executive-orders.

On April 8, 2020, Governor Kemp signed an executive order **extending Georgia's public health state of emergency** through **May 13, 2020** and extending the **statewide shelter in place order** through **April 30, 2020**. All provisions of the statewide shelter in place order remain in effect.

On April 2, 2020, Governor Brian Kemp issued an Executive Order requiring Georgians to shelter-in-place to stop the spread of COVID-19. The Executive Order can be found at: https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/executive-orders/2020-executive-orders.

On March 26, 2020, Governor Brian Kemp issued an Executive Order closing public elementary and secondary schools for in-person instruction through April 24, 2020. The Executive Order can be found at: https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/executive-orders/2020-executive-orders.

At noon on March 24, 2020, an Executive Order issued by Governor Brian Kemp went into effect. The order, in effect through April 6, 2020, bans gatherings of more than 10 people unless they can always maintain spacing of at least six feet between people. The order does not distinguish between staff, children, and volunteers; any individual present is counted as part of the 10. The Executive Order can be found at: https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/executive-orders/2020-executive-orders.

Some answers to these Frequently Asked Questions have been revised in light of the Governor's Executive Orders.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Georgia's Pre-K Program

Is there additional guidance for programs regarding Work Sampling Online (WS0) for the 2019-2020 school year?
Guidance for bringing closure to WSO is included in the *Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines Addendum* posted at http://decal.ga.gov/PreK/GuidelinesandAppendix.aspx on April 21, 2020. Also, guidance for WSO closure was emailed to Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers and program directors the week of April 20, 2020.

Is there additional guidance for programs regarding close-out for the end of the Pre-K school year?
Guidance for closing out Pre-K is included in the *Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines Addendum* that was posted at http://decal.ga.gov/PreK/GuidelinesandAppendix.aspx on April 21, 2020.

When will applicants be notified about Georgia's Pre-K grant awards for the 2020-2021 school year?
Due to the public health emergency, the 2021 budget for the State of Georgia has not been appropriated. Pre-K grant agreements for the upcoming school year will be delayed until the budget is approved and signed by the Governor.

How does the Governor's Executive Order impact Georgia's Pre-K Programs?
In keeping with Governor Kemp's recent order to close Georgia's public elementary and secondary schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year**,** DECAL is **closing all Georgia's Pre-K classrooms** for the remainder of the school year.

DECAL will continue to make Georgia's Pre-K payments as scheduled. If a program is currently serving Georgia's Pre-K children and a parent requires continued child care, Pre-K funds can be used to pay for their care during the 6 ½ hour instructional day. Tuition for the 6 ½ hour instructional day may not be charged for a Pre-K child who is currently on your Pre-K roster during COVID closures.

Georgia's Pre-K lead and assistant teachers must continue to receive salary and may not be required to report to work. (However, programs are not required to pay salary for Spring Break if this conflicts with their established salary policy.)

How long is the Pre-K closure in effect?
Georgia's Pre-K programs are closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

Will programs with a scheduled Spring Break be required to pay the lead and assistant teacher for the week of Spring Break?
Programs that have a scheduled Spring Break should follow their own salary policy regarding whether teachers are paid for Spring Break.

Will Pre-K payments be paid on schedule?
Yes, DECAL will execute payments on schedule even if the state office staff are teleworking or if the state office is closed. The April payment is scheduled on or before April 13, 2020. Payments will be based on the April roster count.

Will make-up days be required due to COVID-19 closures?
At this time, teachers and students will not be required to make up days missed due to the COVID-19 closures.

Should Pre-K lead and assistant teachers be paid while Pre-K classes are closed?
Yes. Pre-K lead and assistant teachers must be paid while Pre-K classes are closed. Pre-K payments will not be adjusted for closure days due to COVID-19. Therefore, lead and assistant teachers must be paid according to the established salary agreements between the employer and employee. Changes may not be made in the salary agreement due to closures associated with COVID-19. For example, if your agreement with a lead teacher is that you will pay your lead teacher 100% of the posted salary, you may not reduce the amount the teacher now receives to 90%. Programs must arrange to process and distribute pay to Pre-K teachers.

Do I need to submit my roster even though all Pre-K classes are closed?
Yes, your roster should be submitted even though Pre-K classes are closed. Roster 4 is due by 5 p.m. on April 3. Providers are encouraged to submit their roster as soon as possible and not wait until the due date. If your roster is ready for submission, you should go ahead and submit it now.

Will my Pre-K payment be prorated if my program closes due to COVID-19?
Pre-K payments will not be prorated due to COVID-19 classroom closures. Payments will be based on roster 4 which is due by April 3rd.

Should lunch fees be charged if a Pre-K program is closed? What if a child is absent?
Meal fees for children enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K should not be charged when the Pre-K program is closed. If an individual child is absent, existing meal fee policies should be followed.

Will Pre-K payments be paid on schedule? Yes, DECAL will execute payments on schedule even if the state office staff are teleworking or if the state office is closed. The April payment is scheduled on or before April 12, 2020. Payments will be based on the April roster count.

Should Pre-K students be counted as absent on days when the Pre-K program is closed? If the program/classroom is closed, the closure should be noted on the attendance roster.

Does DECAL recommend "digital learning" days for Pre-K students? The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one hour of total screen time for children age 4. Screen time includes ALL screens including TV, laptops, and hand-held devices. DECAL does not support online learning days for Pre-K children and encourages families and Pre-K providers to limit screen time to no more than one hour a day in high quality digital content.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Child Care Licensing (CCS)

Is there a waiver/hold harmless agreement providers should have families and staff sign when they reopen to avoid getting sued if someone contracts COVID-19?
DECAL cannot give legal advice to child care providers and will not require or provide a COVID-19 waiver. If you have questions, we recommend that you check with your program's attorney or legal advisor to help you make an informed decision.

Does the CDC recommend that children age three and older wear masks?

The CDC recommends that children, age three and above, wear face masks in public places. Because child care is considered a public place, business owners can decide how to best follow the CDC's guidance in their programs. Expecting young children to keep masks on…and keeping the masks clean… presents challenges to providers. Some children, after seeing their parents wear masks, might be comfortable wearing a mask, but others may be afraid or upset by a mask. If you choose to use face masks at your facility, any mask not in use must be kept in an individual, labeled Ziplock bag to ensure it remains sanitized. All reusable masks must be washed at the end of the day.

My CPR and first aid certification will expire soon. Can I still find training?
The American Red Cross continues to publish First Aid and CPR training by approved entities at locations throughout the state on their website at: https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class. Some published trainings include additional precautions trainers are taking during the COVID-19 event. CPR training by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, the National Safety Council, and the American Safety and Health Institute are all acceptable. Also, a licensed or certified health care professional who meets the rule requirement can provide this training. CPR training is required to include hands-on training; therefore, CPR training conducted solely online does not meet the rule requirement. If you are having difficulty finding CPR training that includes the hands-on portion and the staff member's training expired on or after March 1, 2020 through the duration of the COVID-19 event, contact your Child Care Services regional consultant for guidance.

If my cafeteria has four walls, a door, and a bathroom, can it be used as a classroom?
Typically, cafeterias are high traffic areas and the central hub of a center. Providers must ensure that at any given time no more than 10 people are within this space, and if people must pass through the cafeteria to access other parts of the program, they must maintain appropriate social distancing of six feet between themselves and others as they pass through.

If the cafeteria space has not been licensed, an amendment will need to be completed and submitted for approval to your child care consultant before use. The cafeteria space is limited in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, in that no more than 10 people, including caregivers, can be present in one location. Due to a cafeteria not normally being used as a classroom, only non-diapered children can be cared for in this space. In addition, age appropriate materials and activities should be provided.

My child care program is currently doing drop-off and pick-up at the front door. How should we have families sign their children in and out each day?
The purpose of having families sign their children in and out each day is to ensure center staff can account for all children at any given time, in the event of a fire or similar type of emergency; therefore, child care programs should continue to follow a sign in/out procedure. During this time when access to facilities is limited, child care providers can sign children in and out for the parents if they are using a computer system. They can also use a tablet outside of the building during drop-off and pick-up to allow families to complete the check-in/check-out process, but the tablet would need to be disinfected after each use. A third option is to sign-in and out on paper. Programs should also maintain documentation as required by the rules and regulations. Programs can take extra precautions if pens are used by having multiple pens available. The pens should be sanitized with a disinfectant wipe or other means before another person uses the pen.

With class sizes limited to no more than 10 including teachers, if I have too many children enrolled in a classroom, how do I decide who can attend?

Although no one wants to turn away families who are enrolled or wish to enroll, child care must adhere to Governor Kemp's Executive Order of March 23, which states that no more than 10 people can gather in one location unless six feet of social distancing can be maintained. For child care, this means that classrooms can have no more than 10 people, including teachers. If demand exceeds space at a licensed or exempt program, providers must make the business decision about who they will serve by prioritizing enrollment slots. DECAL recommends giving priority to families who are essential workers, so they can provide vital services to the community in this critical time.

Can you combine classes during afterschool hours if class size, including teachers, is no more than 10?
At the current time, all public schools in Georgia are closed. Children under three (3) years of age must be housed in a separate physical area from older children except during early morning times of arrival, and late afternoon times of departure, which generally means the first and last hour of the operating day. During these times when children are mixed, the ratios for the youngest child in the group must be followed, and no more than 10 people can be in the classroom regardless of age.

Does outdoor equipment have to be disinfected between groups that use the playground?
The CDC recommends that all surfaces that are frequently touched be cleaned and sanitized regularly. DECAL recommends that play equipment be disinfected between groups.

Do adjacent playgrounds separated by fencing count as separate locations?
If the barrier between playgrounds is a barrier four feet high or higher, the playgrounds should be counted as separate spaces. However, the limit of 10 per group would still be in place, and staff should consider staggering playground times so only one group is outside at a time. If unable to stagger playground times, then staff should ensure staff and children do not gather and socialize near the fence on adjoining playgrounds.

Do we have any information about how the Governor's Executive Order might affect summer camp?
Day camps may continue to operate according to the exemption approval the program has obtained. If a program needs to modify the hours or days served, the program director may download the exemption amendment form found at
http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/ApplicationExemptionAmendment.pdf

If our center is exempt from licensing (church based; only four hours per day for children over age two), what mandate regarding pay for staff do we follow?
DECAL does not provide guidance on staff pay for programs other than Georgia's Pre-K Program. Georgia's Pre-K Program is the only program fully funded by DECAL.

Does the limit of 10 people, including children and staff, apply to playgrounds?
Yes. There can be no more than 10 individuals in a group whether it's indoors or outdoors. Although there is often enough space for six feet of social distancing on playgrounds, we know that is not the way children play or interact.

If my classroom capacity is more than 10, do I still need to limit the class size to 10 including children and staff?
Yes. To comply with the Governor's Executive Order on March 23, 2020, there can be no more than 10 people in one location. For child care learning centers, a location is a classroom with four full walls and a door. For family child care learning homes, a location is the home.

I have a staff of five (5). We all have the same expiration date for CPR/first aid, which is April 27. Will there be an extension on expiration dates?
No extensions will be provided. At least one program administrator and one staff member at the program must have current CPR/First Aid certifications.

Does a child care program have to participate in Quality Rated for their COVID-19 open/closed status and children's vacancy information to show at www.qualityrated.org?
No, ALL licensed and exempt child care program's information can be seen by the public if entered in DECAL KOALA.

Can exempt faith-based morning preschools get a waiver to be open more than 20 hours per week in the short term to make up some of the hours missed due to closures?
If a program has an exemption for ages 2-6, four hours each day, and 20 hours each week, the program is limited to providing services only for these time periods. Beyond these limits, the program is required to be licensed. If you find the need to adjust your hours of operation, contact our office so we can discuss the licensure process with you.

Will there be an extension for staff's 10-hour health and safety orientation training?
Rule .33(3) allows for completion within the first 90 days of employment. At this time, there will not be an extension. NOTE: This training is available online.

I'm a Family Child Care provider. If I accept kids of first responders, can I care for them outside of my normal hours (2nd &/or 3rd shift)?
An amendment would need to be completed to update hours of care. If those hours consist of night time care, you would need to comply with night time care rules. Also, the limit of no more than 10 individuals, including children, staff, and residents of the home, would still apply. NOTE: FCCLHs may have no more than six children for pay present at any given time, and ratios must be maintained according to the rules and regulations.

How long do we close our day cares for?
The decision to close a child care learning center or family child care learning home or remain open is up to you as a business owner. DECAL advises owners and directors to consult their local health departments and to follow all local and state ordinances in making decisions.

How do we deal with parents that do not want to pay since they are keeping their kids at home, but we are still open?

As most child care programs are private businesses, policies related to tuition and family fees are left up to the individual programs. For programs receiving CAPS, Georgia's Pre-K, and other DECAL funding, we are continuing to make payments even if children are unable to attend. We hope that continuing these funds helps programs meet current challenges and minimizes burdens on families.

I just found out that a child care center in the community tested positive for coronavirus. How many child care centers have reported coronavirus?

Specific data that links COVID-19 and specific child care centers is unavailable. Programs are encouraged to contact their local health departments and to utilize data from the Georgia Department of Public Health website to learn about cases of coronavirus in local communities/counties.

My husband was exposed to the virus through the school system last week. I closed my home day care for the remainder of this week, but I plan to re-open next week (which would be six days closed…not the recommended 14-day quarantine). Is this adequate time to re-open?
As DECAL staff are not medical experts, we strongly recommend that programs with specific questions contact their local Department of Public Health.

What should we do about staff with underlying health conditions but aren't currently showing signs of the virus or aren't sick?
Programs are advised to contact their local Department of Public Health and review all CDC guidelines related to questions about specific COVID-19 risk factors.

What recommendations does DECAL have if an exposure happens within a facility? Should we only follow the Department of Health, or does DECAL recommend a closure time frame? What should we do if a parent/teacher/child tests positive for Covid-19 once we reopen?
DECAL advises programs to contact their local Department of Public Health about possible COVID-19 exposures.

We attempted to keep our program open, but our count was very low last week. So, we had to close. I sent in my closure status to DECAL Koala but am not sure how long we will be closed. What do we do now?
Thank you for entering your information in DECAL Koala. This is helpful in tracking and measuring access to available child care. When you reopen, be sure to update your status in DECAL Koala.

I have already seen on social media where people are setting up "group babysitting groups" in someone's home. I think we will begin to see many unregulated child care situations. Does DECAL have a plan to monitor or educate the public on this?
DECAL continues to monitor and work with all licensed child care. DECAL also provides information to programs who are seeking information about regulations and possibly seeking a licensing exemption. Any reports of unlicensed child care that should be licensed will be investigated.

I was told that if I close my center, I would not get reimbursement for this month. Is this right or I won't get reimbursed for the weeks I'm closed?
DECAL is continuing to make CAPS and Georgia's Pre-K payments for participating programs, including those who are closed. In terms of tuition-based reimbursement, how and what you collect is based on your policies and is at your discretion.

The order bans all gatherings of more than 10 people unless the group can always maintain spacing of at least six feet between people. What does this mean for child care programs?
Because child care programs cannot always maintain six feet between people, group sizes must be no more than 10 people, including staff, to follow the order. NOTE: Staff: child ratios must be followed per the rules and regulations.

Does the Governor's Executive Order apply to family child care learning homes (FCCLH)?

Yes, the order applies to FCCLHs, so to comply with the order, each FCCLH must ensure that there are no more than 10 individuals present at a FCCLH at one time. This includes staff, residents of the home, family members, and enrolled children, regardless of pay status. NOTE: FCCLHs may have no more than six children for pay present at any given time, and ratios must be maintained according to the rules and regulations.

What does self-contained classroom mean?
To be considered self-contained, a classroom must be separated from other classrooms in the building by fixed walls, which can include windows/glass and doors. Large rooms split into multiple spaces using shelving units and other such dividers or partitions are not self-contained classrooms.

Additional information about self-contained classrooms: If the room has an accordion wall, the accordion wall may be used:

- if the accordion wall runs floor to ceiling with no more than a one-foot space between the top of the accordion wall and the ceiling; AND
- once the accordion wall is opened to create two self-contained classrooms, if each classroom has their own entrance, the accordion wall must always remain closed. If the room does not have two entrances, programs must ensure that at any given time no more than 10 people are within each space, and if people must pass through the room to access the other room, they must maintain appropriate social distancing of six feet between themselves and others as they pass through; AND
- there are no fire marshal restrictions to use the space as two separate rooms.

The Executive Order states that no one shall allow more than 10 persons to be gathered at a single location, if such gathering requires persons to stand or be seated within six feet of any other person. How do child care programs meet this requirement?
To meet this requirement, child care programs must ensure that groups of 10 or less children and staff are in self-contained classrooms.

Current guidelines around social distancing, primarily that individuals remain six (6) or more feet apart and that groups remain at less than 10, are hard to follow in child care settings. What are your recommendations?
We recommend that, where possible, class sizes remain at 10. We understand that six feet apart is not possible when caring for children. Therefore, it is critically important that you diligently maintain cleaning standards and implement strategies such as reducing the number of adults who can enter your program and conducting temperature checks on visitors and children.

