



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Georgia’s CAPS Program Offering Child Care Assistance to
Essential Services Workforce on Frontlines Fighting COVID-19 Pandemic**

Emergency Child Care Scholarships will be Issued for Minimum of Three Months

ATLANTA, Ga., (April 21,2020) – Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services, or CAPS Program, provides scholarships to help with the cost of child care so parents can work or attend school. The program not only helps families navigate their children’s early years, but also connects families with resources to help them become self-sufficient.

Recently the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) added a new priority group to the CAPS program for Essential Services Workforce on the frontlines fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Medical personnel, first responders, child care personnel, and others that meet eligibility criteria can get help finding open child care and apply for assistance paying for child care by visiting www.qualityrated.org.

“Emergency child care scholarships will be issued for three months and will be extended as long as the current state of emergency continues,” said Elisabetta Kasfir, Deputy Commissioner for Georgia’s CAPS Program. “This is a new priority group created by CAPS to support certain members of Georgia’s workforce during this public health emergency.”

“This support will help first responders and other essential workers pay for child care so they can help stop the spread of COVID-19 and support our communities with essential services,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Families who qualify for the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group, and meet other CAPS eligibility requirements, will be eligible to receive child care subsidy for three months and potentially longer if the COVID-19 public health emergency continues.”

DECAL has a three-tier definition of eligible families for the Essential Services Workforce. Only tier one is currently open which includes law enforcement, public safety, and first responder personnel (including police officers, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, 911 call center staff, dispatchers, and National Guard); Medical personnel who provide direct care to patients and the personnel who support direct care to patients (including sanitation staff, lab technicians, and reception staff); Pharmacy personnel (including pharmacists, technicians, pharmacy assistants); and child care personnel. DECAL said it will add professions based on current demands, need, and availability of funding.

DECAL has allocated 500 slots for the Essential Services Workforce and will reevaluate May 1st to determine when to open it up to Tier 2. On average statewide each slot is valued at \$5,500 to \$6,500 annually but may be lower or higher depending on specifics.

Eligibility requirements for the Essential Services Workforce Priority Group are detailed on the application available at www.qualityrated.org or by calling 1-833-4GA-CAPS. For further assistance locating available child care call 1-877-ALL-GA-KIDS.

About DECAL

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program; licenses child care centers and home-based child care; administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program and federal nutrition programs; and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community-powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decals.ga.gov.