AN ACT

Establishing the COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Grant Program and the COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Fund to provide grants to essential workers to be used for childcare during the COVID-19 disaster emergency; imposing duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development; and providing for a transfer of Federal money.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Grant Program Act.

Section 2. Definitions. The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Childcare." Care in lieu of parental care for part of a 24-hour day by an eligible provider, as described in 55 Pa. Code § 3041.13(a) (relating to parent choice), or a relative of the child who provides the care for the child if the relative complies with the applicable State requirements for providing the care.

"COVID-19." The coronavirus disease 2019, an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 that was first identified during December 2019 in Wuhan, China.

"Department." The Department of Community and Economic Development of the Commonwealth.

"Essential worker." An individual employed by or under contract with a life-sustaining business or entity who worked during the proclamation of disaster emergency and is engaged in any of the following industries:

1. Healthcare and social assistance.
2. Food manufacturing or food retail facilities.
3. Janitorial services to buildings and dwellings.
4. Transit and ground passenger transportation.
5. Security services for industries listed in this definition.
6. Commercial industries not closed during the proclamation of disaster emergency.


"Proclamation of disaster emergency." The proclamation of disaster emergency issued by the Governor on March 6, 2020, published at 50 Pa.B. 1644 (March 21, 2020), and any renewal of the state of disaster emergency.
"Program." The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Program established under this act.

Section 3. Program.
(a) Establishment.--The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Grant Program is established within the department.
(b) Duties of department.--The department shall provide grants under the program in accordance with this act to essential workers adversely affected by COVID-19. Grants provided under the program shall be used for childcare services.

Section 4. Establishment of fund.
The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Fund is established in the State Treasury. Money in the fund is appropriated to the department on a continuing basis for the purpose of awarding grants to essential workers under the program.

Section 5. Application forms.
(a) Development.--The department shall develop a grant application form for applicants, including the following information:
(1) Name, address, contact information and annual income of the applicant.
(2) Name, address and contact information of the applicant's employer.
(3) Name, age and childcare provider for each child of the applicant.
(4) Current cost of childcare per month paid by the applicant.
(5) Amount of grant money requested under the program.
(6) Any other information or documentation that the department deems necessary and appropriate.
Section 6. Eligibility.

(a) General rule.--Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b), grants may be awarded to essential workers.

(b) Exception.--Individuals who earn more than $80,000 in gross annual income per year or married couples who earn more than $120,000 in gross annual income per year shall not be eligible for grants under this act.

Section 7. Applicability.

This act applies to childcare costs for children from birth until the day prior to the date of the child's 14th birthday. Children with disabilities 18 years of age or younger may be eligible at the discretion of the department.

Section 8. Award of grants.

(a) Distribution of grants.--No later than 20 days after receipt of the application form, the department shall make a determination on the application and the amount to be awarded.

(b) Consideration.--In determining grants to be awarded, the department shall give priority to an applicant whose gross annual income is less than $35,000.

(c) Notice.--After making a determination under subsection (a), the department shall provide written notice to the applicant of the award amount or denial of the grant. Notice of a grant award to an applicant shall include the amount of the grant money awarded and all conditions or restrictions on the use of the grant money. Notice of a denial, either in part or in full, shall include the reasons for the denial.

Section 9. Guidelines.
The department may promulgate rules, regulations and
guidelines for the implementation and administration of the
program.

Section 10. Public notice.

(a) Availability of grants.--The department shall provide
information regarding the availability of grants under the
program on the department's publicly accessible Internet
website.

(b) Report.--Following the termination or expiration of the
proclamation of disaster emergency, the department shall post on
the department's publicly accessible Internet website the amount
of grant money awarded under the program.

Section 11. Limitation on award of grants.

Subject to the availability of funds, a grant to an applicant
shall not exceed $750 per month per child.

Section 12. Transfer of Federal money.

The sum of $100,000,000 of the money received by the
Commonwealth under the CARES Act shall be transferred to the
fund.

Section 13. Expiration.

(a) Notice.--Upon the expiration or termination of the
disaster emergency proclamation, the department shall transmit
notice of the expiration or termination of the program under
subsection (b) to the Legislative Reference Bureau for
publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

(b) Authority.--The authority of the department to award
grants under the program shall expire three months after the
publication of the notice required in subsection (a).

Section 14. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 30 days.

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