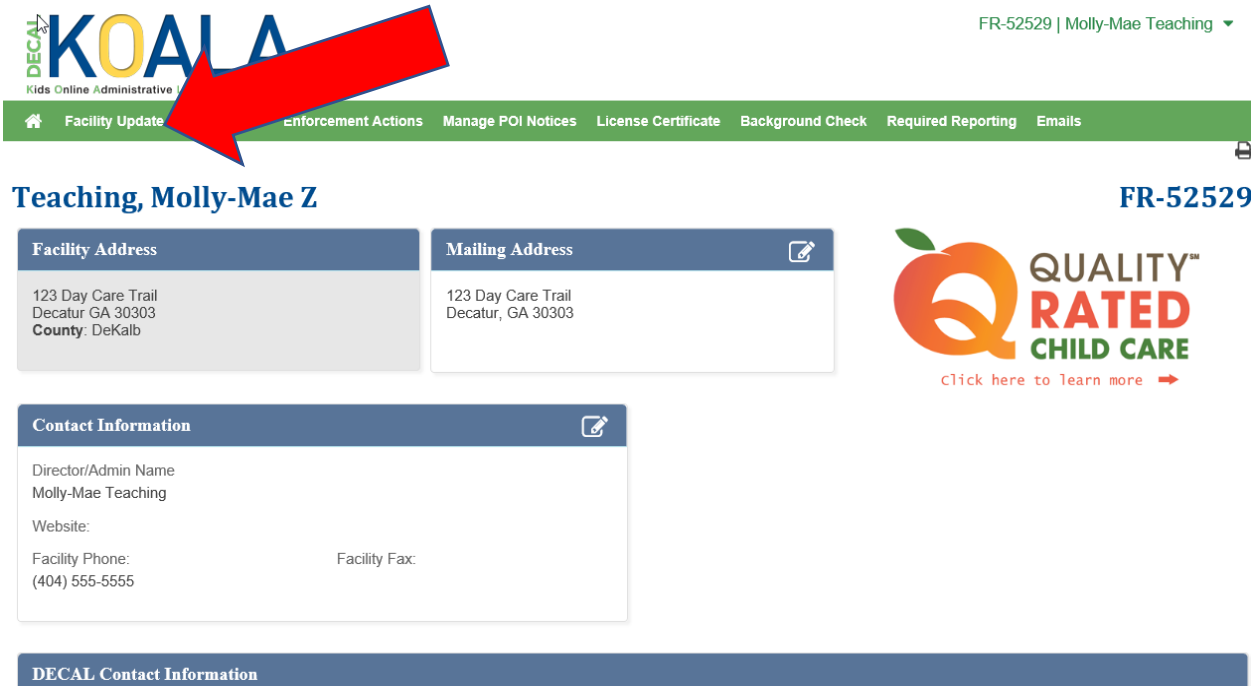
How often do I inform DECAL of my business closure status? If I have a question about how to report my status, who do I call?
If your open/closure status changes, we ask that you inform us immediately. It is important that DECAL keep up to date open/closure information. If you have a question about how your open/closure status should be noted, contact your specific child care consultant.

How do I report the operating status of my licensed or exempt child care programs?
You can use your DECAL KOALA account to report if your program is continuing to operate or if you have chosen to close your program. If you have already reported your status to your CCS consultant via email or telephone, they will enter the information in KOALA for you. If you have not yet reported this information to DECAL, follow these steps:

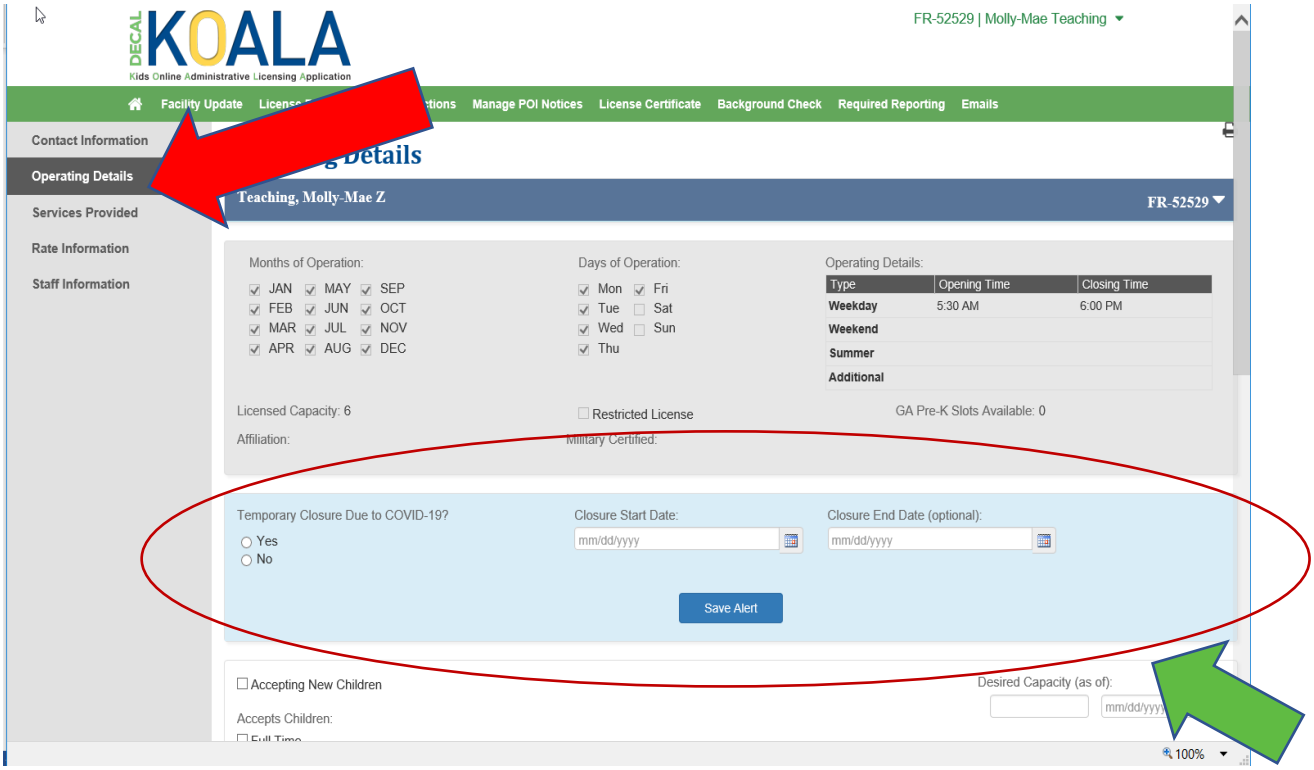
- Log in to your DECAL KOALA account at www.decalkoala.com
- From the Green Menu Bar, click Facility Update
- Click Operating Details
- Enter your program's COVID-19 info in the Blue area

Screenshot for logging into DECAL KOALA:

Once logged in Click Facility Update:



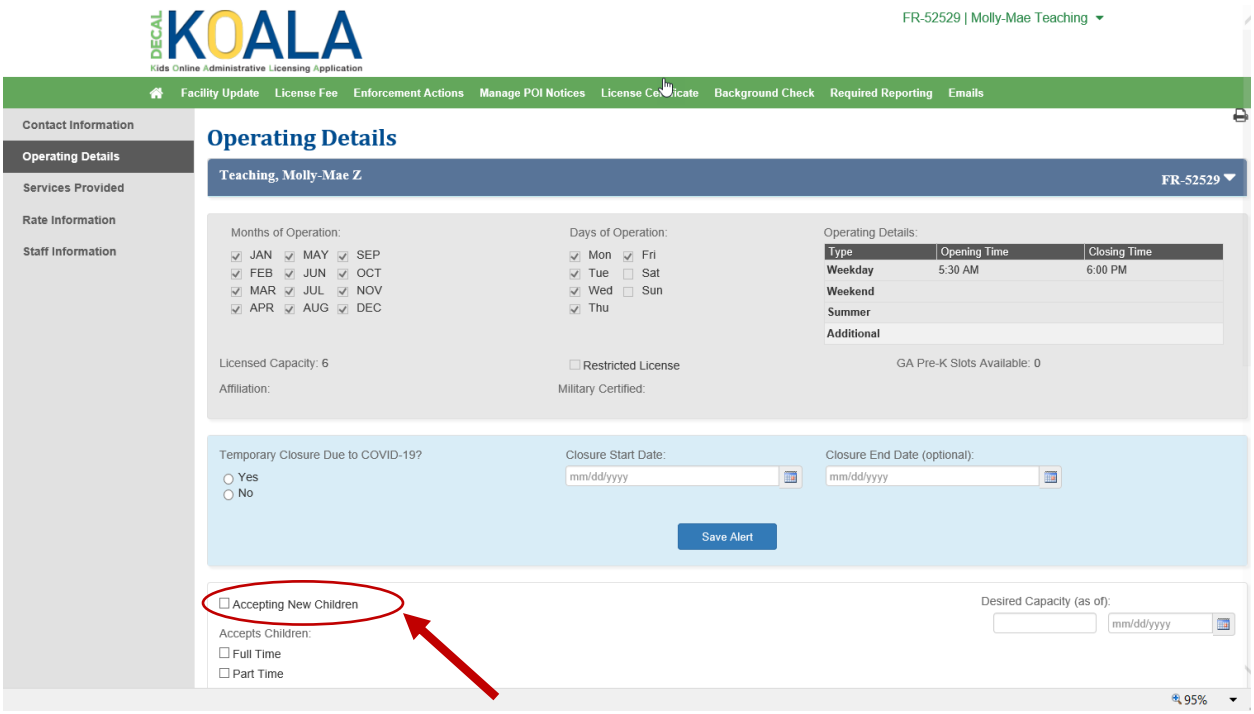
Next, click on Operating Details and enter if program is Operating or Closed:



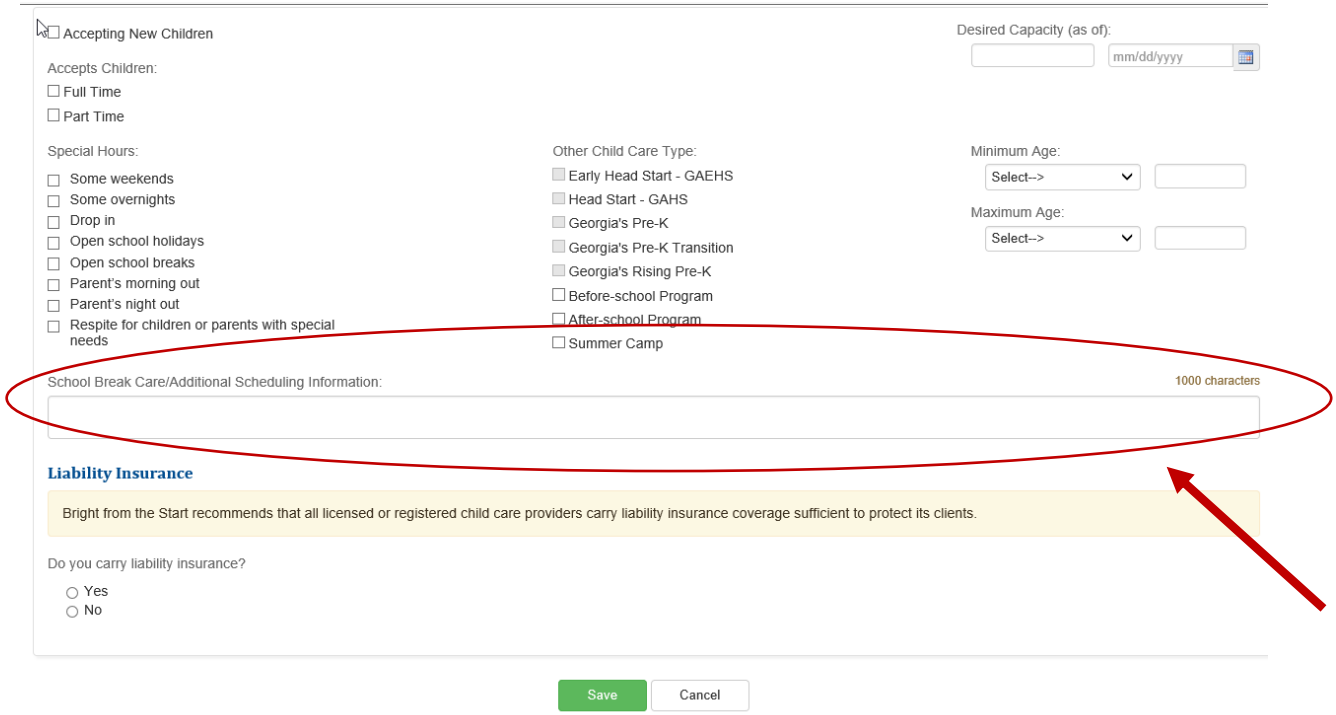
What programs have access to DECAL KOALA?
Currently, child care learning centers, family child care learning homes and license-exempt programs can create and maintain DECAL KOALA accounts. Local School Systems (LSS) and other programs with GA Pre-K, but are not licensed or license-exempt, can report closures to the call center (1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS) or to their Pre-K representative.

For programs that reported being open or closed but the dates initially reported have now changed, can I update the dates in DECAL KOALA?
Yes, please update the status of your program as it changes. Only the most current status is displayed, but the history of the changes is maintained by DECAL.

My program is open, but we are not accepting any new enrollees. Is it possible to update this information in DECAL KOALA?
Yes, you may update this information in DECAL KOALA/Facility Update/Operating Details – see screenshot below:

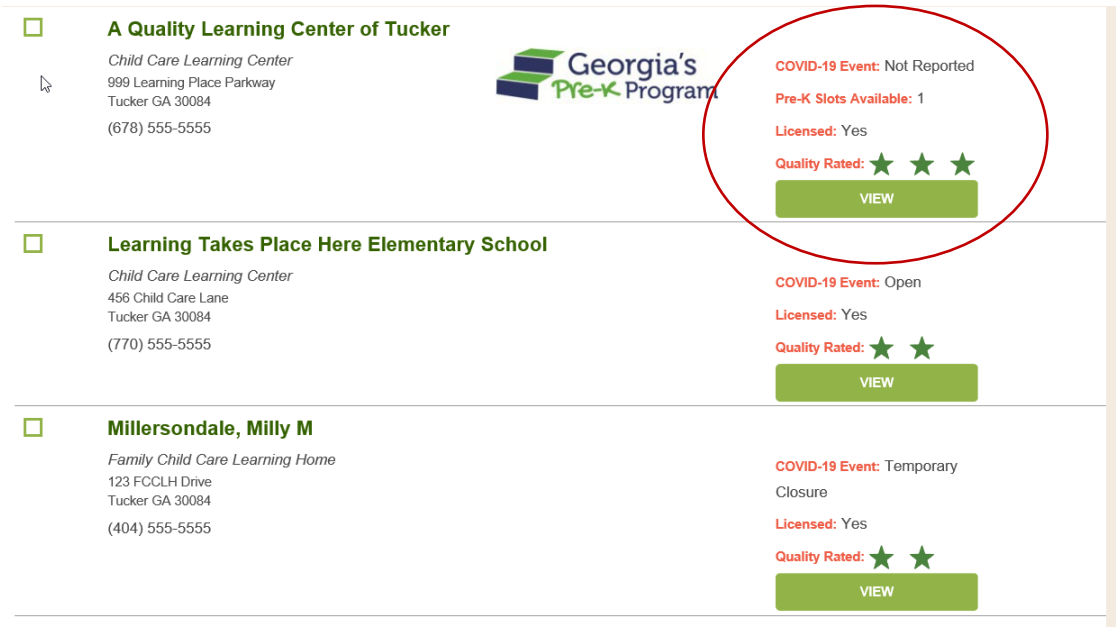


Programs can also enter information (text) in the School Break/Additional Scheduling Information – see screenshot below:

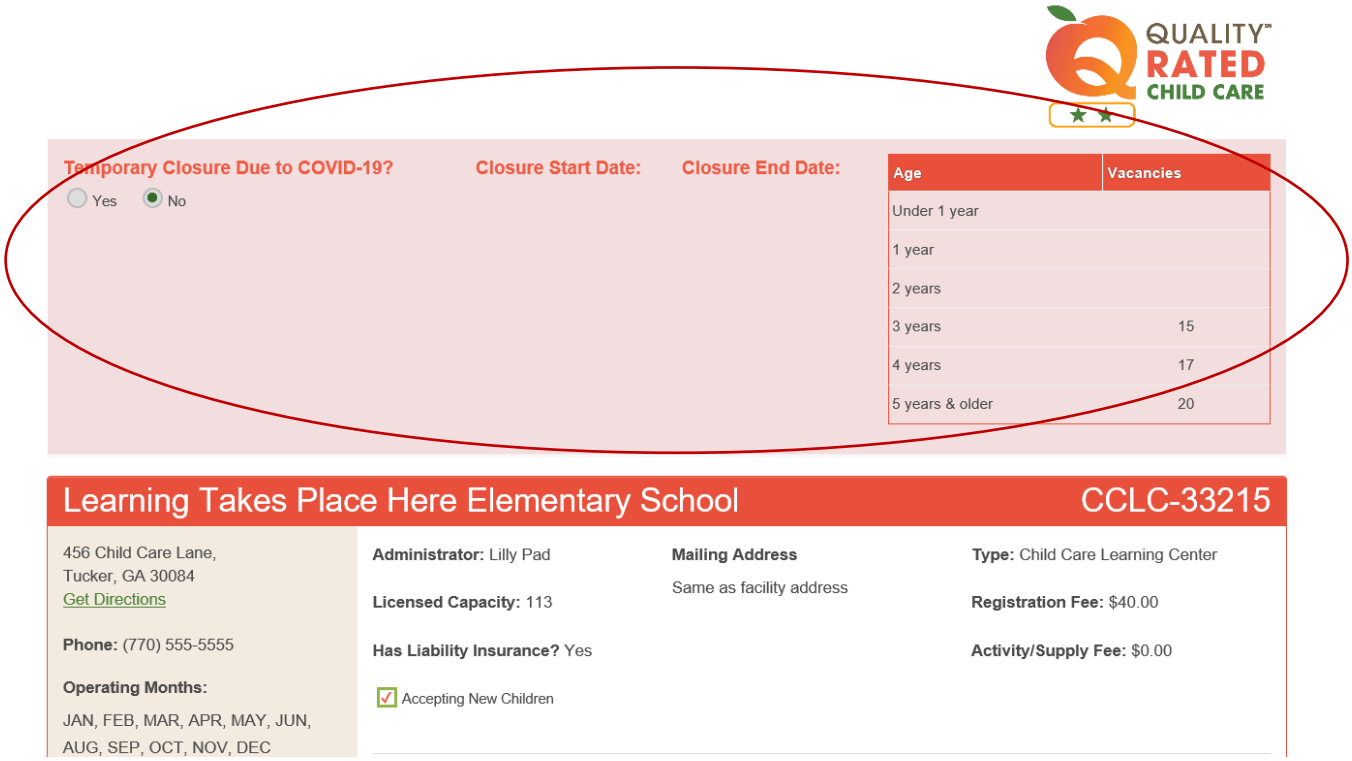


Once a program updates their information in DECAL KOALA, what does it look like when someone searches www.qualityrated.org or www.decal.ga.gov. What do they see?

