### COVID-19 Policy Response: Child Care

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| Use a portion of Georgia Lottery Reserves to mitigate cuts to Georgia’s Pre-K | N/A                      | State budget allocation | • Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) submitted a budget proposal to the House of Representativeness, Senate, and Office of Planning and Budget.  
• DECAL Commissioner Amy Jacobs presented, on 05/26/20, the 14% budget reduction proposal to the Senate Appropriations Committee. | |
| Create an Afterschool, Summer Enrichment, Youth Development work group to strategically approach | N/A                      | Budget directive to Department of Early Care and Learning, the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services, the Georgia Department of Education, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Technical College System of Georgia, and the USG Extension Service | • Unknown. | |
| Provide guidance for Day Camp settings | N/A                      | DECAL guidance    | • DECAL provides health and safety guidance, which align with CDC guidelines and the 05/12/20 Executive Order (EO), for day camp settings. (05/12/20)  
• DECAL shared a Day Camp Decision Tree infographic, which was created by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (05/18/20) | |

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</table>
| Provide guidance on virtual inspections | N/A                      | DECAL guidance   | • DECAL has temporarily added a virtual and online component to child care regulation. (05/06/20)  
• DECAL provided guidance on annual report required reporting for virtual visit inspections. (05/06/20)  |                                |
| DECAL distribute clear and consistent health and safety guidance to child care providers | N/A                      | DECAL guidance   | • DECAL Commissioner acknowledges provider’s expertise in practicing and teaching health and hygiene that are in accordance with DPH and CDC guidelines. (03/20/20)  
• DECAL provides guidance on health and safety protocol for child care providers. (03/25/20)  
• DECAL FAQ provides child care specific CDC guidance.  
• DECAL states providers should follow all licensing regulations and public health department guidance.  
• Governor Kemp issued an EO (04/23/20), effective 05/01/20 through 05/13/20, stating that licensed child care providers may continue to operate, while still following standard hygiene and disinfectant guidelines provided by DECAL. (04/27/20)  
• DECAL released a guidance check-list for child care operations that ensure compliance with the 04/23/20 EO.  
• DECAL FAQ provides a list of resources for PPE vendors. (05/04/20)  
• DECAL issued guidance for the following child care operation practices, which follow the EO issued on 05/12/20 by Governor Kemp:  
  o Limit group sizes to a maximum of 20 people per room, including teachers;  | • WA: documents detailing health and safety guidance for arrival, departure, play areas, meal time, and hygiene practices  
• IA: documents detailing guidance for health hygiene practices |

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<td>Restrict eating to classroom instead of congregate/communal settings;</td>
<td>DECAL provides health and safety guidance, which aligns with CDC guidelines, for operating child care providers. (05/12/20)</td>
<td>DECAL shared a Child Care Program Decision Tree infographic, which was created by the CDC. (05/18/20)</td>
<td>DECAL posted a CDC follow-up letter which highlights resources for child care providers. (05/18/20)</td>
<td>DECAL issued (04/08/20) the following policy waivers, updated on 04/23/20 and 05/20/20 for CAPS: Emergency CAPS Payment from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20. Emergency CAPS State-Approved Activity from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20. Temporary Suspension of Provider Rate Changes from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20.</td>
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<td>Health screenings upon arrival;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited access to facility;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanitization and disinfectant protocol; and</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Modify sign in/ sign out procurers. (05/13/20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue emergency waivers for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DECAL guidance</td>
<td>DECAL issued (04/08/20) the following policy waivers, updated on 04/23/20 and 05/20/20 for CAPS: Emergency CAPS Payment from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20. Emergency CAPS State-Approved Activity from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20. Temporary Suspension of Provider Rate Changes from 03/16/20 through 06/05/20.</td>
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<td>Extend CAPS Quality Rated 2020 deadline</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DECAL guidance</td>
<td>• DECAL FAQ states that a new deadline will be announced after the public health emergency subsides. Expected new deadline will be on or after 06/30/21. (04/09/20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Create Essential Services Workforce    | N/A                       | DECAL guidance  | • DECAL has established a new priority group, Essential Services Workforce, for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS). (04/01/20)  
• Essential Services Workforce Tier 1 includes:  
  o Law enforcement, public safety, and first responder personnel;  
  o Medical personnel who provide direct care to patients and the personnel who support direct care to patients;  
  o Pharmacy personnel; and  
  o Child care personnel.  
• Essential Services Workforce Tier 2 includes:  
  o Food and grocery store personnel;  
  o Convenience store personnel;  
  o Pharmacy personnel not included in Tier 1; |                                |

