

## **For Immediate Release**

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Mike Deines  
785.296.0537

### **Department for Children and Families Announces Hero Relief Program**

*Program provides child care subsidies to eligible health care workers, first responders and other essential workers*

Governor Laura Kelly and DCF Secretary Laura Howard today announced efforts to support parents and childcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The “Hero Relief Program” expands DCF’s child care assistance subsidies for families and provides financial support directly to child care providers. The new program specifically targets health care workers, first responders and other essential workers.

“We know these essential workers are risking their health every day to protect others,” Kelly said. “The Hero Relief Program is our way of saying ‘we’ve got your back’ by making sure families have access to quality affordable child care.”

Beginning Monday, April 20, child care subsidies will be available to essential workers who financially qualify. The list includes:

- Health care workers (including RNs, other medical professionals and health care support workers, hospital and laboratory staff)
- First responders (including law enforcement, fire and rescue, and other public safety workers)
- Food and agriculture workers
- Judicial branch (essential services)
- National Guard
- Child and adult protective service specialists
- Child care providers caring for children of eligible workers listed above

In order to qualify, families must have countable gross income at or below 250% of the federal poverty level. For an average family of four that equals a monthly income of \$5,458. Families will receive the full DCF subsidy amount based on their family size, with no family-share deduction.

“During a time when these everyday heroes are working long hours, we hope this program helps relieve some of the financial burden they’re experiencing,” Howard said. “It’s our duty to support families during this uncertain time so we encourage families to apply.”

The Hero Relief Program also supports child care providers by providing a menu of stipends and grants to assist during the pandemic.

Grants may include:

- Sustainability stipends for all KDHE-Licensed child care and relative providers to help pay for ongoing expenses like food, supplies, labor and rent/mortgage.
- Revenue replacement subsidies for DCF enrolled child care providers
- Supply grants to assist with pandemic related expenses like gloves, disinfectants, soap and other necessary items.
- Emergency worker support bonuses – a one-time bonus to providers who care for children of health care workers and first responders.

For more information and for instructions on how to apply, visit **KSHeroRelief.com**.

For more information on COVID-19 visit: [www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus).

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