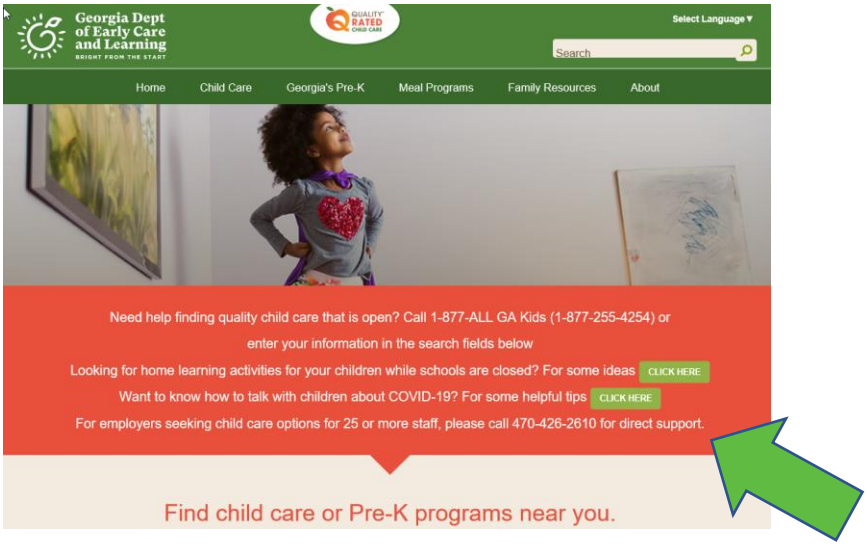
If a person enters a zip code in the search engine, the results will populate in a list that looks like this:



When the viewer selects a specific program from the list, they can click the green VIEW button to learn the operating details of the selected program; the details will vary based on what each program has reported/indicated through DECAL KOALA.



If an employer reaches out to my program seeking child care for more than 25 children or staff, and my program is unable to support them, where can I direct them?
An employer can call 470-426-2610 for direct support. This information is also listed at www.qualityrated.org.



Is there an alternative disinfectant that can be used in my facility, since there are shortages of disinfectant wipes, sprays, and cleaners?
Though commercial disinfecting wipes, sprays, and cleaners are convenient, a simple effective disinfectant can be made using bleach. This is the most recommended product for child care programs to use to disinfect surfaces.

- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
  - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against Coronavirus when properly diluted.
    - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
      - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
      - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
  - Visit the following link for products approved by the EPA to fight emerging viral pathogens: https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2 These solutions are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

Should I change any of my classroom practices because of the coronavirus?
You should continue your basic health and safety practices such as handwashing and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children and teachers. Extra care and attention should be given to ensure you and your students use proper handwashing techniques. P*roper* basic *hand washing* involves using soap and warm water to wash hands for about 20 seconds. Children and teachers should also cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and immediately dispose of the tissue in a trashcan. For additional information, visit the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for child care programs. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/checklist.html
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html

If my child care program is exposed to COVID-19, what steps should I take?

1. Immediately contact your local public health department.
2. Based on guidance from the health department, determine your next steps and notify parents, staff, and other individuals possibly impacted.
3. Contact Child Care Services Intake at 404-656-5957 within 24 hours to inform DECAL.

Did the Governor shut down schools and child care due to COVID-19?
Currently, the Governor is encouraging child care providers to make decisions about closing at the local level. If you feel it's in the best interest of the children, families, and staff at your program to close, notify your child care services (CCS) consultant.

What measures should child care providers take if parents are unable to pick up sick children?
Providers should continue with normal business operations and follow their established policy concerning children who are sick and need to be picked up.

What measures should child care providers take if a child is sick at the program?

Providers should follow normal procedures and policies.

Are additional rules and regulations going to be put into place soon to combat the spread of COVID-19?
Child care providers should continue to operate by the current child care licensing rules unless directed differently by the local health department. Pay strict attention to rules pertaining to hygiene, communicable diseases, cleaning, and sanitizing. If employees or children are sick, the CDC and the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recommend they stay home.

The CDC is discouraging large events. Does the state have a position on larger child care learning centers as they may be more vulnerable to larger spread?
DECAL has not received direction from the Department of Public Health or the Governor's Office concerning large child care learning centers. We do not anticipate decisions being made based on program capacity.

Will DECAL be providing plans and/or guidance for child care learning centers and family child care learning homes regarding distance learning? Providers should consult Georgia's state licensing rules and *Caring for Our Children* regarding best practices for activities and schedules. Distance learning for young children is not considered best practice. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommendations for children's media use. For children ages birth to 24 months, screen use is not recommended. For children ages 2 to 5, limit screen use to one hour per day of high-quality programs. Screen time includes all screens including television, videos, and any hand-held devices.

Should providers continue to promote family style dining during meals?
DECAL will continue to monitor guidance from the DPH and the CDC for additional information related to the Coronavirus. At this time, there is no additional guidance, and providers should adhere to licensing rules regarding family style dining and other dietary considerations. Providers should use best judgment regarding changes in meal service.

If public schools in an area close, will the state allow child care programs to serve those children without being screened for the virus?
If the students have not been directed to self-isolate by the local public health department, they can be served in child care programs. The child care provider should ask that question at the time of enrollment. Remember that license capacity and staff: child ratios should be maintained in accordance with state rules and regulations in all classrooms.

If my local school system has closed, but my program remains open, is it safe to accept school age children for care?
It is the child care provider's decision who to accept care. Providers can ask the family if they have been contacted by, or are being monitored by, the local health department. This information can help providers make informed decisions about accepting children into their program.

If there are two degrees of separation between someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and someone at a child care facility, does that person need to self-isolate? For example: If a teacher at a facility had lunch with a friend who was exposed to COVID-19 but is not experiencing any symptoms, does the teacher need to self- isolate?

At this time, the public health departments are requiring self-isolation only for those with direct contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Exposure to COVID-19 is contact within six feet for a duration of ten minutes or more. If you have questions about exposure, contact your local health department.

Will a child care provider be notified if an employee or a child at their facility has COVID-19?
DPH conducts a thorough investigation when COVID-19 cases are confirmed or presumed. Anyone who may have been exposed to the patient is contacted and given direction for self-isolation and testing.

Can a child care program increase their capacity to serve additional children during the outbreak?
At this time, license capacity cannot be increased. We understand that you may be asked to care for additional children during this time; however, licensing regulations regarding license capacity are designed to best protect children.

Who should I contact with any questions not addressed in this FAQ?
General questions can be directed to DECAL's main office at 404-656-5957. The receptionist will direct callers to the most pertinent division. You may also directly contact DECAL divisions at:

Child Care Licensing: childcareservices@decal.ga.gov
Exempt Programs: CCSExemptions@decal.ga.gov
Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS): 1-833-4GA-CAPS or the *Contact Us* link on our website https://caps.decal.ga.gov
Quality Rated: 1-855-800-7747, qualityrated@decal.ga.gov
Nutrition: Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov or 404-651-8193
Pre-K: prek@decal.ga.gov or call 404-651-7420

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Child Care License Exemptions

May an Exempt Summer Program open to provide services for school age children during this period of emergency?
Yes, day camp programs may choose to operate during other school breaks if the program has an approved exemption to operate a day camp for school age children.

Should exempt programs log-in and report whether they are open or closed?
Yes, please do. Families may search for programs in their areas, and your program may be an option for them; or if you are closed, it is helpful for families to know that also. Be sure to also update your months and hours of operation in your DECAL KOALA account.

What are the regulations for license-exempt programs?
The regulations and application process for exempt programs can be found at http://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/Exemptions.aspx

Will emergency flexibility be granted to exempt programs to stay open beyond four hours per day to accommodate parents who need child care during this critical time?
No, the program may need to apply for a different type of exemption or an emergency temporary license for this purpose.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding CAPS

Some of my families are having trouble getting ahold of the documentation required for their renewals and are concerned that it will impact their scholarship. How can I support those families?
Advise families having trouble obtaining adequate documentation for their renewal to contact their Family Support Consultant, who will work with each family to ensure that COVID-19 disruptions will not interrupt their scholarship.

What is the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group, and who is eligible under this new priority group?
CAPS created the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group to support certain members of Georgia's workforce during this public health emergency. The job categories currently eligible under this priority group include law enforcement, public safety, first responders, medical personnel, pharmacy personnel, and child care personnel. Additional information on the eligibility requirements of this priority group is available here.

Families who qualify for the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group, and who meet other CAPS eligibility requirements, will be eligible to receive child care subsidies for at least three months. To apply for CAPS scholarships under this priority group, visit the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group application on the Quality Rated website.

Can I bill for a child who enrolled in my program after March 1, 2020, and has not yet attended my program due to COVID-19?
A child must have attended your program at least one day since March 1, 2020, to be eligible for payment.

What is the layered funding policy waiver, and what types of programs does it cover?
During the current crisis, CAPS is temporarily allowing for layered funding. This change means that a provider may bill for children with an active scholarship who received care at least once since March 1, 2020, even when another federal or state program, such as Head Start or Georgia's Pre-K, has paid for the child's care for the same service period. This authorization applies to open and closed providers.

If a child's provider is closed and that child transitions to an open provider, which provider can bill for that child?
By law, we can only pay one provider for each active scholarship. CAPS will pay the program currently associated with that child's scholarship. If a family chooses to transition to a new provider and submits a provider change request to CAPS, CAPS will pay that family's new provider.

How can I maintain social distancing protocols while requiring parents to sign their children in and out of my program?
While COVID-19 affects our communities, we are waiving the requirement that parents must sign their children in and out of CAPS programs. However, it is still essential that you maintain accurate attendance records and know who is in your building. Coordinate alternate arrival and departure procedures that adhere to social distancing. For example, you can ask parents to drop their child off with a staff member at the door, and your staff member can sign that child in and out of the program.

If my program remains open, but my local school system and other child care programs in my area have closed, can I accept new children for care?
It is the child care provider's decision to accept new children for care. As a precaution, you can ask families if they have been contacted by or are being monitored by the local health department. This information can help you make informed decisions about whether to accept children into your program. Additionally, you can conduct daily health checks when children or other persons arrive at your program. These health checks might include taking the temperature of each child and adult who enters the building and asking questions about whether the child, or anyone to whom the child has been exposed, is experiencing a fever or cold-like symptoms.

I'm having issues billing. Who can I contact to get help on this issue?
Report your billing issue–related to COVID-19 or otherwise–to the Maximus support desk at 1-877-755-6522. If Maximus cannot resolve your billing issue, submit the billing issue to us on our website at https://caps.decal.ga.gov/en/ContactSupport/.

If a family's scholarship is currently up for renewal, how might this affect my ability to bill on that family?
Renewals will not be impacted at this time because CAPS staff members are working remotely to process renewals.

What does it mean when CAPS states that it will pay providers the maximum rate for each child? Does this mean that CAPS will pay providers' listed tuition?
This change means that CAPS will pay providers the CAPS program's published maximum reimbursement rates while emergency CAPS policies are in effect, which may be less than your listed tuition. However, we will continue to pay the provider's published tuition for children with disabilities and children in DFCS custody. Information on CAPS reimbursement rates is available in the appendices of the CAPS policy manual.

I am concerned COVID-19 will continue to affect my center even after April 10, 2020. What will happen then?
We recognize that COVID-19 may impact our families and communities beyond the April 10, 2020 expiration of these temporary policies. We will continue to send updates and additional information if we choose to extend these policies or if we add other emergency measures. If a provider chooses to remain closed due to COVID-19 related circumstances after these emergency policies formally expire, those providers will not continue to receive CAPS payments.

I understand that I am supposed to bill on the child's scholarship with the highest rate if my center is still open, but a child is absent. However, for what amount of time should I bill? A single day, a few days, or a full week?
Providers can claim the full-week's rate for an absent child if that child has a scholarship for full-time care. The child must have been in care at least once since March 1, 2020 to be eligible for payment.

I know I must continue to maintain accurate attendance records per CAPS policy. However, will I get payment for a child if I mark that child as absent?
You will still be able to bill for children using the billing portal. However, we are making a change to the billing portal, so you can mark a child absent due to COVID-19 related circumstances. This change allows

you to maintain accurate attendance records and ensures CAPS will continue payment for that child. However, the child must have attended at least one day since March 1, 2020 to be eligible for payment.

If I choose to close, how can I bill so that CAPS will continue to pay me?
Just as open providers will be able to indicate which children are absent due to COVID-19 related circumstances, closed providers will be able to indicate they have closed due to COVID-19. Closed providers will mark the COVID-19 indicator on one scholarship per child who was present at least one day since March 1, 2020.

If a CAPS child is absent, or if I am closed, can I still charge the family a copayment?
While you can still charge families a copayment, we encourage you to waive those fees under those circumstances. NOTE: If your facility is closed and one of your families still needs child care, they may have to pay a family copayment at the other facility as well.

Is CAPS currently accepting new applicants?
Yes, CAPS is currently accepting new applicants. However, applicants must continue to meet our established eligibility requirements. Information on our eligibility requirements is available at caps.decal.ga.gov. Families may apply online at www.gateway.ga.gov.

What is the Emergency Eligibility Policy?
While emergency CAPS policies remain in effect, families who permanently lose their employment or stop attending an education/training program due to matters related to COVID-19 can continue child care services at the current level through the end of their current certification period. The family does not need to report this permanent loss in activity; however, if they do report, they may see a reduction in their family fee.

While emergency CAPS policies remain in effect, if the family is not meeting state-approved activity requirements at their annual redetermination as a result of circumstances related to COVID-19, the lack of an activity will not impact eligibility.

How can I bill for a child who was only attending my program part-time but now requires full-time care?
We have updated the billing portal, so you will have the option to bill for full-time care on a child with a variable scholarship whenever you bill for these affected weeks. For school-aged children who only have a before and after school scholarship, but you are caring for full-time, you will be reimbursed the difference between the before and after rate and the full-time rate via a payment adjustment. Maximus will contact providers with affected scholarships to complete the appropriate form to receive the payment adjustment.

How will I be paid during this time?
The billing portal will remain open and providers can continue to submit invoices for payment processing. Payments can be processed by the CAPS program remotely. We anticipate no disruptions in payments to child care providers.

If a family is unable to pay their CAPS weekly assessed fee because they are temporarily not working, will CAPS pay the family fee?

Once the family reports this change in their circumstances to the CAPS program via Georgia Gateway, their family fee can be reduced accordingly by CAPS, and your payment will be adjusted based on the new amount.

