



THE HON DAN TEHAN MP

Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

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New support for families and child care services

Families using child care now have 62 days available to them for absences. They will continue to receive the Child Care Subsidy if their child is absent from care for any reason for these days.

Families will be able to use the additional 20 days of absences this financial year. Beyond 62 days the Government has waived the requirement to produce medical evidence if a child is absent due to COVID-19 reasons.

Families will now be able to access an additional 20 days of child care this financial year while still receive the Child Care Subsidy to support families impacted by COVID-19.

Families will be able to access a total of 62 days of allowable absences as well as additional absences, where a child is ill, quarantined or unable to attend child care due to COVID-19, and without the medical evidence usually required.

The Government has also waived the requirement for services to enforce payment of out of pocket fees by families for child care services who have been directed to close on public health advice as a result of COVID-19.

The current expert medical advice is that the child care sector remains open except where individual services have been directed to close by health authorities.

The health and safety of all Australians is our number one priority, and that includes the 1.3 million children in child care, and 200,000 staff working in the child care sector.

Families experiencing a loss of income, such as casual workers or those in self-isolation, may be eligible for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship). This subsidy is available for up to 13 weeks and, in most cases, the full cost of child care will be covered.

The Federal Government is working with the sector to protect the viability of child care providers so they can continue to provide their services to Australian families.

The new rules give effect to the amendments passed by Parliament on Monday to the *Families Assistance Act* and *Family Assistance Administration Act*, and provide fee relief to families and child care services.

Grants are also available for child care providers through the Community Child Care Special Circumstances Fund to help cover business costs, including wages, to ensure services impacted by COVID-19 can continue to operate.

Child care services seeking health and situation information about COVID-19 should contact the 24/7 National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. Information is also available from <https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19>.

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