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Early Childhood Education and Care Department Offers Guidance for Child Care Providers Amidst “Stay at Home” Order

Santa Fe - On Monday, New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky commented on Governor Lujan Grisham’s “stay at home” order.

[The order](#), which goes into effect at 8 am on Tuesday, March 24, requires all non-essential businesses to close and limit activities for New Mexicans outside of their homes. The goal of the order is to limit the spread of COVID-19.

“The Governor understands that child care providers *are* front-line, essential workers. They *are* first responders. Without them, our public health workforce couldn’t contain the virus or care for the sick. Without them, government couldn’t deliver indispensable services. Without them, some of our children wouldn’t have a safe, healthy place to go,” said Secretary Groginsky.

“Child care providers who support workers in essential businesses or essential non-profits are exempt from the order,” said Secretary Groginsky. “This means that they may continue to operate during the public health emergency. If a child care provider is not providing care to support essential workers - and wants to continue to provide care - ECECD and CYFD will work with the provider to determine whether they might be able to fulfill unmet child care needs.”

The Early Childhood Education and Care Department is also waiving parents’ March and April copayments for child care assistance and offering a financial incentive for centers that stay open: \$250 per month per enrolled child in the child care assistance program. Providers who need food or other supplies can also fill out a brief survey at newmexicokids.org, and a member of the ECECD team will assist them.

Today’s update follows on last week’s announcement that New Mexico will offer [free, comprehensive family health coverage](#) for any child care worker who is diagnosed with COVID-19.

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