Can I get paid for children with CAPS scholarships if I am closed, or if I am open, but some children are not attending?
Whether open or closed, a provider may continue to bill for any child with an active scholarship who was present at least once since March 1, 2020. When billing for absent children, or billing for a service week when the center is closed, providers should bill only on one scholarship per child using the scholarship with the highest rate. This emergency policy will remain in effect through service week ending March 29, 2020. Even though providers will be paid for all children in care since March 1, 2020, providers must still keep accurate records required by CAPS policy including sign in and sign out records.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Quality Rated

What do programs do if they are submitting their QR portfolio and their program has been closed for 30 days before the date of submission? How should Ratios (Standard 5) be reported?
On the ratio screens, programs will need to enter a date that is no more than 30 days before the portfolio submission date. For the ratio counts, programs will need to enter ratios based on attendance from the last week that children were present.

Classroom Observations

How soon after this public health emergency will QR classroom observations resume?
Due to the public health emergency, we anticipate that all official classroom and family child care learning home observations will be suspended at least until June 30, 2020. This date will be revised as necessary.

Official observations are those that result in a rating. Quality Rated Assessors will need to conduct training observations and reliability rechecks before official observations can resume. These training observations and reliability rechecks may occur before June 30, 2020 if public health conditions allow.

Is it possible for ERS Assessors to conduct observations remotely using our program's classroom cameras or by sending us iPads to live stream our classroom activities?
Valid and reliable classroom observations cannot be conducted remotely.

Will Quality Rated issue new cohort observation dates for programs that were already registered for a cohort?
QR staff are evaluating the impact that COVID-19 has had on the ability to maintain the timelines for each cohort group. Observation windows and cohort dates will be updated for each cohort group when DECAL has a clearer understanding of when observations can occur.

Changes in the child care landscape after the crisis is over will also need to be considered. As DECAL plans for revising the cohort observation dates, all programs registered for an impacted cohort will be notified of changes and the options available to them. These options will consider the vast changes that

have occurred during the COVID-19 crisis and ensure that providers have the supports they need to be ready for their observation.

Programs in Cohort 1

How will Quality Rated reschedule all the missed observations from Cohort 1?
When assessors resume observations on June 30, 2020, Cohort 1 providers not yet observed will be the first programs to be assessed. These programs will be contacted beforehand to ensure that they are ready for their observations. We will work with any program to ensure that providers have supports they need to be observed.

We had our observation visit already right before this started and were told we would receive our rating in May. Will that still happen?
Assessor teams and the report reviewers are continuing to process all completed observations, and you will receive your rating very soon if you have not already done so.

Will the April 15 portfolio submission deadline for the Cohort 1 Reverse group be extended?
Yes, this date has been extended to May 18, 2020. Contact the Quality Rated Help Desk with specific questions related to specific providers and programs.

Programs in Cohort 2

Will the April 30 portfolio submission deadline for Cohort 2 be extended?
Yes, this date has been extended to May 31, 2020. We will continue to evaluate dates as we receive more information. If you think you will be closed longer than this time, contact the Quality Rated Help Desk.

Rating Incentive Bonuses

If I signed up for Cohort 1, but I receive my observation during what should be a later cohort observation window, will I still receive the Rating Incentive Bonus for Cohort 1?
Yes, Rating Incentive Bonuses will be paid according to the cohort you originally signed up for, unless you receive a 0-rating and are re-rated under a later cohort; in that case, the later cohort's Rating Incentive Bonus would apply.

If we wait until May 31, 2020 to submit our Cohort 2 portfolio, will we or will we not receive our bonus or grant money?
The Rating Incentive Bonuses will be paid according to when you signed up for the cohort and remain based on the cohort you originally signed up for. If you signed up for Cohort 2 in December, you would receive the $500 signing bonus; if you signed up for Cohort 2 in January, you will receive the $200 signing bonus. We are working on setting up the system to make payments once portfolios are submitted, regardless of whether you wait until May 31 or not.

If you receive a 1, 2, or 3-star rating, regardless of whether your observation occurs in another cohort's observation window due to COVID-19, you will receive the rating incentive payments for Cohort 2. If you receive a 0-star rating and are re-rated under a later cohort, then that cohort's rating incentive would apply.

Are providers penalized if they are closed and miss their cohort/observation window?

No. Providers will receive their bonus payment for the cohort that they signed up for. QR staff will try to reschedule your observation for your current cohort or at a time closest to the cohort you signed up for. However, this may not be possible. In that case, your observation may occur later in the year

Portfolio

Should I continue to work on my portfolio during this time?
Yes, if you can safely work on your portfolio, you can continue to access your QR account and update your portfolio during this time. If you have questions about your portfolio and the ability to complete specific standards, contact the Quality Rated Help Desk.

For programs getting ready to submit their portfolios for QR, will there be any consideration for programs that cannot get CPR/FA renewals?
Due to limited in-person training availability during the COVID-19 health event, CPR and First Aid training for new staff hired after March 1, 2020, or for current staff whose training expired on March 1, 2020 or after, will continue to be counted as valid for Quality Rated portfolio scoring purposes.

Affected programs must upload a written statement in the portfolio indicating that training could not be obtained due to the current health situation. This statement must include the names of staff persons who could not complete initial training or recertification and the expiration dates for CPR and First Aid training for current staff. The statement should be uploaded in the Written Health Information section in Standard 2.

When in-person CPR and First Aid training opportunities resume, expired dates will no longer be accepted, and notice will be provided.

CAPS Providers

I am a CAPS provider. Will I be able to accept new CAPS children after May 1, 2020 if I am not signed up for a QR cohort group or have my star rating?
This requirement has been suspended and will be updated when the new 2020 Goal date has been determined.

How has the COVID-19 public health emergency impacted the CAPS/QR 2020 deadline?
Because of the COVID-19 crisis, DECAL is extending the December 31, 2020 deadline requiring all CAPS providers to be Quality Rated (also known as the 2020 Goal).

A new deadline will be announced when this public health emergency subsides, and more is known about the overall impact of COVID-19. We expect that the new deadline will be on or after June 30, 2021.

All deadlines related to the 2020 Goal, including the May 1, 2020 date requiring providers to have registered for a Quality Rated slot to receive new CAPS scholarships, have been suspended. DECAL will communicate new dates and guidance for providers who have registered for a Quarter 2, 3, or 4 Observation Cohort. Many providers who were registered for Quarter 1 Observation Cohort were observed and are in the process of being rated. We will provide guidance to programs who were registered for the Quarter 1 Cohort but were not observed.

Annual Verification

Is the COVID-19 public health emergency impacting the Quality Rated annual verification process?
The Annual Verification Process consists of "check-in" for rated programs who are not required to be rerated. For most programs, their annual check-in will not be impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

DECAL has adopted an annual check-in process for programs who are not required to be rerated. The check-in process allows programs to select one of the following three options: 1) simply check-in and let DECAL know that they are content with their current rating and wish to do nothing; 2) request a continuous quality improvement grant; or 3) request a new observation. Programs that do not manually check-in are considered to have selected option 1.

In November 2019, DECAL announced that to meet the 2020 Goal, mandatory and voluntary re-ratings would be suspended. Eligible programs had until November 30 to "opt-out" of this suspension and request to be rerated.

Annual Verification will continue for all programs currently star rated. The impact of COVID-19 will depend on if a child care program opted out of the suspension of Request for Reassessment. Programs that did not opt out of the suspension continue to have the option to select Check-In or CQI during Annual Verification. If programs do not log in to their QR account by their anniversary date, the system will automatically check them in; no further action is required by the program; and the current rating remains in place for the next year.

Programs that opted out of the suspension are required to submit their request for reassessment portfolio by their anniversary date. If the portfolio is not submitted by this date, the system will automatically check them in; no further action is required by the program; and the current rating remains in place for the next year.

Because observations are currently suspended until at least June 30, any pending request for reassessment observations will need to be rescheduled once observations are resumed. If a program is not able to submit its reassessment portfolio by its anniversary deadline but still wants to be considered for an observation and re-rating this year, the program director should contact the Quality Rated Help Desk. If the program opted out of the suspension but decided that it no longer wishes to be re-rated this year, no action is needed. At your annual verification period, the program can select Check-In or CQI or allow the system to automatically check in.

I opted out of the rating extension and am due to be observed and renew my rating this year. Due to the COVID-19 situation, is it possible to request the rating extension now?
Providers who opted out of the rating extension in November 2019 and elected to be re-rated in 2020 are being contacted by QR staff to determine if they would like to take the extension now or remain on the list to be re-rated. If you choose to be re-rated your observation will occur later in the year once we are able continue conducting assessments. If your rating is due to expire before that time your rating will be extended to allow enough time for you prepare your portfolio for submission.

I opted out of the Request for Reassessment Suspension this year. Due to the COVID-19 situation, I will be unable to submit my portfolio. Is it possible to opt in to the suspension now?

Yes, a Request for Reassessment does not impact your star rating unless you complete the process and receive a new rating. This means that if you fail to submit your Request for Reassessment portfolio, your QR account will simply revert to a check-in for this year without any further action on your part, and your current rating will remain valid. You will have the option to resume with a Request for Reassessment at Annual Verification next year, unless your rating is expiring in 2021 at which time you will be directed to complete a Required Reassessment portfolio.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Quality Rated Subsidy Grants (QRSG)

Should QRSG/Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Subsidy Grant (EHS-CCPSG) students be counted as absent on days when the child care program is closed, when the student or a family member is quarantined, or when a family decides to keep a child at home due to COVID-19 concerns?
If the program/classroom is closed, the closure should be noted on the monthly attendance roster. If individual students are not present due to a quarantine, the absence should be marked as excused. Absences for students whose parents choose to keep them at home as a precautionary measure should also be marked as excused absences. Programs should not disenroll students who are not attending due to COVID-19.

If my QRSG/EHS-CCPSG program will be temporarily closing due to COVID-19, who should I contact? If you choose to close your program, QRSG Administrators and EHS-CCP Subsidy Grantees should contact their Quality Rated Subsidy Analyst. If your program is licensed, you must also follow child care licensing regulations and contact DECAL's child care licensing division.

How will I be paid during this time?
QRSG: The QRSG billing portal in PANDA/CAPS Maximus will remain open and providers can continue to submit invoices for payment processing. DECAL will process payments remotely. We anticipate no disruptions in payments to grantees.
EHS-CCP: The EHS-CCP Subsidy Grant rosters and payment invoices can continue to be sent electronically, and DECAL will process payments remotely. Again, we anticipate no disruptions in payments to grantees.

Can I get paid for children with a QRSG slot or EHS-CCP subsidy grant slot if the child care program is closed, or if the child care program is open, but some children are not attending?
Whether open or closed, a provider may continue to bill for *any child with an active subsidy grant slot* who was present at least one day during March 2020. Additional guidance on billing procedures for services rendered during March 2020 will be shared before the reporting due date of April 10, 2020. This emergency policy will remain in effect through service week ending March 29, 2020. Even though programs will be paid for all children in care since March 1, 2020, providers must maintain accurate records required by CAPS policy including sign in and sign out records. Providers may only bill for a child *with an active subsidy grant slot*.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Staff/Workforce Training

How do I find DECAL-approved trainings that are offered online?

GaPDS includes a list of DECAL-approved online trainings through the *Find Scheduled Training Sessions* tab (https://gapds.decal.ga.gov/Trainings/Scheduled). Select "Online" under *Training Format* and hit the *Search Training* button. Information on approved online trainings will appear.

How do I know if a scheduled training is canceled?
If you or your staff registered for training through the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS), you will receive a cancelation email if the training is canceled. You may also check the Training Cancelations webpage on GaPDS for the most up-to-date information. If you or your staff did not register for the training through GaPDS, you will need to contact the trainer directly to find out if the training has been canceled.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Criminal Records Checks and Personnel

I'm having a difficult time finding a fingerprint place that will do the fingerprints for the background check. Some locations are open but are not doing the service. What can I do?

I'm having many issues keeping teachers in the building. My committed teachers are following guidance about not coming to work if they are experiencing any symptoms. Therefore, I'm trying to hire some temporary substitutes to help during this time. However, I've called five of the closest locations to Canton, and none are doing the fingerprinting. How should I handle this?

If we have an employee who needs the Gemalto background clearance and can't find a facility in their area to conduct the fingerprinting...what are the guidelines for this?

I need to start hiring for fall. Are CRCs available during this time to run those for future hires?
According to Gemalto, there are locations open in the state to complete background checks. Although there are fewer open locations, there are enough locations available in each of Gemalto's eight regions (https://www.aps.gemalto.com/ga/GA_regions_html/GA_Regions_Main.htm) for the state to comply with the mandatory background check requirements. DECAL acknowledges that many individuals might have to drive farther than normal to comply with this law. DECAL will continue to monitor the availability of open locations to obtain a background check.

I am trying to keep all my staff, but right now I cannot afford to. I went from 255 kids to 25. I am trying to divide hours for everyone and file unemployment, but I have one employee who refuses to work or give me an excuse why. Can I legally terminate her?
DECAL cannot give legal advice to child care programs, so we recommend that you check with your program's attorney or legal advisor.

What is the rule for family child care background check?
The rules regarding background checks for family child care learning homes can be found in the document *Rules and Regulations Family Child Care Learning Homes* 290-2-3-.21.

What do we do about people needing background checks, or more specifically, updated background checks (due every five years)? Some cities, like Sandy Springs, have shuttered services. Does that apply to background checks?

Currently, there are enough fingerprinting locations open in the state. Currently, there are no changes to the background check requirements. All potential and current employees must have a valid background check to be present in the facility while children are present for care.

What are your suggestions for background checks if the fingerprinting place is closed?
Currently, there are enough fingerprinting locations open in the state. Currently, there are no changes to the background check requirements. All potential and current employees must have a valid background check to be present in the facility while children are present for care.

What about out-of-state background checks? We can't find a place open to do fingerprint cards.
You need to contact local law enforcement to see how they can help with fingerprinting cards to be sent to another state. If DECAL cannot get the necessary background check clearance information from another state, the department will cannot issue a satisfactory Comprehensive Background Check Determination; however, if the background check using Gemalto is clear, DECAL will issue a satisfactory determination permitting the employee to be present as long as they are supervised by a staff member who has a valid Comprehensive Background Check Determination.

How will you address background checks that are expiring? Our fingerprint location is closed right now.
Currently, there are enough fingerprinting locations open in the state. Currently, there are no changes to the background check requirements. All potential and current employees must have a valid background check to be present in the facility while children are present for care.

At this time will my requests for background checks be processed?
Yes, unless the DECAL offices are ordered closed, DECAL staff processing background checks will be in the office as usual.

FOR PROVIDERS: Regarding Shelter in Place Orders and Miscellaneous Items

Many counties and municipalities have passed their own shelter in place orders that can be read as more restrictive than the one the Governor issued. If the local shelter in place order is read to have closed child care or related functions, does the more restrictive order supersede the Governor's order?
In general, counties and municipalities have the authority to be more restrictive as long as they don't contradict a state law. However, in this specific instance, the statute (O.C.G.A. 38-3-51) grants the Governor the right to suspend any other government order(s) or regulation(s) that do not fully conform to the emergency order issued by the Governor. Since the Governor's order would allow child care facilities to remain open as a minimum basic operation, any action closing a facility by a local municipality became null and void.

Is there any liability to programs who choose to open during this time should someone become ill? That has been a concern for my program.
DECAL cannot give legal advice to child care programs, so we recommend that you check with your program's attorney or legal advisor.

What's the liability to a school who chooses to open and follows the amended rules reports a case of COVID-19? Can a school be sued by a family or staff member if they are exposed as a result?
DECAL cannot give legal advice to child care programs, so we recommend that you check with your program's attorney or legal advisor.

Do we need an "essential employee" document if more restrictions to the public are made?
You should contact the jurisdiction issuing the restriction to determine what is required to maintain compliance. If the Governor's Office issues any further executive orders pertaining to child care, DECAL will issue further guidance as needed.

If our county issues a shelter in place order, how will it affect our center?
Working in conjunction with the jurisdiction issuing the order and with their local public health department, business owners must evaluate the shelter in place order to determine how the order impacts their business.

About the Office of State Administrative Hearings

Will the Office of State Administrative Hearings (OSAH) be scheduling or hearing DECAL appeals?
OSAH has cancelled all hearings at all hearing locations until March 31, 2020; cases will be rescheduled. Check your email for updates from OSAH or visit their website at https://osah.ga.gov. If you have a matter before any court other than OSAH, you will need to contact that court system directly.

FOR PROVIDERS: Miscellaneous Resources

Where can I get supplies to meet CDC guidelines and the requirements in the Governor's Executive Order such as PPE and sanitizer?
DECAL does not endorse third party vendors. However, DECAL is providing the following charts of vendors whom providers can contact about purchasing PPE and other needed supplies. This list is provided for your convenience only and is NOT an endorsement of any vendor. DECAL does NOT guarantee any of the representations made by any vendor. DECAL does not benefit in any way from the posting of this information. If a dispute or conflict arises with any vendor, DECAL will not be a party to the matter, and the dispute must be resolved between the provider and the vendor.

