

Dear Parents and Child Care Providers:

Thank you very much for your continued understanding over the last year, as we have worked diligently to navigate and adjust our agency procedures to accommodate the shift in our “new normal” due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic has been challenging, it has given way to positive policy revisions implemented by the California Legislature.

Effective July 1, 2021, Supportive Services, Inc. Alternative Payment Program along with other childcare and development programs transitioned from the California Department of Education to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). This transition is the result of the Early Childhood Development Act of 2020. The State of California is committed to building and strengthening an equitable, comprehensive, quality, and affordable childcare and development system in our state. The California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services will continue to work together to support this smooth transition.

Governor Newsome has approved Assembly Bill 131 which will require additional changes and modifications to address the continued issues negatively impacting once again all of us due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider the Supportive Services, Inc. Parent/Provider Handbook and this document as your resource guide for gathering information regarding parent and provider requirements from now through June 30, 2022.

As always, we would like to thank you for your continued patience and diligence as we work together to meet the needs of the families we serve during these unique and ever-changing times.

### **The following guidelines are effective July 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2022 and superseded any previously issued**

#### **16 Paid Nonoperational Days**

Assembly Bill 131 (chapter 116, Statutes of 2021) authorized 16 reimbursable nonoperational days for childcare and development providers when the provider is closed due to COVID related reasons. The 16 paid nonoperational days are available for both licensed and license-exempt childcare providers. Furthermore, the 16 nonoperational days are available for use between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. The 16 paid nonoperational days do not need to be used consecutively.

Nonoperational closure days include closures necessary to allow providers to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine or to recover from the COVID-19 vaccine side effects, to clean and sanitize the space in which childcare services are provided. Childcare providers are to mark on the attendance sheet(s) any closure days they wish to claim when they are closed for COVID-related reasons.

#### **Retroactive Adjustments**

Supportive Services, Inc. provides the option of requesting an adjustment to be reimbursed retroactively for closures related to COVID-19 for which a provider may not have previously been reimbursed. Retro reimbursements will be processed as quickly as possible. To determine if you are eligible for a retroactive adjustment contact the Accounts Payable Department at (559) 230-1180.

### **Tracking Nonoperational Days**

Effective July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, Supportive Services, Inc. must report, monthly, to the Department of Social Services the usage of paid nonoperational days and associated costs. Hence, it is important that ALL childcare providers document COVID related closures on the monthly attendance sheets to assist the agency in remaining compliant with State requirements.

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-09

### **Waiver of Family Fees**

Effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, childcare providers will NOT collect family fees. Family fees will be waived through June 30, 2022. Supportive Services, Inc. will reimburse the full amount of the child's certified childcare hours without deducting family fees starting with the July 2021 childcare reimbursement. Please be advised that the collection of family fees will resume on July 1, 2022 in accordance with families' initial certification or recertification.

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-01

### **Parent Signatures**

Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 10227.5, attendance sheets must include the dates and times in and out documented on a daily basis and must be signed by both the provider and the parent. If the child is not in attendance, the provider must indicate the reason for the absence.

Effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, or through the end of the state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as declared by the Governor on March 4, 2020, whichever comes first, Supportive Services, Inc will reimburse childcare providers who submit an attendance sheet without a parent or guardian signature IF the childcare provider has attempted to collect the signature, but the parent or guardian is unable to sign due to COVID-19.

Attendance sheets eligible for reimbursement without a parent signature, must accompany documentation or an attestation of the provider's attempts to collect the parent or guardian's signature.

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-07

### **Parent Appeal Process**

As part of the transition from the California Department of Education to the California Department of Social Services, the state level appeals contact information has changed. Effective July 1, 2021, families who have completed the local level appeal process and are now appealing at the state level, should send all applicable correspondence to:

California Department of Social Services  
Child Care and Development Division  
Attn: Appeals Coordinator  
744 P Street, MS 9-8-351  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (833) 559-2420  
Fax: (916) 654-1048  
Email: CCDDAppeals@dss.ca.gov

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-11

### **Provider Reimbursement Based on Certified Need**

Pursuant to AB 131 (chapter 116, Statutes of 2021), childcare providers shall continue to be reimbursed based on families' certified need for services, as follows:

1. Childcare providers shall be reimbursed based on the maximum authorized hours of care, regardless of attendance.
2. Childcare providers who service families with a variable schedule, shall also be reimbursed based on the maximum authorized hours of care.

3. License-exempt childcare providers who provide part-time childcare services, shall be reimbursed based on the maximum authorized hours of care.

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-07

### **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Survey Requirement**

In accordance with federal requirements for the Child Care Stabilization funds, childcare providers who are reimbursed based on certified need rather than attendance or who are reimbursed for nonoperational days must provide information via a one-time survey. The survey can be completed online and is available in English and Spanish. More details will be provided in a separate mailing.

