



**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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**DECAL and CAPS Announce ACCESS –
Awarding Child Care Education Scholarship Supplements**

*Under ACCESS, CAPS family fees will be waived beginning May 17, 2021,
through service period ending October 2, 2022*

ATLANTA, Ga., (May 17, 2021) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has some great news for families who receive CAPS scholarship assistance in paying for child care. Through the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), DECAL has received funds to help eligible Georgia families negatively impacted by the pandemic pay for child care. DECAL will use this historic investment in early learning to support families through a special initiative called ACCESS - Awarding Child Care Education Scholarship Supplements. ACCESS is intended to temporarily alleviate the financial burden of child care for families in the CAPS program.

“As part of this funding, CAPS family fees...the portion of child care paid for by families...will be waived under the ACCESS initiative beginning May 17, 2021 through service period ending October 2, 2022,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Families will not pay their provider any tuition related fees or co-payments for child care services. CAPS will pay child care providers their full published rate for the type of care provided, including the family fee.”

Deputy Commissioner for CAPS Elisabetta Kasfir added, “Child Care providers may charge families for costs outside of tuition, such as transportation fees or meal fees. Eliminating the family fee will significantly enhance families’ access to quality child care during this time when their ability to pay child care co-payments may be impacted.”

Families participating in the CAPS program share in the cost of paying for child care based on their income and household size. This amount is referred to as a family fee. Also, families are responsible for paying the difference between the amount their selected child care program charges and the amount CAPS will pay. This is known as their rate differential. The family fee plus the rate differential is the amount each family pays the provider weekly, which is called their Parent Weekly Responsibility. Under the ACCESS Initiative, the Parent Weekly Responsibility will be waived beginning May 17, 2021, through October 2, 2022. CAPS families will no longer be responsible for making weekly payments to child care providers for tuition.

According to [Childcare Aware of America](#), the average annual price for full-time infant care in a child care center in Georgia is approximately \$8,729 or \$168/week. Using this figure, ACCESS will save families enrolled in the CAPS program on average \$35/week, or \$1,820/year per child, on their child care costs.

Since March 2020, DECAL has waived certain CAPS policies to support families and child care providers impacted by COVID-19. More information on ACCESS is available by calling 1-833-4GA-CAPS (1-833-442-2277). To learn more about CAPS Policies and Procedures, visit <https://caps.dec.al.ga.gov/en/>.

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.dec.al.ga.gov.