N-95 Masks

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
Fastenal	Customer Service	404-351-7881
SI Medical	Jeffery Sterling	866-827-4104
Streamline	Rhonda Polhill	770-289-9338
Body Amour	Chris Lizotte	603-567-4506
Day to Day Necessities	Kim Craig	248-773-2829

Nitrile Gloves

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
Fastenal	Customer Service	404-351-7881
Sara Glove	Customer Service	866-664-7272 Ext. 106

Grainger	Aaron Shoemaker	404-909-4024
Uline	Customer Service	800-295-5570
Airgas	Judy Robledo	855-625-5285 Ext. 3649
VWR/Avantor Sciences	Nicole Clark	404-693-7963
CMC Medical	Greg Meerbaum	561-703-8865
RJ Medical	Mark Jackson	205-259-9212

Isolation Gowns

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
Sourceline	Paulette Rakestraw	770-294-1039
CMC Medical	Greg Meerbaum	561-703-8865

Surgical Gowns

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
Sourceline	Greg Meerbaum	561-703-8865
Sara Glove	Customer Service	866-664-7272 Ext. 106
Day to Day Necessities	Kim Craig	248-773-2829
CMC Medical	Greg Meerbaum	561-703-8865

Surgical Masks

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
US21	Daniel Leija	703-560-0021 Ext. 143
Fastenal	Customer Service	404-351-7881
Streamline	Rhonda Polhill	770-289-7881
Cintas	Craig Frayall	770-987-3007
F3EA	Raul Joyner	912-659-4064
Flagrant International	John Ramirez	954-804-5150
Elixir Therapeutic	Martin Hudler	917-991-7665

DuPont Tyvek Suits

Company Name	Contact Name	Telephone/Contact Info
CMC Medical	Greg Meerbaum	561-703-8865
Airgas	Judy Robledo	855-625-5285 ext. 3649
Grainger	Aaron Shoemaker	404-909-4024
Coveralls Direct	www.coverallsdirect.com	770-987-3007

Vendor	Contact Name	Contact Phone Number	Contact Email Address
Blue Hill Buffalo Consulting, LLC	Andrew Holt	917-476-5818	aholtnyc@gmail.com
Contract Furnishing International, Inc.	Joe Griffin	941-374-3960	joe@contract-furnishings.com
Fastenal	Richard Warren	252-944-1772	riwarren@fastenal.com
Fisher Scientific	David Holden	832-385-2187	david.holden@thermofisher.com
FRC global Group, LLC	Richard Cohen	631-252-4169	covid19@frcglobalgroup.com
Henry Schein	Rob Irwin	661-244-7090	Rob.Irwin@HenrySchein.com
Medical Solutions Inc.	Pat Willette	952-484-5454	pwillette@medicalsolutionsinc.com
Medline	Lucas McGovern	847-837-2820	lmcgovern@medline.com
MedSupply Partners	Clifford Collins	770 973-0250	ccollins@medsupplypartners.com
Procom Products, Inc.	Nickholas Doty	574-387-0866	ndoty@procomproducts.com

Red One Medical Devices, LLC	Cal Chancy	912-704-5502	cchancy@redonemedical.com
The HB Group	Henri Bonan	801-580-5138	henri.bonan@thehbgroup.com
Thomas Scientific	Lewis McMillan	484-280-8133	lewis.mcmillan@thomassci.com
VWR	Nicole Clark	404-693-7964	nicole.clark@avantorsciences.com

Is there or will there be any financial support for programs impacted by COVID-19?
The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation has launched the **Save Small Business Grant Fund**. Funded by contributions from corporate and philanthropic partners, the program provides $5,000 supplemental grants to small employers in economically vulnerable communities. These grants will be available to businesses employing between 3 and 20 staff in certain Zip codes. The grant application opens on **April 20, 2020**.

Visit the Save Small Business Fund page for more information, including eligibility and applications.

Can you provide additional information on the Paycheck Protection Program?
After the provider webinar on April 8, 2020, we received several questions about the Paycheck Protection Program small business loans. Information about these loans can be found at https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program-ppp.

Can you provide additional information related to potential funding and/or supports from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act?
As of 4/13/2020, DECAL has not received any official notification or guidance related to the CARES Act. Because we know there are funds earmarked for supporting child care, we are preparing to quickly disburse funds awarded from the CARES Act. However, we cannot release those plans and begin the process for disbursement until we receive official notification and guidance. We anticipate that any plan will include direct supports to child care providers, including child care learning centers and family child care learning homes.

Where can we find financial assistance for non-profit child care centers who would lose money weekly following the new guidelines.
DECAL has temporarily suspended some rules to meet the Governor's Executive Order and to best meet the challenges related to COVID-19. While we understand that these changes may have a financial impact, they are necessary to follow the guidelines highlighted in the Executive Order. DECAL is currently supporting programs by continuing to make payments where possible and will move swiftly to allocate any financial or state assistance allocated for early education in recently passed legislation.

If we choose to be open during these times, can providers receive help with cleaning supplies to continue sterilizing?
Any funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) allocated for this purpose will be distributed as soon as DECAL has guidance from the legislation and from the Governor's Office.

Is Pre-K the only program that will continue to receive funds?
No, DECAL is continuing to make CAPS payments.

If my child care business is closing, what resources are available to my business or my staff?
Governor Brian P. Kemp announced that Georgia has received an official statewide disaster declaration from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). This declaration will provide assistance in the form of SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans to impacted small businesses in all 159 counties in Georgia. The application is now live, and Georgia small business owners can go directly to the SBA for assistance. Small business owners should visit www.disasterloan.sba.gov for information and the application. Loans are available for small business and non-profit organizations. While terms will be established on a case-by-case basis, many will have a thirty-year repayment term with first payments not due for up to twelve months. Businesses should expect to provide a tax transcript, financial statements, and a profit and loss statement. Interest rates will range from 2.75% to 3.75%.

Information on filing an unemployment claim, details on how employers must file partial claims, and resources for other reemployment assistance can be found at www.gdol.ga.gov, and Georgians may visit www.EmployGeorgia.com for access to today's job opportunities.

FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE LEARNING HOME PROVIDERS: Miscellaneous Resources

We in home day cares are also an important part in child care. If we're out of work because everyone is keeping their kids home, and we will not qualify for unemployment, we can't afford to take out a loan to pay later. What help are we going to get in this government bailout to help us through these hard times?
We understand the concerns and challenges related to family child care learning homes and COVID-19. We are including Family Child Care Learning Homes in our current supports, and we are waiting legislative guidance related to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act from the U.S. Congress. Any supports in legislation will include, if guidance permits, Family Child Care Learning Homes.

For CACFP or SFSP Sponsors/Participants

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

Can CACFP sites that remain open implement the non-congregate and meal time nationwide waivers?
The nationwide waivers to allow meal service time flexibilities and non-congregate feeding in the Child Nutrition Programs during the coronavirus pandemic do not require that a CACFP site be closed. Under these waivers, day care homes and centers that are still open can provide meal service on site to participants in attendance. They can also arrange meal service pick-ups and/or provide meal delivery for participants temporarily not in attendance. If the CACFP operator determines there is a need and it is logistically feasible to implement these options, it can do so for all or part of its participants. As indicated in SP 14-2020, Child Nutrition Program Meal Service during Novel Coronavirus Outbreaks: Questions and Answers #3 (https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19/meal-service-during-novel-coronavirus-outbreaks-qas), CACFP operators may provide meal delivery only to enrolled children and adult participants due to confidentiality and logistical requirements.

Can Head Start programs deliver meals to children enrolled in the home-based program option?

Head Start programs may distribute meals only to children who were already receiving meals through CACFP or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Under the non-congregate waiver, these meals can be provided through a state approved meal distribution method. Head Start children who do not normally receive meals under CACFP or NSLP, such as children in the Head Start/Early Head Start home-based program option, can use open SFSP or NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sites in their community to get meals. The USDA Meals for Kids Site Finder at https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids can help Head Start families locate open meal sites.

Can CACFP state agencies and sponsoring organizations add new centers and facilities during the COVID-19 emergency?
Yes, state agencies and sponsoring organizations can add new centers and day care homes that are providing care during the coronavirus pandemic. However, state agencies and sponsoring organizations must complete all aspects of the application and approval process. It is up to each state agency or sponsor to determine if they have the capacity to add centers and facilities based on their systems and other resources, such as the availability of inspections and licensing.

Are state agencies and sponsoring organizations required to conduct pre-approval reviews for new CACFP centers and day care homes during the coronavirus pandemic?
Yes, to ensure program integrity during the emergency response, state agencies and sponsoring organizations are still required to conduct pre-approval reviews for new institutions and facilities. However, through authority established by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127), FNS granted nationwide waivers of onsite monitoring requirements for state agencies and onsite monitoring of new facilities for sponsoring organizations. State agencies and sponsoring organizations that choose to use these waivers may conduct pre-approval reviews off-site through a desk audit.

Can CACFP institutions deliver meals?
Yes. If the CACFP operator determines there is a need, and it is logistically feasible to deliver meals directly to homes, it may do so with state agency approval and adherence to all federal confidentiality requirements. If applicable, any state agency meal service times would also have to be waived, per the Meal Service Time nationwide waiver. To request approval, CACFP operators can indicate that they intend to deliver meals on the combined waiver form and forward the document to tammie.baldwin@decal.ga.gov. Delivery could be completed by mail or delivery service, or hand delivered by CACFP staff, volunteers, community organizations, or others. This option is available only to CACFP operators that provide care for enrolled children.

What funding is available for meal delivery?
There is no additional reimbursement for home delivery or mobile meals delivery, but related expenses, such as postage or delivery service fees, would be considered an allowable cost under the CACFP. Delivery costs could also be paid with non-program funds such as state or local funds, or private donations.

What are the requirements for initiating home meal delivery for a household?
CACFP operators must first obtain written consent from households of enrolled children (including by email or other electronic means) that the household wants to receive delivered meals. CACFP operators should also confirm the household's current contact information to ensure meals are delivered to the correct location.

It is critical that CACFP operators protect the confidentiality of children and their households throughout this process. The National School Lunch Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) do not authorize release of household contact information for children without first obtaining the written consent of the child's parent or guardian. The CACFP operator must make the first contact about meal delivery with the households of enrolled children, and adult participants, and must notify them if contact information will be shared with an external organization, for example, a local non-profit that will provide meal delivery. Once the CACFP operator receives written consent from the parent or guardian to release contact information, the information may be shared with other organizations involved with meal delivery.

Do home-delivered meals need to be shelf stable?
No. The type of meal offered will depend on the resources and capacity of the program operator. Programs that can prepare ready-to-eat meals and have the capacity to deliver meals daily in a way that meets state or local food safety requirements may do so.

Does the child or adult participant need to be present for home meal delivery?
No. If the CACFP operator has obtained the household's written consent to deliver meals and has verified the current address, the child or adult participant does not need to be present at the time of delivery. If the meals are shelf stable, no one needs to be present if the address has been verified. Consider state and local food safety requirements and best practices.

Can a child care center that operates CACFP and is closed due to COVID-19 provide non-congregate meals to enrolled children?
The waiver provides CACFP institutions and facilities the ability to provide meals through a variety of methods, including pick-up schedules with designated times for distribution as long as these are previously approved by the state agency. The maximum number of meals that may be offered to each child remains the same as under regular CACFP operations. The state agency may approve a distribution or pick up approach that includes meals for multiple days, up to one week at a time.

Because non-food items are allowable items through CACFP, can we provide such items to families who may need them in addition to food items?
CACFP requires that operational costs are limited to the institution's allowable expenses of serving meals to eligible participants in eligible child and adult care centers, except as provided in §226.18(a), sponsors of day care homes do not have allowable operating expenses.

Non-food supplies are an allowable operational cost, including those required for preparing and serving meals (e.g., plates, plastic forks, napkins, etc.) These items should be provided directly to program participants with the meals. Institutions should provide the number of non-food items needed for the number of meals provided.

Institutions must document the costs of these items with receipts and invoices.

Is the meal pattern waiver a sponsorship waiver to be administered case by case, or is it an approval for specific center or homes? What is required to be submitted for approval?
It is both. If you are having a problem meeting the meal pattern requirements at all your sites, complete part 1 of the meal pattern waiver. If you are having a problem meeting the requirements at individual

sites, you need to complete only part 2 of the form. The waiver start date, meal component, and a written justification is required for approval.

Do I need to complete the meal pattern waiver if I am having a problem finding milk?
No, a milk flexibility does not require a waiver approval; however, it does require state agency approval. If you are having issues finding the correct quantity or type of milk and would like to request a flexibility, email your application specialist or Sonja Adams at Sonja.adams@decal.ga.gov

My center shut down temporarily. Do I need to complete paperwork until we reopen?
If your center is closed, it is expected that you report that information to DECAL's licensing unit and email Leslie Truman, so Nutrition Services will have a record of it. If you are not serving meals, there are no CACFP records you would be expected to maintain for the time period in which the facility was closed.

When do the waivers end?
All the waivers are located on the COVID-19 resources page. When you click on the document, you will see the end date for each waiver. Generally, the waivers run through June 30 or until the end of the federal disaster declaration, whichever is earlier.

We currently have an agreement with the school system to provide our food; however, since the schools are closed, the school system no longer has capacity to provide our meals. We currently serve supper. Is it possible that we could switch to a healthy snack?
Yes, you can switch from supper to a snack. Be sure to update your application to reflect the meal you are serving, so when you file your claim, the application in ATLAS matches your current operation.

We want to maximize our impact and serve more children or adults who need healthy meals. How can we serve more meals in our center or our community?
We recommend that you issue local media releases and use social media to announce that you are serving meals in your community. You can also use some of the flexibilities including distributing multiple meals at once, allowing parents/guardians to pick up meals, and serving meals in non-congregate settings. Additionally, you can deliver meals for children and adult participants with state agency approval.

When providing meals for the children, can we provide them with both lunch and breakfast items and account for those on the Meal Count Sheet as a breakfast and lunch item, or are we only focused on lunches at this time?
Yes, you can serve both lunch and breakfast. You will want to keep track of those meals separately, because they have different reimbursement rates and meal pattern requirements. We also encourage you to serve meal types – other than lunch – at this time.

How should milk be properly handled and distributed?
You must maintain milk at the appropriate temperature of 40 degrees or less. Additionally, you need to ensure you have appropriate holding facilities to keep the milk at the right temperature. If you are sending milk home, the easiest way to provide it is in individual servings.

When providing meals for families, how are we determining the income eligibility statement (IES) for the students receiving meals who are not directly associated with our school?

To claim a meal in CACFP, you must provide proof of enrollment for that child at your center. If you don't have an IES for a child, you will need a different method of enrollment, but you can still claim the meal. However, the reimbursement rate is based on whether the child qualifies for free or reduced-price meals. If you have a separate form of enrollment but don't have an IES for that child, you will be reimbursed at the paid rate which is a lower rate than the free and reduced rate.

Are we able to provide meals several days at a time?
Yes. If you are claiming the meals, make sure the meals meet the required meal components and quantities are being met.

If we are serving meals throughout Spring Break, are those meals still allowed to be included on the CACFP count sheet in May?
Yes, you would claim those meals and account for them on your meal record for CACFP. You can file your claims for April meals on May 1.

Will we be able to use CACFP funds if we have to close?
CACFP organizations may only use CACFP funds to operate their meal service program. Funds are only to be used on allowable CACFP costs while meal service is in operation. The organization must have a process in place to utilize its non-CACFP funding sources in the event of a temporary or unexpected closure.

Will there be any changes to the processing of new CACFP applications?
There are no changes to the CACFP application process at this time. Organizations interested in the CACFP should contact Leslie Truman at Leslie.Truman@decal.ga.gov and visit the DECAL website at: http://decal.ga.gov/CACFP/Applicant.aspx.

Is there a start date for the recently approved CACFP waivers for non-congregate feeding, activity requirements for at-risk afterschool, and the mealtimes waiver?
These waivers are effective immediately through June 30 or until the end of the federal declaration of a disaster, whichever comes first. These waivers are posted on the DECAL website at: http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CACFPNationwideWaiversDuetoCOVID-19_03232020.pdf.

Center A is a non-CACFP site and is closing temporarily due to low numbers. The children from Center A are going to Center B, which is a CACFP site. This is a temporary center that is under review until we get through this health crisis.

a. **Do the children in Center A (non-CACFP site and is closing) need to enroll at Center B and do they need to fill out income eligibility forms?**
   If this is a traditional CACFP site, not at-risk afterschool, then the answer is Yes. Those children from Center A would have to enroll in Center B, and they must be present for the meal. Proof of enrollment for the children coming from Center A to B would be required. If the facility is using income eligibility forms as proof as enrollment, they would be required. If the center is using another type of document as an enrollment form, then an income eligibility statement would not be required. However, all meals served to those children who don't have an income eligibility statement would be reimbursed at the paid rate, which is a lower rate.
b. **If the combined enrollment disqualifies Center B, can the two centers "live" together but document meals separately for Center B to continue to claim for their children?**

No, two sites cannot operate at the same location. Contact your application specialist for additional guidance.