English ARPA survey link: <https://bit.ly/3ujym53>

Spanish ARPA survey link: <https://bit.ly/3AEmNaC>

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-07; 21-09

### **TK – 12 School Closures**

If a child is required to quarantine from school due to COVID and during the quarantine the child utilizes services with the childcare provider, the provider may be eligible for reimbursement. Parents must submit a copy of the documentation from the school verifying the child must be quarantined and the duration of the quarantine. Without proper document, Supportive Services, Inc. is unable to reimburse childcare providers for the days/hours a child is in the care of the childcare provider due to COVID-19 TK – 12 school closures.

\*Reference: CAPPA-CDSS 10-19-2021

### **Provider Reimbursement for School-Age Children – Effective November 15, 2021**

#### **In-Person Instruction**

In accordance with state and federal law, reimbursing childcare providers during the hours of a child's "scheduled instructional minutes" is prohibited. As a result, Supportive Services, Inc. must only reimburse childcare providers during non-school hours when a school-age child is enrolled and participating in "in-person instruction."

#### **Distance Learning**

Distance Learning refers to remote instruction offered when a school is closed, and in-person instruction is not available. Since TK-12 distance learning does not provide supervision for children during a child's "scheduled instructional minutes" of a public or private educational program that the child is enrolled and attending, the agency may reimburse providers for days/hours that a school-age child is participating in distance learning while in a childcare setting. **Note: this only applies when the child's school is closed, and in-person instruction is not available.**

#### **In-Person vs. Remote Learning Option**

If a school offers the choice between in-person instruction and remote schooling, Supportive Services, Inc. is unable to reimburse childcare providers for any day/hours of care that take place when in-person instruction is available, but the parent opts to enroll their school-age child in remote learning. Per Child Care Bulletin 21-14, Supportive Services, Inc. may only reimburse providers for care provided during non-school hours or when in-person instruction is not available. **Note: this policy is effective November 15, 2021. Childcare that was provided between July 1, 2021, and November 12, 2021, while in-person instruction was available but where the parent opted to utilize remote learning shall be reimbursed. ANY reimbursement for childcare provided on or after November 16, 2021, must meet the criteria as outlined in this section.**

\*Reference: Child Care Bulletin 21-14



# ATTENTION CHILD CARE PROVIDERS!

## American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Survey Requirement

October 27, 2021

Pursuant to the Agreement between the State of California and Child Care Providers United – California (CCPU), the Governor and the Legislature directed a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) childcare stabilization funding to childcare providers in the form of benefits such as stipends or rate increases. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is responsible for issuing the ARPA funding to childcare providers and childcare and development contractors, and for collecting data about how the funds were used, to comply with federal reporting requirements. Collected data will be protected and reported to the federal government to track COVID-19 childcare stabilization funding.

Providers who wish to continue their eligibility for applicable one-time stipends and other forms of financial support allocated via AB 131 and ARPA, must complete the ARPA survey by December 31, 2021. The survey can be completed online and is available in English and Spanish, see the below links. \*\* A hardcopy version of the survey will be forthcoming for childcare providers who do not have internet access.

- English ARPA survey link: <https://bit.ly/3ujym53>
- Spanish ARPA survey link: <https://bit.ly/3AEmNaC>

**NOTE:** *Supportive Services, Inc. is not the managing authority for the ARPA survey; we are only serving as a liaison to CDSS, fulfilling our obligation to share the ARPA Survey requirement with childcare providers registered with our program. If you have questions, or need help completing this survey, please email the California Department of Social Services at [CCPB@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCPB@dss.ca.gov).*

## Upcoming Agency Policy Changes

The following Agency Policies are in the revision process:

### **Abandonment of Care**

Supportive Services, Inc must review attendance sheets monthly to determine if a family has not used childcare for 30 days. Non-attendance for 30 days is considered abandonment. Parents and providers have individual reporting requirements below:

#### **Parent Reporting Requirements**

Families must notify their childcare provider within seven (7) consecutive calendar days if their child(ren) will be absent along with a reason for the absence and the expected duration of the absence.

#### **Provider Reporting Requirements**

When a family has not been in communication with the provider for seven (7) consecutive calendar days and has not notified the provider of the reason the family is not using services, the provider must contact Supportive Services, Inc. at (559) 230-1180.

#### **Supportive Services, Inc Abandonment of Care Procedure**

1. Supportive Services, Inc. will attempt to contact families via phone, email and in writing when a provider has notified the agency that a family has not used services and failed to contact the provider for seven (7) consecutive calendar days.
2. When attempts to contact the family are unsuccessful, Supportive Services, Inc. will issue a Notice of Action (NOA) disenrolling the family based on **Abandonment of Care.**

### **Annual Recertification Timeline**

50 days