



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
2020 MAY -1 AM 8:48  
CLERK OF THE BOARD  
OF SUPERVISORS

**NATHAN FLETCHER**  
SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE: May 5, 2020**

**15**

**TO: Board of Supervisors**

**SUBJECT**

**SUPPORTING EMERGENCY CHILDCARE VOUCHERS FOR COVID-19 ESSENTIAL WORKERS AND OTHER VULNERABLE POPULATIONS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

Health care workers, first responders as well as many other employees of essential businesses are on the front lines fighting the deadly COVID-19 pandemic so the rest of us can remain safely in our homes and continue to get our basic needs met. They are risking their lives to keep us alive and safe. In the midst of their exhausting, heroic work, those with young children (ages birth to 12 years) have the added hardship of arranging and paying for childcare because schools (which previously provided a minimum of 30 hours per week of supervision and, if parents rely on before and after school programming, up to 50 hours a week of supervision) and many childcare operators are closed. Many of these individuals are now being asked to work extended and off-hours shifts, exacerbating their childcare challenges.

Additionally, families who are already grappling with trying circumstances caused by domestic violence, homelessness, child abuse or caring for a disabled child with higher needs are all facing increased struggles due to the public health orders related to COVID-19 crisis.

Today, I am proposing to allocate \$5 million from the County’s federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act allotment to immediately support “Emergency Childcare” for San Diego County’s essential workers and direct the Chief Administrative Officer to enter into agreements with the two existing California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP) childcare voucher administrators operating locally using similar eligibility criteria and guidelines outlined by California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**  
**SUPERVISOR NATHAN FLETCHER**

- 1.) Establish appropriations of \$5,000,000 in Self Sufficiency Services, Services and Supplies, to provide funding for costs related to emergency childcare for essential workers based on federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding. (4 VOTES)

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- 2.) Authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, or designee to enter into negotiations with the YMCA Childcare Resource Service and Child Development Associates and subject to successful negotiations, execute agreements in an equal amount to both entities to administer emergency childcare vouchers using substantially similar eligibility and program guidelines found in the California Department of Education's Early Childhood Learning and Education Division Management Bulletin 20-06 (April 2020) for the remainder of the calendar year and to amend the agreements as needed.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds associated with today's recommendation are not included in the Self Sufficiency Services Fiscal Year 2019-20 Operational Plan. If approved, the recommendation will result in costs and revenues of \$5,000,000. The funding source is federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act funding. There will be no change in net General Fund and no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

If approved, these actions will have a positive impact on the business community by enabling essential workers with increased opportunities to staff essential businesses in the community.

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

On April 10<sup>th</sup> the Child Care Disaster Council (the Council) was activated in coordination with the County's Office of Emergency Services. The purpose of the Council is to assess the childcare needs and capacity during disaster responses and support the childcare community in service continuity during a disaster. Additionally, the Council was briefed on the efforts by the San Diego Emergency Child Care Taskforce and the need to have a plan in place to support the activation of emergency childcare options through the existing childcare infrastructure in the county.

**BACKGROUND**

Today, I am proposing to allocate \$5 million from the County's federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allotment to immediately support "Emergency Childcare" vouchers for San Diego County's critical essential workers and other vulnerable populations that are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Health care workers, first responders as well as any others employed by essential businesses are on the front lines fighting the deadly COVID-19 pandemic so the rest of us can remain safely in our homes and continue to get our basic needs met. They are risking their lives to keep us alive and safe. In the midst of their exhausting, heroic work, those with young children (ages birth to 12 years) have the added hardship of arranging and paying for childcare because schools (which previously provided a minimum of 30 hours per week of supervision and, if parents rely on before and after school programming, up to 50 hours a week of supervision) and many childcare operators are closed. Many of these individuals are now being asked to work extended and off-hours shifts, exacerbating their childcare challenges.

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Additionally, families who are already grappling with trying circumstances caused by domestic violence, homelessness, child abuse and caring for a disabled child with higher needs are facing increased struggles due to the public health orders related to COVID-19 crisis.

In response to this growing need, I received a plan from the San Diego Emergency Child Care Task Force, a group made up of early childhood education stakeholders and community-based providers. This plan recommended expanding subsidized childcare to essential workers. The intent of the proposal is to ensure that essential workers who are parents or guardians of children (ages 0 – 12 years) can continue to do their jobs at full productivity despite the shutdown of schools and many childcare providers. The plan proposes to leverage the existing state-subsidized early learning and care program system of care, called California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP), which pays childcare providers on behalf of low-income families who have a demonstrated need for care. Payments are paid according to CDE rules and capped by the Regional Market Rate Ceilings. As of March 2020, the CAPP childcare voucher administrators operating in San Diego were at capacity and were not accepting any new applications.

To help address the growing demand for additional childcare resources to support California's essential workers, the Governor signed Senate Bill 89 (2020) into law, which gave the State Superintendent of Public Instruction the authority to develop directives to address early childhood learning programs impacted by the coronavirus. Additionally, Governor Newsom allocated \$100 million in funding to support "Emergency Childcare" for essential workers with \$50 million going toward CAPP to expand childcare vouchers to COVID19 essential workers and other vulnerable populations and \$50 million for cleaning supplies, personal protective equipment and other health and safety supplies for childcare providers opening their operations during the emergency.