How can I serve children in my community who are school aged and are NOT enrolled in my center? If so, do I obtain an Income Form?
As a CACFP provider/institution, you can serve school age children during school closures, but you will need proof of enrollment for that child in order to claim them. Income eligibility forms are available on our website under CACFP forms.

Can CACFP facilities provide non-congregate meals during this public health emergency?
Yes. As of March 20, the USDA approved a nationwide waiver to allow non-congregate feeding in CACFP and SFSP. The USDA recognizes that waiving the congregate meal requirement is vital to ensure appropriate safety measures for the purpose of providing meals and meal supplements. The waiver is effective immediately and remains in effect through June 30, 2020, or until the end of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. DECAL will later provide additional guidance on implementing this non-congregate feeding waiver.

Are there any mealtime restrictions specific to CACFP during the public health emergency?
No. As of March 20, the USDA approved a nationwide waiver to allow flexibility in meal service time requirements to support streamlined access to nutritious meals.

Will CACFP training sessions still be offered during this time?
Web-based training sessions housed in GA ATLAS are still available. All CACFP sessions conducted via webinar will still be offered, i.e., Memo Monday. To view past Memo Monday sessions, visit our webpage. At this time, all face-to-face CACFP sessions have been temporarily postponed. Notification emails regarding these trainings were sent to those registered. Our office will correspond via email when the training sessions are rescheduled.

Should CACFP facilities that use pricing programs still charge families a meal fee if the facility is closed? What if a child is absent?
Meal fees for children enrolled in a CACFP participating facility should not be charged if the facility is closed due to the coronavirus outbreak. However, if the facility is open but the individual child is absent, the facility's existing meal policies should be followed.

For additional information, contact Kate Alexander, Policy Administrator, at Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov.

I am a CACFP sponsor. Do I have to adhere to monitoring requirements during unanticipated school closures?
Effective immediately, the USDA has approved a waiver suspending onsite monitoring to support social distancing while providing meals. This waiver applies automatically to all sponsoring organizations that elect to use it, without further application through June 30, 2020. However, sponsors must contact Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov if they plan to use this waiver. With this waiver, the following CACFP monitoring requirements have been waived:

- the requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii) that sponsoring organizations review each CACFP facility three times each year. **For a sponsor's current review year, CACFP sponsors may conduct two reviews of their CACFP facilities.**
- the requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)(A) that at least two of the three reviews must be unannounced. **For a sponsor's current review year, only one CACFP facility review is required to be unannounced.**
- the requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)(B) that at least one unannounced review must include observation of a meal service.
- the requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)(D) that not more than six months may elapse between reviews.
- the requirement at CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)(C) that at least one review must be made during each new facility's first four weeks of program operations **has not been waived but allows sponsoring organizations to review new CACFP facilities as a desk audit.**

Do you recommend closing my child care center or day care home to prevent the spread of Coronavirus?
Considering the Governor's Executive Order, DECAL is providing the following guidance regarding the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP):

Child Care Learning Centers: Georgia's licensed Child Care Learning Centers (CCLC) may remain open if classrooms are limited to 10 or less individuals (including staff), and classrooms are self-contained. Current ratios for infants (1:6) and toddlers (1:8) must be maintained. DECAL is asking child care providers to update their open/close status on KOALA.

Family Child Care Learning Homes: Georgia's licensed Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLH) may also continue to operate. FCCLHs are permitted to serve up to 6 children for pay. To comply with the Governor's Executive Order, FCCLHs must ensure that their program does not have, at any time, groups of more than 10. This includes staff, family members, and children enrolled in the program.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Institutions and Sites Operating During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: DECAL is pleased that so many organizations have received permission to serve families impacted by COVID-19 closures through the SFSP and that so many institutions and facilities continue to serve families through the CACFP. These feeding programs can continue to operate if they follow the guidelines noted in the Governor's Executive Order.

If you do decide to close your center/day care home, notify your application specialist or email Leslie Truman at Leslie.Truman@decal.ga.gov

If a statewide mandate was issued requiring child care centers and homes to close, would the USDA provide financial relief or advancement to relieve the impact to sponsors?
At this time, DECAL is not aware of any plans for USDA to provide funding during times in which child care centers or homes are closed and not serving meals to children. If we receive additional information from USDA, we will provide this information to all institutions.

Are there any plans to postpone or reschedule the National CACFP Childcare Conference in April?
The Conference Committee has determined that the best course of action for everyone in our community at this time is to CANCEL the National Child Nutrition Conference entirely. Full refunds to attendees, exhibitors, advertisers and sponsors will be issued. Continued patience is requested as these refunds are processed in the next 90 days.

AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL

How can I apply to serve At Risk meals when the new school year begins?
When the new school year begins, sponsors can transition to the **At-Risk Afterschool Meals** component of the CACFP. Through the Afterschool Meals program, healthy meals and snacks can be served to children and teenagers who participate in afterschool programs in low income areas. CACFP is available to afterschool programs only during the school year when classes are in session.

Sponsors must hold a child care license or request an exemption from Child Care Services (CCS) before they can register for training. For more information about exemptions, visit: http://decal.ga.gov/CCS/Exemptions.aspx. Sponsors may contact Leslie Truman at Leslie.Truman@decal.ga.gov or at 404.657.1779 to register for training.

Are At-Risk Afterschool centers/programs allowed to continue serving meals and snacks during unanticipated school closures?
Yes. At-Risk Afterschool centers may continue serving meals and snacks as part of the At-Risk Afterschool meals component of CACFP. When operating during unanticipated school closures, afterschool centers must continue to meet At-Risk Afterschool requirements except for educational or enrichment activities (For more information, reference the Q&A: **Are educational or enrichment programs required for At-Risk Afterschool programs during the public health emergency?**). On days when schools are closed, At-Risk Afterschool centers that normally offer a snack and supper after school may instead choose to offer either lunch and a snack, or breakfast and a snack. These meals and snacks would be reimbursed through CACFP at the free rate. Additionally, CACFP sponsors may serve a snack and/or a meal at a site that has been served meals earlier in the day by SFSP sponsors. For example, if an SFSP organization serves breakfast only at an approved site, a CACFP At-Risk Afterschool program could serve lunch and/or a snack later the same day. Both organizations, however, cannot claim reimbursement for serving the same meal at the same time, on the same day, at the site.

Can an existing CACFP/At-Risk program at a location submit emergency sites for off-site locations through our sponsor?
Only the organization that has a direct agreement with DECAL to operate the At-Risk Afterschool program may contact DECAL to add sites. If there are other organizations interested in becoming a site, they will need to contact the CACFP Sponsor. To qualify, they must be a licensed facility or approved for an exemption. After that, an add-a-site request must also undergo an application process for approval.

Are educational or enrichment programs required for At-Risk Afterschool programs during the public health emergency?
No. As of March 20, the USDA approved a nationwide waiver that does not require enrichment or educational activities during At-Risk After School programs. The waiver is effective immediately and remains in effect through June 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier.

Can I claim reimbursement for meals served to children who did not typically attend my At-Risk afterschool program (e.g., siblings of enrolled children whose schools are closed due to coronavirus concerns)?
Yes, if the child is eligible to receive meals and all required records are maintained which include but are not limited to meal count records, attendance records, and menus. See CACFP Policy 18 at http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CACFPPolicy18.pdf for recordkeeping requirements. Additionally, institutions should ensure the ATLAS application reflects current operations including the current average daily attendance and the types of meals served.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)

What options do SFSP sponsors have to continue feeding children when emergency feeding ends on June 30?
Sponsors currently approved for emergency feeding that have attended 2020 experienced sponsor training may continue serving meals after June 30, 2020 when emergency feeding ends. Sponsors would continue to serve meals through the traditional Summer Food Service Program. However, sponsors would be required to meet all SFSP application and operational requirements. This year's SFSP application deadline for the traditional SFSP has been extended to **July 1, 2020**.

My FSMC contract is set to expire around the start of SFSP FY20, and I do not have any available renewals. Can I take advantage of the FSMC waiver by executing a one-year noncompetitive contract?
Yes. If your contract set to expire for SFSP FY20 (by or around June 30, 2020) and you do not have any available renewals, you may use emergency noncompetitive procurement to extend your current contract for one additional year or proceed with a new one-year emergency noncompetitive contract. NOTE: The emergency noncompetitive contract is valid for one year only, through June 30, 2021 with no options to renew. In addition, the use of the waiver is available until September 30, 2020 or until the expiration of the federally declared public health emergency. If you have any questions, contact LaMonika Jones, Procurement and Purchasing Compliance Officer at 404-656-2472 or via email lamonika.jones@decal.ga.gov.

What is a noncompetitive procurement?
Noncompetitive procurement is a contract awarded without any competition. Noncompetitive contracts do not include sole source contracts or contracts awarded under noncompetitive negotiation, both of which require negotiation. Noncompetitive contracts may be used when the public exigency or emergency for the requirement will permit a delay in competitive solicitation.

If my summer sites won't serve meals this year, for example, on a college campus that won't be open, will I have to attend new sponsor training next summer?
Yes, your organization would be required to attend two-day new sponsor training in the year that you would like to participate again. All sponsoring organizations that don't participate in SFSP for a summer season are required to attend two-day new sponsor training to resume their participation. New policies, guidance, or updates to federal regulations are issued throughout the year, and we want to ensure you are up to date on the current requirements.

May programs serving meals through the SFSP or the National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) during an unanticipated school closure serve meals on weekends or previously scheduled days off, such as spring break and teacher work days?
Yes. When schools are closed due to COVID-19, with state agency approval, SFSP and SSO service institutions may serve meals on days when schools had originally planned to be closed, including weekends, spring break, and other previously scheduled days off. After careful review, FNS has determined that, because the unanticipated pandemic school closures justify continued operation of SFSP and SSO, such meals may be served when there is an ongoing unanticipated closure due to COVID-19. NOTE: After your school year ends, SFSP and SSO operate under normal summer conditions (which also includes weekends and holidays with state agency approval).

Should I submit my SFSP application this summer even though I know that my sites are not operating, and I'm not sure my school will be available for my summer program?
You will have to make the best decision for your organization. We do recommend that you submit your application even if there is just a slight chance you will operate a traditional summer food service program this year to ensure you have time to get your application approved.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, why are we required to get a permit for the kitchen in the name of our organization when the kitchen we are renting for the SFSP already has permit? Can we waive this requirement in a time like this, so we can serve our community?
The requirement for the food service permit is a Department of Public Health requirement. The regulations require that we adhere to all the local health and sanitation requirements applicable to our state. As it stands, DPH requires that the food service permit is required if an organization is self-prepping their meals, and the permit must be in the name of that organization. If sponsors desire an exception to the permit requirement, they should contact their local health department.

I am a SFSP sponsor. Do I have to adhere to monitoring requirements during unanticipated school closures?
The USDA recognizes that in this public health emergency, suspending onsite monitoring is vital to support social distancing while providing meals. Therefore, a waiver has been approved to postpone required onsite site visits for all SFSP sponsoring organizations. NOTE: To ensure program integrity during this time, SFSP sponsoring organizations should, to the maximum extent practicable, continue monitoring activities of program operations offsite (e.g., through a desk audit). For SFSP sites who operate the program during normal summer operations (May through August), SFSP sponsors may also postpone required site visits until summer 2020. This waiver is effective immediately and remains in effect through June 30, 2020, or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. Sponsors must contact Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov if they plan to use this waiver.

How can I operate an SFSP feeding site that complies with the Governor's and local executive orders regarding social distancing?
Below are suggestions that help comply with the Governor's executive order that limits groups to 10 or fewer individuals who always maintain at least six feet between individuals. Sponsors and sites should also review and comply with any local orders that may be in place. As private businesses, sponsors are solely responsible for interpreting all orders to ensure the site is able to operate and not violate any jurisdiction's requirements. DECAL offers the following guidance; however, DECAL's interpretations are the department's alone and should not be the only criteria considered when determining whether to maintain operations or to cease operations.

- Have the children walk up to the food counter one at a time
- Utilize the non-congregate waiver, and let the children pick up a meal and take it home
- Allow the children and their parent/guardians to enter the building and pick up meals in groups of 10 or less
- Limit number of staff working in the kitchen together
- Clean surfaces that are frequently touched including shared countertops, kitchen areas, and doorknobs

Can schools that have been approved for non-congregate feeding through SFSP or SSO deliver meals directly to students' homes?
If a School Food Authority (SFA) determines there is a need and it is logistically feasible to deliver meals directly to homes, it may do so with state agency approval, adherence to all federal confidentiality requirements, and with all necessary federal waiver approvals (including an approval for non-congregate feeding). Delivery could be accomplished by mail or delivery service, or hand delivered by school staff, volunteers, community organizations, or others. **This option is available to SFA sponsors of school sites only** due to student confidentiality and logistical requirements. Non-SFA sponsors are encouraged to work with local SFAs where possible.

How does the SFSP work during an unanticipated school closure?
In the event of an unanticipated school closure, SFSP sponsors may serve FREE nutritious meals to children in low-income areas. Program requirements are the same as traditional SFSP but occur during the school year when unanticipated school closures occur.

Am I eligible to serve SFSP meals during unanticipated school closures?
Sponsors who have participated in the SFSP within the past two years are eligible to serve meals during unanticipated school closures.

Am I required to submit an application to serve meals during an unanticipated school closure?
SFSP organizations are exempt from submitting new applications to participate if the sponsor participated in the SFSP during the current year or in either of the prior two fiscal years. In addition, new sponsors applying for participation in the program due to an unanticipated school closure are exempt from the application submission deadline. At a minimum, DECAL would still require the following documentation to be considered eligible for reimbursable meals during an unanticipated school closure:

- Site application identifying locations
- Food permit, if applicable (refer to the following link to determine if a food permit is required for the site. Click here to access food permit.
- Budget outline of projected expenses with supporting documentation. Click here to access a budget template. This template should only be used during unanticipated school closures.

What sites are eligible to serve SFSP meals during unanticipated school closures?
SFSP sites must still meet area eligibility requirements which means the site is in an area in which at least 50% of the children residing in the area are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals.

Can I serve meals at a new site?
Yes, sponsors may add new sites to serve meals during an unanticipated school closure if the site(s) meet the eligibility requirements noted above.

What are the options for SFSP meal service during unanticipated school closures?

- Breakfast only
- Snack only
- Lunch only
- Supper only
- Lunch and AM or PM Snack
- Breakfast and AM or PM Snack
- Breakfast and Lunch
- Supper and AM or PM Snack
- Breakfast and Supper
- AM and PM Snack

What is the meal pattern for SFSP during unanticipated school closures?
The meal pattern is the same as traditional SFSP. See https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/meal-patterns

Can we provide a SFSP sack meal for a child to take home and qualify for reimbursement?
Yes, based on the declaration of a public health emergency due to the novel coronavirus by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, FNS has approved DECAL's request to waive the requirement that, during unanticipated school closures, SFSP meals must be served in a congregate setting. Public notice of the approved waiver can be accessed at:
http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/PublicAnnouncement_PublicHealthEmergencyWaiverRequest.pdf

Are there plans to submit a waiver to allow sponsoring organizations to serve two meals and a snack during unanticipated school closures?
DECAL submitted a waiver to the USDA on March 18, 2020. The waiver would enable SFSP sponsors of open, restricted open, and enrolled sites who are in good standing, and within DECAL discretion, to serve up to two meals and a snack each day. This waiver requests that sponsors have the option to serve a lunch and supper as the two eligible meals to claim. Specifically, DECAL requests the following program regulation be waived: · 7 CFR 225.16(b)(3)(ii)

A copy of the official request can be found here:
http://decal.ga.gov/Nutrition/SFSPWaiverRequests.aspx

Has DECAL submitted other waiver requests to USDA FNS for the SFSP?
DECAL issued three (3) additional waiver requests to the USDA FNS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) for the SFSP. In the waivers, DECAL requested continued use of the following:
(1) Area Eligibility in Closed Enrolled Sites (7 CFR 225.15(f)) *
(2) Meal Service Times (7 CFR 225.16(c)) **(Approved by USDA)**
(3) First Week Site Visits (7 CFR 225.15(d)(2)) **(Approved by USDA)**
*DECAL is awaiting approval for the remaining request and will notify SFSP sponsors once additional information is received. State policy guidance is currently being revised to reflect all approved waiver requests.
Copies of the waiver requests and public announcements can be found on DECAL's website at: http://decal.ga.gov/Nutrition/SFSPWaiverRequests.aspx. DECAL strongly advises organizations to regularly check the DECAL website for waiver updates.

Will SFSP training sessions still be offered during this time?
Web-based training sessions housed in GA ATLAS are still available. All SFSP sessions conducted via webinar will still be offered, i.e., Memo Monday, Procurement Readiness, Budget Readiness, SFSP, and Recordkeeping 101. To view past Memo Monday sessions, visit our webpage. For those already registered for upcoming SFSP New Sponsor Orientation training sessions, training will be delivered **virtually (webinar)** and **web-based (self-study)**. More information is forthcoming.

FOR BOTH CACFP & SFSP

Is the Nondiscrimination Statement required on informational materials and websites?
States must comply with their obligation to include the required Nondiscrimination Statement (NDS) on all printed and electronic program materials made available to applicants, participants, and potentially eligible persons for public information, public education, or public distribution. This includes, but is not limited to, information pertaining to eligibility, benefits, services, the location of local facilities or service delivery points, and hours of service.

If the size of the material is too small to include the full statement, the material must, at a minimum, include the following statement in print in the same font size as the main text: "This institution is an equal opportunity provider." On websites, the Nondiscrimination Statement (NDS) or a link to it, must be included on the home page of the program information.

Can children, or in CACFP, adult participants pick up multiple meals at the same time?
Yes. Under the Meal Service Times Flexibility waiver, program operators are not required to serve meals at a certain time or to allow a certain amount of time to elapse between meals. Therefore, program operators participating under this waiver and the Non-Congregate Feeding waiver may allow children or adult participants to pick up multiple meals at one time, up to one week at a time. The maximum number of meals that may be served and claimed for federal reimbursement per child or adult participant per day remains the same; however, the state agency may approve a distribution approach that allows children or adult participants to pick up meals for multiple days, up to one week at a time. Program operators are also required to maintain accurate meal counts by program and submit claims by program.

If a CACFP site closes as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, can it become an SFSP site and offer meals? What if schools in the area have or have not closed?
A CACFP site that is closed during the pandemic may become an SFSP site under an SFSP sponsor that has been approved by the DECAL. If the sponsor intends to operate the site as an open site and serve the community at large, the site must be in an eligible area, unless the state agency has approval to waive the area eligibility requirement and has approved the site to operate under the waiver. SFSP sites may only operate during the regular school year in cases of unanticipated school closures, or during breaks for schools operating on a continuous calendar. If schools in an area are open, meals would be served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and SFSP would not be an option.

If a child care center or day care home continues to provide CACFP meals and snacks during the COVID-19 pandemic, can the facility also be approved to operate as an SFSP site?
Yes. CACFP institutions that have developed a separate food service program for children who are not enrolled in their day care homes or centers may be approved to participate as an SFSP site under an

SFSP sponsor that has been approved by the DECAL. The CACFP institution must meet SFSP eligibility criteria, ensure that the same children are not served meals in both programs, and keep separate records for each program. To operate as an open SFSP site, the facility must be in an "area in which poor economic conditions exist," as defined at 7 CFR 225.2 of SFSP regulations, unless the state agency is approved to grant waivers of the restrictions on site eligibility. SFSP sites may only operate during the regular school year in cases of unanticipated school closures, or during breaks for schools operating on a continuous calendar. If schools in an area are open, meals would be served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and SFSP would not be an option.

Will racial and ethnic data be collected if it is not provided by applicants during telephone interviews and online systems?
For current households, states may use existing school meal enrollment applications. For new applications, states are encouraged to use information from other State Education Agencies, or from other household public assistance benefits received such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Will meal pattern waivers affect a program operator's responsibility to make meal modifications for participants with disabilities?
During this public health emergency, states and program operators are not relieved of their obligation to provide meal modifications for participants with disabilities. When planning a non-congregate meal service, state agencies and program operators should consider how individuals who require meal modifications will be identified and served.

May program operators provide non-congregate meals at different locations that were not previously approved by the State agency?
No. The state agency must approve all locations for distribution of meals.

Under the current nationwide waivers allowing non-congregate feeding and no meal time restrictions due to COVID-19, may Child Nutrition Program operators provide food items in bulk, either through pick up or home delivery, without additional waivers?
Under current statutory and regulatory authority and in conjunction with recent COVID-19 waivers allowing non-congregate feeding and no meal time restrictions when providing multiple meals at one time, program operators may provide bulk items as long as individual meals are easily identifiable as a reimbursable meal. When implementing such a delivery mechanism, program operators:

- Must include the required food components in the proper minimum amounts for each reimbursable meal being claimed;
- Must ensure that food items are clearly identifiable as making up reimbursable meals;
- Are strongly encouraged to provide menus with directions indicating which items are to be used for each meal and the portion sizes;
- Should consider if households have access to refrigeration, stoves, microwaves, etc., when providing food that requires refrigeration or further preparation, such as reheating; and
- Should ensure that only minimal preparation is required, i.e., that food provided as ingredients for recipes does not require chopping, mixing, baking, etc.

Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 226.6(i)(11), state agencies may approve requested flexibilities for unitized meals prepared by food service management companies or delivered to CACFP outside-school-hours care centers.

Can an SFA or other sponsor that participates in both SFSP or SSO and CACFP At-Risk provide meals and snacks through SSO or SFSP and At-Risk to each participant? Do the programs have to be operated at the same site or different sites? Can participants pick up multiple meals at once?
An SFA or a community organization, if approved to operate both programs, can locate them at the same or at different sites. The SFA or community organization may allow children to pick up multiple meals from each program at one time. However, the maximum number of meals that may be offered to each child may not exceed the number of meals allowed by each program. Under SFSP and SSO, up to two meals or one meal and one snack, per child, per day, in any combination except lunch and supper, are allowed. Under CACFP At-Risk, up to one snack and one meal per child per day are allowed. If the SFA or community organization is operating both programs at the same site, and all the meals for both programs are picked up at the same time, each program must keep accurate meal counts and claim only the meals served for that specific program.

The state agency may approve a plan that includes pick-up of meals for multiple days, up to one week at a time. The state agency should consider the expected duration of the school closure and the capacity of the sponsor to execute such an approach effectively, including meeting state or local food safety requirements.

Do you need to have "And Justice for All" (AJFA) posters on mobile routes for COVID-19 meal distribution?
The AJFA poster must be prominently displayed in all facilities and locations that distribute program benefits or administer services. Due to COVID-19, if printed AJFA posters are not available for display, paper copies may be substituted as necessary, including use of the 2015 AJFA poster, if you have not received new (2019) posters. Meals delivered from stationary vans or buses should display the AJFA poster. For vehicles making door-to-door deliveries at homes and businesses, the AJFA poster does not need to be displayed.

What is the maximum number of program meals and snacks that can be claimed for federal reimbursement each day?
The maximum number of meals or snacks that can be claimed for federal reimbursement, per child or adult participant, per day, varies by program:

- NSLP: Up to one lunch per child per day;
- NSLP Afterschool Snack Service: Up to one snack per child per day;
- NSLP Seamless Summer Option: Up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child, per day, in any combination except lunch and supper;
- SBP: Up to one breakfast per child per day;
- CACFP Child and Adult Care: Up to two meals and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, per child or adult participant per day;
- CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component: Up to one meal and one snack, per child per day;
- CACFP Emergency Shelters: Up to three meals, per resident 18 years and younger, per day; or
- SFSP: Up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child, per day, in any combination except lunch and supper.

Some program operators participate in multiple programs. For example, under typical circumstances, in one day, a program operator may serve a child breakfast through SBP, lunch through NSLP, and supper and snack through CACFP At-Risk. Under the waivers, a child may still participate in more than one

program, but in no circumstances shall a child receive more than the number of meals allowed in each program for which they are eligible. Operators must also ensure children do not receive duplicates of the same meal.

Are there any funding opportunities available to help serve meals to children in response to the Coronavirus?
No Kid Hungry is offering emergency grants to support local school districts and nonprofit organizations in their efforts to ensure kids get the nutritious food they need. The grant request is specifically for school districts and community organizations to submit an inquiry for grants to support nutrition programs in their communities. No Kid Hungry is also in the process of developing a separate database to help families and individuals find help in their communities; they will provide a link here once that is ready. Click here to submit your request.

Can Head Start programs serve meals during the public health emergency?
During the public health emergency, only SFSP sponsors who are in good standing and who have participated in the program during the last two years can serve as an emergency feeding SFSP sponsor. However, Head Start locations may apply to operate as a feeding site under an existing SFSP sponsor or may operate At-Risk Afterschool sites as an independent center or as a site under an existing CACFP sponsor. Several waivers are now available for SFSP and CACFP. Head Start programs currently participating in the CACFP can notify DECAL if they wish to participate in the waivers. Contact Kate Alexander at Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov for additional information.

Some food items are difficult to locate right now. Will we be penalized if we can't serve a component for a meal due the current situation?
While the USDA expects and strongly encourages federal nutrition programs to maintain and meet the nutrition standards for each program to the greatest extent possible during this public health emergency, USDA recently announced a waiver to allow meal pattern flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs.

However, to participate in this waiver, sponsors and institutions must contact DECAL for approval, and requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Guidance will be distributed soon on how to request approval to use this waiver. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this waiver, contact Kate Alexander at Kate.Alexander@DECAL.ga.gov.

Can we provide hot supper meals at mobile sites? They would be set up so that children come through a line and pick up a to-go plate.
Summer food sponsors have the option of providing hot supper meals at mobile sites using to-go containers. CACFP providers/institutions now have the option of offering congregate feeding so you also provide meals in a "take out" container through a mobile site or supper. Ensure that your application always reflects your current operations.

Is it allowable to freeze milk and use it after the expiration date?
Although unopened milk is safely stored in the freezer at 0ºF for up to three months, freezing milk is not recommended. Freezing milk, specifically high fat milk (whole milk), causes changes that will deteriorate the texture, preventing it from being used as fluid milk. Additionally, the CACFP Crediting Handbook provides guidance that foods past the expiration date are not creditable. Therefore, if the milk expires, the milk will need to be discarded even if it has been frozen.

What is an example of a non-congregate setting?
There are different variations. Some facilities provide meals packaged in a to-go box at their existing site that has already been approved. It's a complete unitized meal that the child picks up and takes home. This is also appropriate when serving meals to adults. Another option would be to provide meals at the door so that no one enters the facility.

Is there a list of approved vendors able to provide meals and/or individual food items during the emergency?
DECAL Nutrition Services currently does not have an "approved" list of vendors. However, following is a link to vendors and supplier currently serving our program providers.
http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CACFP_SFSP_WebVendorList.pdf

Will claims be processed as usual or will they be delayed?
We don't anticipate any delays in claims processing. Continue to adhere to the claim's submission requirements, and you will be paid according to the regular schedule.

Can you open ATLAS, so we can process for March and get reimbursed quicker?
Unfortunately, no. March claims may be filed on April 1 to allow institutions and sites to claim for the entire month.

How do I add sites to my SFSP or CACFP application? Do we fax Add a Site packages to the DECAL Nutrition office?
Submit your emergency feeding sites to your business operations representative. Approving additional sites is a priority, so our Nutrition staff will process sites as quickly as possible. There are several options to submit information. You may email your business operations representative with the add a site information or you may upload it to ATLAS and alert your business ops specialist by sending them a notification email.

Do we have authorization to pay food service staff double time, such as cooks, when they come in to prepare meals?
We have not received specific guidance from the USDA on this topic; however, any CACFP institution should adhere to its approved budgeted amounts and compensation plan.

We are experiencing a milk shortage. Are there any flexibilities granted for the quantity and type of milk we can provide to children in our care?
Yes, DECAL can approve meals without milk, but we need a brief written notification explaining the interruption of milk service. An official request via email should include a list of site locations/addresses experiencing a shortage of milk and the date the shortage began. Forward your request to your Application Specialist and copy Sonja Adams at Sonja.adams@decal.ga.gov

If we are experiencing a milk shortage, what beverage alternative can we serve?
When experiencing a shortage of cow's milk, non-dairy alternatives may be used. However, alternatives must be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. Requiring non-dairy alternatives to be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk ensures children receive vital nutrients needed for growth and development. Alternatives served to children ages 1-5 must be unflavored due to the higher sugar content of flavored varieties.

Acceptable non-dairy or cow's milk alternatives include:

- Low-fat or fat-free lactose-reduced, buttermilk and acidified milk
- Goat milk, sheep milk, buffalo milk (must be pasteurized)
- Soy milk (calcium and vitamin D fortified)

Unacceptable non-dairy or cow's milk alternatives include:
(These are examples and do not represent a comprehensive list.)

- Juice
- Almond milk
- Rice milk
- Almond milk "plus"
- Cashew milk
- Coconut milk
- Water
- Hemp milk
- Oat milk
- Whole grain drink
- Flax milk
- Calcium-fortified orange juice

Yogurt may not be substituted for fluid milk for children of any age. This is because milk provides a wealth of nutrients growing children need, such as vitamin A and D, and comparable quantities of these nutrients are not currently found in commercially available yogurts.

If cow's milk and acceptable non-dairy alternatives on the above acceptable list are served, no special approvals or waivers are required. However, if cow's milk or acceptable non-dairy alternatives are not available, and you are a CACFP or SFSP participant, you may contact DECAL to discuss a waiver of the milk requirement. Approvals would be based on a reasonable and justified need (e.g., public health emergency).

What resources or policy guidance is available relating to unanticipated school closures and/or the Coronavirus?
To date, the following guidance was posted to the DECAL website:

- Child Nutrition Program Meal Service during Novel Coronavirus Outbreaks, March 13, 2020
- Meal Service during Unanticipated School Closures, March 13, 2020
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
    - http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm
    - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html
    - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf
- Georgia Department of Public Health
    - http://dph.georgia.gov/influenza-what-you-need-know
    - https://dph.georgia.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-outbreak

Governor Kemp has ordered many state employees to work from home to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Does DECAL plan to close their offices? If so, what is the best way to submit CACFP and/or SFSP documents to the team?

Currently, DECAL does not plan to close our offices although many DECAL employees are teleworking to ensure greater social distancing. Regardless, DECAL including the Nutrition Services division is conducting business as usual.

The Nutrition Division asks all institutions to submit CACFP and/or SFSP documents electronically via email or uploaded in GA ATLAS. If information is uploaded in GA ATLAS, notify your assigned Application Specialist or Business Operations Representative.

For CACFP/SFSP Applications, contact:
Institutions 0 (zero) - G
Paula Lawrence, Application Specialist
404-463-2111
Paula.lawrence@decal.ga.gov
Institutions H-P
Sherika Blount, Application Specialist
404-656-6411
Shericka.blount@decal.ga.gov

Institutions Q-Z
Brandi Banks, Application Specialist
470-725-6543
Brandi.banks@decal.ga.gov

For CACFP/SFSP Add-a-Site Packages or Sponsor Updates, contact:
Institutions 0 (zero) - G
Temika Moore, Business Operations Representative
404-463-1494
Temika.moore@decal.ga.gov

Institutions H-P
Kenya Taylor, Business Operations Representative
404-463-4040
Kenya.taylor@decal.ga.gov

Institutions Q-Z
Edith Pierre, Business Operations Representative
404-463-8314
Edith.pierre@decal.ga.gov

Are sponsors and institutions required to follow proper procurement procedures during an emergency?
Emergency purchases are defined as situations when the welfare of life, property, or the continuation of vital programs are in jeopardy and require immediate, on-the-spot purchases. Emergency purchases can be issued when there is limited time to purchase in the regular manner since the item or service is needed immediately. During an emergency, purchase, micro-purchase, and small purchase procedures are acceptable. Sponsors and institutions must have a process in place to document written quotes

received via telephone and keep invoices and receipts on file. Contact DECAL if emergency purchases exceed formal procurement threshold limits.
See http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/ProcurementManual.pdf

Am I able to donate leftover perishable food items to my children in the wake of unanticipated school closings?
Currently, DECAL is not aware of any flexibility allowing excess food (specifically perishable food items) purchased for the CACFP or SFSP to be donated to program participants in the wake of unforeseen circumstances such as Coronavirus.

Because of unforeseen circumstances, occasionally there will be leftover food. All alternatives permitted by program regulations and state and local health and sanitation codes should be exhausted before discarding food. Options may include using leftovers in subsequent meal services, offering "sharing tables," or transferring food to other sites. (See attached: Donation of Leftover Foods from School Cafeterias, June 11, 1996). Where it is not feasible to reuse leftovers, excess food may be donated to a non-profit organization, such as a community food bank, homeless shelter, or other nonprofit charitable organizations. See:
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP11_CACFP05_SFSP07-2012os.pdf

What is necessary to amend budgets to get approval for disinfectants, etc. when these products become more readily available?
Due to the current situation, cleaning supplies such as disinfectants would be considered necessary and reasonable costs. If an institution would like to charge these costs, the ATLAS Budget Detail (Non-food supplies budget category) must be revised if any of the following factors apply:

- A new cost is incurred that wasn't previously approved in the budget
- A line item increases or decreases by 20% or more. A line item is defined as the function level, Operating and Administrative and/or the Program level CACFP and SFSP. If a change impacts either level by 20% or more, a budget revision is required.
- When allocation methodologies change due to changes within the organization resulting in an increase or decrease of 20% or more.
- A new cost item will be incurred that requires prior or specific prior approval or special consideration (i.e., formal procurement)
- When an approved specific prior written approval item's actual cost is found to be more than the actual approved amount
- Costs that exceed established maximums are unallowable, and the 20% rule does not apply when established maximums are breached.