In late April, the Superintendent of Public Instruction issued a California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division Management Bulletin 20-06 detailing administrative, eligibility and program guidelines, as well as defined payment rates for existing local childcare administrators to provide "Emergency Childcare" to COVID-19 essential workers and at-risk families. Two months of childcare will be paid directly to the childcare provider on behalf of an eligible family at the Regional Market Rate through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Subsequently, the San Diego region CAPP contracted administrators received a combined \$5.1 million of state "Emergency Childcare" funding. The two long-standing contractors for CAPP are YMCA Childcare Resource Service (YMCA CRS) and Child Development Associates (CDA). These state funds were allocated at the end of April, which allowed for the reopening of applications for the CAPP childcare voucher program on April 24<sup>th</sup>. It is estimated that this funding will support vouchers for approximately 2,664 children for two months.

As of April 29, one week after CAPP applications were re-opened locally, the two agencies have received a combined 1514 eligible applications from families countywide. Some families have multiple children, as such the program applications are temporarily closed and a waiting list has been started while they evaluate the current flood of applications to ensure there are enough funds to cover the requests received. This overflowing response is further evidence that the demand among San Diego County's essential workers for childcare resources exceeds the current

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funding available and additional funding from the County would be significant to help meet the need of more families that are struggling to make ends meet.

YMCA CRS and CDA have established a single Countywide application on the San Diego for Every Child website [www.sandiegoforeverychild.org](http://www.sandiegoforeverychild.org) where applicants in need of “Emergency Childcare” can fill out a brief application for either program. The state funded CAPP voucher program and/or a micro-grant toward childcare expenses (one-time stipend) for essential workers and other families facing hardship related to COVID-19. This micro-grant program is funded through philanthropy and at the time of writing this board letter, that fund has been depleted, has a significant waitlist and is not currently accepting additional applications. Eligibility guidelines for each program differ and families cannot receive benefits from both programs; they can only receive assistance from one or the other.

As outlined in this board letter, allocating \$5 million of the County’s CARES Act allotment aligns with the Governor’s investments in the childcare system, as well as the San Diego Emergency Child Care Task Force’s recommendations. By leveraging the existing CAPP childcare voucher system and administrators, eligibility and program guidelines it will allow for a quick turn-around to get more childcare resources for San Diego’s dedicated COVID-19 essential workers.

The following is criteria for families that are eligible for CAPP, which are enrolled based on the prioritization criteria set forth in the California Department of Education Management Bulletin 20-06 referenced earlier:

1.) At-Risk Populations:

- **At-Risk Population Priority 1:** Children identified as receiving Child Protective Services or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- **At-Risk Population Priority 2:** Children eligible through the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children
- **At-Risk Population Priority 3:** Families experiencing homelessness as defined in Section 11434(a)(2) of Title 42 of the *United States Code*, known as the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act*
- **At-Risk Population Priority 4:** Children of domestic violence survivors

2.) Essential workers in the following sectors, whose total family income does not exceed the current income eligibility threshold and are not able to work remotely (enroll in the order listed):

- **Essential Worker Priority 1:** Healthcare / Public Health and Emergency Service sectors
- **Essential Worker Priority 2:** Food and Agriculture, Teachers, Education staff, and providers of Early Learning and Care Services including custodial, kitchen staff, and other support staff, workers supporting critical infrastructure, State and local government workers, Communications and Information Technology IT, Energy, Transportation and Logistics, Critical Manufacturing, Hazardous Materials, Financial Services, and Chemical sectors

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- **Essential Worker Priority 3:** All other fields listed on the State’s Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers document
- 3.) Families with children with disabilities or special health care needs whose Individual Education Programs and Individual Family Support Plans include Early Learning and Care services.
- 4.) Essential workers listed in #2 above, whose total family income exceeds the current income eligibility threshold and are not able to work remotely.

The CAPP program has been in operation with state funding and guidance for over 40 years with already established administrators and program guidelines that have been modified in accordance with COVID-19 essential workers in mind. Leveraging this system will allow county funds to become operational and flow to San Diegans in an efficient and expedient manner.

With the current rate of applications submitted during the first week CAPP reopened under the administration of YMCA and CDA, it is evident that the \$5 million allocated by the state will not fully meet the needs that exist in San Diego, but if the County steps up and contributes funding it will go a long way to help bridge the unplanned costs of families that counted on their children being in school and are struggling paying for this expected expense.

There are other efforts in the works to help identify the scope of the need and to inform stakeholders about solutions going forward as the proposal in this board letter is only meant to be a bridge until a more comprehensive solution can be identified and funded. The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is currently circulating a survey to parents through school districts, as well as other list serves to obtain input from essential workers on their current childcare needs to assess the care parents require during this time.

Additionally, the state legislature is holding budget hearings to discuss how they will use the \$351 million in federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) as part of the CARES Act, which is also designated to provide assistance to families effected by COVID-19 and childcare providers during the public health crisis. Although the state legislature is holding hearings about how this funding should be spent, it is not anticipated that any decisions will be made until the next fiscal year.

It is clear that “Emergency Childcare” for essential workers that have made personal sacrifices for the good of our community need immediate support to help with unplanned childcare needs during this pandemic. The County has received its allocation of CARES Act funding that can be used to support essential workers during this crisis. If we act now, by establishing a program that mirrors eligibility of the State’s “Emergency Childcare” through the CAPP system and utilize existing contractors, we can establish additional vouchers in a short turnaround time to support our critical essential workers.

I urge your support for allocating \$5 million in CARES Act funding for “Emergency Childcare” vouchers for essential workers, and directing the Chief Administrative Officer to enter into

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agreements with YMCA and CDA using similar eligibility criteria and other guidelines outlined in the California Department of Education Management Bulletin 20-06.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

The requested action supports the Live Well San Diego Initiative in the County's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, and its vision for a San Diego that is Building Better Health, Living Safely and Thriving, by providing support to essential workers who are fulfilling their duties during a global pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Fletcher". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

NATHAN FLETCHER  
Supervisor, Fourth District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**      Yes     No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
 Yes     No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** District 4

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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