Once the budget revision is completed, notify the Budget Compliance Specialist at
Tremachel.Johnson@decal.ga.gov

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS

DECAL Participation of Nationwide Waivers Due to COVID-19
Pursuant to the COVID–19 Child Nutrition Response Act (the Act) (H.R. 6201, Title II), and based on the exceptional circumstances of this public health emergency, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) established nationwide waivers to support access to nutritious meals while minimizing potential exposure to the novel coronavirus.

Consistent with section 2202(a)(2) of the Act, while these waivers apply automatically to all states that elect to use them and without further application, state agencies must first inform their FNS Regional Office if they elect to be subject to the waiver(s).

The following table lists all waivers that DECAL has elected to utilize and for which notice has been given to USDA's Southeast Regional Office (SERO).

Organizations who wish to utilize any of the waivers in the table below must first notify Leslie Truman at Leslie.Truman@decal.ga.gov.

Waiver Type	Applicable Program(s)	Brief Description of Waiver (*For full details, please refer to the actual waiver memo.*)
Activity Requirement in At-Risk Afterschool	CACFP	The requirement that At-Risk afterschool care centers serve afterschool meals and snacks in a structured and supervised environment, with an educational or enrichment activity is waived during the public health emergency. *****Waiver remains in effect through June 30th*****
Meal Pattern Flexibilities	CACFP & SFSP	The requirement to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements is waived during the public health emergency. *****Waiver extended until May 31st*****
Meal Times Waiver	CACFP & SFSP	The requirement that meals must follow meal service time requirements is waived during the public health emergency. *****SFSP Waiver extended until September 30th*****
Non-congregate Feeding	CACFP & SFSP	The requirement that meals be served in a congregate setting and must be consumed by participants on site is waived during the public health emergency. *****Waiver remains in effect through June 30th*****
Onsite Monitoring Waiver for SFSP Sponsors	SFSP	***For sponsors only*** - FNS waives that SFSP monitoring requirements included at 7 CFR 225.15(d) be conducted on site. *****Waiver in effect through June 30th*****
Onsite Monitoring Waiver for State agencies	SFSP	***For State agency only –*** FNS waives that SFSP monitoring requirements included at 7 CFR 225.7(d)(2)(ii) be conducted onsite. *****Waiver in effect through June 30th*****
Onsite Monitoring Waiver for State agencies	CACFP	***For State agency only –*** FNS waives that CACFP monitoring requirements included at Section 17 of the NSLA as well as 7 CFR 226.6(b)(1) and 226.6(m)(6) be conducted onsite. *****Waiver extended through September 30th*****

Monitoring Waiver for Sponsoring Organizations	CACFP	***For sponsors only*** – CACFP monitoring requirements are waived as follows: (1) sponsors may conduct two reviews of their CACFP facilities; (2) only one CACFP facility review is required to be unannounced; (3) FNS waives that at least one unannounced review must include observation of a meal service; (4) FNS waives the requirement that not more than six months may elapse between reviews; and (5) allows sponsors to review new CACFP facilities as a desk audit. *****Waiver in effect through June 30th*****
Parent Pick-Up	CACFP & SFSP	Under this waiver, Program operators in a State with an approved waiver allowing non-congregate meal distribution during COVID-19-related operations may distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their eligible children. *****Waiver in effect through June 30th*****
(60) Day Reporting Requirements for January and February 2020 Claims	CACFP & SFSP	The requirement to submit claims for reimbursement no more than 60 days after the last day of the month has been waived for claims covering operations during the months of **January** and **February 2020**. *****Deadlines for these two claims months are extended for 30 calendar days from their original required date of submission.*****
Closed Enrolled Site Eligibility	SFSP	Under this waiver, for all States, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) closed enrolled sites during the COVID-19 public health emergency may determine site eligibility through area eligibility without collecting income eligibility applications. *****Waiver in effect until September 30, 2020*****
First Week Site Visits	SFSP	(1) FNS waives, for all States, the requirement that Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are required to visit each of their sites at least once during the first week of operation. (2) This waiver applies to State agencies administering and local organizations that have operated the SFSP successfully in the previous year, and SFSP sponsors in good standing that have successfully participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). *****Waiver in effect until September 30, 2020*****
Waiver of Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Duration	SFSP	This waives, for all State agencies, school food authorities, and SFSP sponsors the food service management company contracts duration requirements at 7 CFF 210.16(d) and 225.6(h)(7). FSMC contracts that may expire by or around

		June 30, 2020, may be extended through school year 2020-2021 (June 30, 2021). To ensure Program integrity during this time, extended FSMC contracts are limited to one-year only. *****Waiver in effect until September 30, 2020*****
Waiver of Annual Review Requirements for State Agencies	CACFP	***For State agency only*** **-** This waives, for all State agencies, CACFP monitoring requirements included at Section 17(d)(2)(C) of the NSLA and regulations at 7 CFR 226.6(m)(6) and 226.6(m)(6)(i) through (ii). *****Waiver in effect until September 30, 2020*****

As we practice social distancing and self-quarantine, finding activities and things to do with young children can be challenging. Following are gardening, cooking, and other outdoor activities/resources for families and providers.

- Go to Farm to ECE Resources for At-home Activities for children's books, songs, and free curriculum related to gardening, food, and nutrition.
- Go to Tree Exploration Activity for a specific outdoor activity.
- Go to Gardening and Cooking Songs, Books, and Tips for Families for fun *Farm to ECE* activities.

Serving Meals in CACFP During COVID-19
Helpful Guide for Meal Planning Alternatives
Use the "Serving Meals in the CACFP during COVID-19" resource to help in menu planning during COVID-19. Whatever challenges you are facing, we recognize that meals served during the pandemic will look different than normal with unique challenges arising. This resource may help in determining alternate meal components during times of food shortage.

FoodCorps Resources to Support Remote Education
FoodCorps shares their COVID-19 Resource Page which includes access to hands-on lessons that are best suited to do with kids at home.

How do I submit a waiver request?
To use any of the USDA nationwide waivers recently approved to support access to nutritious meals while minimizing potential exposure to the novel coronavirus, complete the applicable Waiver Request Form located here and submit it to Tammie Baldwin at Tammie.Baldwin@decal.ga.gov. After submitting your waiver forms(s), allow DECAL adequate time to process the information and respond to approve or deny each request. Approved nationwide waivers relate to meal times, meal patterns (excluding milk flexibilities), non-congregate feeding, parent pick-up, monitoring requirements, CACFP At-Risk Enrichment Activity Requirement, and 60-day claim submission for January or February claims. To request a waiver for anything not mentioned, contact Kate Alexander at Kate.Alexander@decal.ga.gov.

Click here to explore the Captain Planet Foundation's recommended resources for learning at home. Our current situation highlights now, more than ever, the importance of kids understanding how to connect with nature, how to grow their own food, how to build their agency for problem solving, and how to be an empathetic global citizen. Captain Planet Foundation has pulled together a curated guide of free or

low-cost resources for K-12 students to continue learning and explore their environment including live cooking classes with Chef Asata Reid, Life Chef and founder of Feed the People.

Resources for Farm to School and Farm to Early Care and Education
Click here to explore the National Farm to School Network's resources related to COVID-19 that are relevant to the farm to school and farm to early care and education community.

About Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

Excerpted from ECLKC.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

What about wages & benefits for Head Start and Early Head Start staff?
The Office of Head Start (OHS) is directing programs to continue to pay wages and provide benefits for staff unable to report to work during center closures necessary to address COVID-19. This additional emergency response flexibility is important to ensure critical grants management activities can continue during closures. It will help ensure staff are ready and able to return to work as soon as it is possible to resume operations. This flexibility remains in effect through April 30, 2020 unless further extended by OHS.

What can Head Start programs do to support families?
During center closures, employees should continue to engage families and to deliver services to the extent possible, remotely. As for meals, see the prior referenced section on CACFP flexibilities. Head Start and Early Head Start programs may provide meals and snacks to children during center closures.

- Programs could assemble bags of food, including formula for enrolled infants, and deliver them to homes in agency school buses or other agency vehicles. Families could come out to collect the bags or they could be delivered to the door.
- Food could be assembled, and families could pick it up at a center or other location. Care should be taken to avoid large groups and prevent anyone who is sick from coming to collect food. This could include a "drive-through" station in areas where families have cars.
- Programs could check with local schools, churches, or other community organizations to see if there are partnership opportunities to increase the efficiency of food distribution.

FOR FAMILIES: Regarding CAPS

I'm having trouble getting ahold of the documentation needed for my renewal because my work, educational institution, or child care provider is closed. How will this impact my scholarship?
If you are having difficulties obtaining adequate documentation for your renewal, let your Family Support Consultant know, and they will work with you to identify how to ensure that COVID-19 related disruptions will not impact your scholarship.

If my provider is closed or if I choose not to send my child to my provider at this time, will I lose my CAPS scholarship?

No, you will not lose your CAPS scholarship if your child care provider is temporarily closed or if you choose to keep your child home. However, if your CAPS scholarship is due for its annual redetermination, you must complete your renewal application on Georgia Gateway

(www.gateway.ga.gov) and submit your verification documentation (if available) before the end date of your CAPS scholarship. If you fail to renew your CAPS scholarship, your case may be closed, and you will need to reapply.

Do I still have to pay my provider if my child is absent or if my provider is closed?
If your CAPS scholarship does not cover your child's total tuition, and you usually pay your provider the difference, your provider may expect you to continue to pay that difference. Talk to your provider about their payment expectations for COVID-19 related absences or closures.

Will CAPS continue to pay my provider if my child is absent?
If your provider is still open, and your child does not attend the program, or if your provider is closed, CAPS will continue to pay your provider if your child attended at least once since March 1, 2020.

My child care provider is still open, but I'm concerned that it's not safe for my child to attend the program. How can I be sure that my child is safe at this time?
DECAL is committed to the health and safety of your child. To maintain safe environments during COVID-19, we are asking our providers to take several precautions, including:

- Using proper handwashing techniques
- Frequently cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
- Having sick children and employees stay home
- Limiting classrooms to 10 individuals or less
- Adjusting pick-up and drop-off procedures to encourage social distancing

How do I sign my child in and out of their program while meeting CAPS attendance requirements?
During the COVID-19 crisis, we're waiving CAPS requirement that families sign their child in and out of their program. However, it is essential that your provider knows when your child is dropped off and picked up, so they can know who is in their building during the day. You should drop off and pick up your child with a staff member at the door, and the staff member can sign your child in and out for you. Follow alternate arrival and departure procedures your provider has put in place to adhere to social distancing.

Is CAPS currently accepting new applicants?
Yes, CAPS is currently accepting new applicants. However, applicants must continue to meet our established eligibility requirements. Information on our eligibility requirements is available at caps.decal.ga.gov. Families may apply online at www.gateway.ga.gov.

How do I know if my child care provider or local school system is closed?
Contact your provider or local school system to verify closure. Local news stations will often list school closures. You can also visit www.gadoe.org for information on school closures.

If my local school system closes, can my child go to my child care provider?
If the child care provider is open, has space, and an active scholarship for your child, and the Department of Public Health or your local health department hasn't contacted you and instructed you to isolate at home, your child can attend that program.

What are my options for child care assistance if my child care program is closed, and I need child care to go to work or school?

When you arrange alternative child care for your child(ren), you must submit a *provider change request* as a case change on Georgia Gateway at https://gateway.ga.gov. The alternative provider must be approved to participate in the CAPS program.

If I have a CAPS scholarship, and I am instructed to isolate my child for 14 days, and my child doesn't attend the CAPS child care program, am I still required to pay the CAPS weekly assessed fee?
The family is responsible for paying the family fee to the child care provider if any child is in care; however, you should check with your child care provider about their payment policy when children are absent.

Am I responsible to pay my weekly assessed fee if I am on a temporary layoff because of an employer work stoppage?
You can report a change to your case through Georgia Gateway at https://gateway.ga.gov informing CAPS that you have experienced a temporary layoff. Your family fee may be reduced based on your change in income.

How will my application, renewal, or case change be handled if the due date occurs while CAPS offices are closed?
CAPS will work diligently to complete all applications, renewals, and change requests as quickly as possible. If State offices are closed, or staffing is limited, there could be some delays. Thank you for your patience as we process your application, renewal, or change request.

How would a state office closure impact my renewal that is due?
Renewals are not be impacted at this time because CAPS staff will be available to process renewals remotely. You can help in this process by uploading copies or by using your cell phone to take pictures of your documents and uploading them to Gateway at https://gateway.ga.gov.

How can I submit my renewal application and verification documentation if my local DFCS office is closed?
Families can use their phone or computer to apply for benefits and upload verification documents by taking a picture of their application and documents and uploading them to Gateway at https://gateway.ga.gov.

If I have a CAPS scholarship and my child care provider is not open for business, can I take my child to another child care provider?
Yes, you may take your child to any child care provider who may participate in the CAPS program. If you take your child(ren) to another provider, you must submit a *provider change request* as a case change on Georgia Gateway at https://gateway.ga.gov.

What is the best way to contact CAPS if I have questions related to my CAPS scholarships and/or any adverse actions taken on my case?
CAPS can be contacted by calling 1-833-4GA-CAPS or sending us communication by clicking the "Contact Us" link on our website https://caps.decal.ga.gov.

FOR FAMILIES: General Questions

How can families find the meal sites located in their area or community?
DECAL is getting the word out about where families can find meals for kids during school closures. We're collecting updates from our sponsoring organizations across the state and posting them here. Share the link with your friends to help spread the news that there are opportunities around Georgia for kids to get a healthy meal. Check back often for updates. The USDA's "Meals for Kids" interactive map also directs people to local sites where kids can get free meals. The map will be refreshed and published weekly, as is the normal cycle over the summer. The map is available in English and Spanish at www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids.

My child is currently not attending child care, but my provider is still charging a weekly fee to hold her spot. Are they allowed to do that?
Tuition and fee agreements are between you and your child care provider and are outlined in the provider's policies and procedures that should be discussed when you enrolled your child. Fees charged during absences should be covered in the program's policies and procedures.

I usually have access to my child's classroom at any time. Can I still expect that?
To reduce the risk of exposure, child care programs now have the option to restrict families' access to parts of the program's facility. Specifically, families may be asked to stop at the front door of the facility or the door of the classroom.

Governor Brian Kemp issued an Executive Order that bans all gatherings of more than 10 people unless the group can always maintain spacing of at least six feet between people. What does this mean for child care programs?
Obviously, caregivers in a child care program must be near the children entrusted to their care. Because child care providers cannot always maintain six feet of distance between people, group sizes must be no more than 10 people, including staff, to follow the order. This means that children in care should be in classrooms in child care learning centers and family child care learning homes with no more than 10 people, including their caregivers.

My child care program usually takes children on field trips when school is not in session. Will they cancel previously scheduled field trips?
To ensure the safety of children, families, staff, and communities, all scheduled field trips should be canceled through April 6, 2020.

My child care provider is doing health checks at drop off every morning. Are they allowed to do that?
Some child care providers are doing health checks as children arrive each morning. These health checks could include taking the temperature of each child and adult who enters the building and asking questions about whether the child, or anyone the child has been exposed to, is experiencing fever or cold symptoms. This is just another way to protect the health of your child.

My child's school is closed. Are there any activities we can do at home to help my child continue to learn?
Yes. There are lots of great online resources for home learning activities. Visit our GELDS resource page at: http://gelds.decal.ga.gov/Resources.aspx for a list of activities and resources. Family Connection Partnership has also created a list of family resources and digital learning activities. Go to: https://gafcp.org/coronavirus/.

What can my child and I do to stop the spread of COVID-19?

- Stay home if possible
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue; then dispose of the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Get a flu shot.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if my child exhibits symptoms?
Contact your primary care physician's office or your local public health department.

Are there any resources for supporting learning at home while child care and Pre-K programs are closed?
Below are resources by age group. Additional resources will be added as they are developed.

All Ages

- 49 Fun Physical Activities
https://activeforlife.com/49-fun-physical-activities-to-do-with-kids-aged-2-to-4/

Toddlers:

- Everyday learning activities for toddlers and three year olds
https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/development/intellectual/everyday-toddler-lessons/?
- Fun, simple activities to engage your toddler and three year old in learning
https://thisreadingmama.com/simple-toddler-activities/
- Fun art, science, math and literacy activities for toddlers and threes
https://talkingisteaching.org/
- Great ideas to keep your toddlers busy and learning
https://busytoddler.com/category/activities/
- Tons of simple and fun activities to encourage literacy and school readiness
https://www.vroom.org/
- 20 learning activities for toddlers and threes that use items easily available around the house
https://www.powerfulmothering.com/20-easy-learning-activities-for-toddlers/

Preschool (3 & 4 year olds):

- 25 Indoor Play Activities from a Preschool Teacher
https://www.parentmap.com/article/25-indoor-play-activities-from-a-preschool-teacher
- 20 Indoor Activities besides TV
https://theartofsimple.net/20-indoor-activities-for-kids-besides-tv/