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| Assist families impacted by COVID-19 in accessing child care | N/A                      | DECAL guidance   | • DECAL is encouraging families to visit www.qualityrated.org or call 1-477-ALL-GA-KIDS (Call Center). (03/20/20)  
• DECAL is assisting families in child care searches through the Call Center. (03/20/20)  
• Governor Kemp, DECAL, and YMCA Metro Atlanta created a partnership to [dedicate child care sites for medical workers](#). (03/18/20)  
• YMCA Metro Atlanta has shared their critical child care model with other YMCAs; each site has deciding authority.  
• DECAL FAQ asks providers to report closures immediately.  
• DECAL is contacting providers that have not reflected their operation hour information on KOALA.  
• DECAL is updating, daily, child care sites closing and operating. | |
| | | |  
| Connect parents with operating child care providers  
Provide up to date resources and information regarding child care changes | | | |

- Food and grocery manufacturing;  
- Food processing;  
- Farming and food production;  
- Food and grocery storage, distribution, or transit;  
- Food and grocery delivery; and  
- Restaurant food preparation, service, or delivery. (04/30/20)

- DECAL has a [three-tier definition](#) for eligible families for the Essential Services Workforce. DECAL will re-evaluate 05/01/20 to determine when to open Tier 2. (04/21/20)

- The CAPS scholarship application for Essential Service Workforce Priority Group can be found [here](#). (04/16/20)

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<tr>
<td>Provide <strong>enhanced child care referrals</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DECAL guidance</td>
<td>• Current updates can be found on DECAL social media and <a href="#">website</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ensure Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLHs) can continue operations | N/A | DECAL licensing regulations, DECAL guidance EO | • DECAL is assisting all families in child care searches through the Call Center. (03/20/20)
Note: An enhanced referral occurs when CCR&R coordinates with child care programs to confirm vacancies before the referral is offered to the parent. |

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### Potential Policy and Practice Changes

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| **Utilize Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) networks** | N/A                       | DECAL guidance   | • All 4 GA CCR&R’s, covering 159 counties through 6 regional networks, have created COVID-19 informational pages linking to resources and DECAL updates.  
  ○ [Quality Care for Children](#)  
  ○ [Albany State University](#)  
  ○ [Augusta University/ Leap Early Learning Partners](#)  
  ○ [Savannah Technical College](#)  
  • DECAL is working with CCR&R and the Call Center to address available child care seats for COVID-19 responders. |                               |
| **Ensure adequate funding to support child care and afterschool program sustainability** | Office of the Administration for Children and Families, [CCDF](#) (03/13/20): “lead agencies may use CCDF quality dollars to provide temporary grants or assistance to impacted providers to retain the child care supply during periods of closures” | DECAL assist in creation of a [Statewide Disaster Plan](#) for child care | • Georgia received a statewide disaster declaration from U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Small business owners can apply for a SBA Economic Injury Loan. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
• DECAL will make Georgia Pre-K payments for April and May based on April roster. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
• DECAL will make CAPS payments through service week 04/10/20, if the child has attended at least once since 03/01/20. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
• DECAL will continue to re-evaluate CAPS payment policy on a 2-week time frame.  
• DECAL is awaiting guidance on funds utilization authorized by [The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act](#) from U.S. Congress. As of 04/13/20, DECAL has not received official notification or guidance related to the CARES act. DECAL is preparing how to disburse funds but must wait for official notification and guidance to release more information. ([DECAL FAQ](#)) (04/14/20)  
• Georgia received $144 million under CARES Act. For the first phase of fund distributions, licensed Child Care Providers, |                               |

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| Enhance **KOALA** for provider closure updates | N/A                       | DECAL guidance   | starting 05/01/20, can apply for the DECAL Short Term Assistance Benefit for Licensed Entities (STABLE) payments.  
  - DECAL hosted a provider [webinar](#) for general updates and STABLE Q&A.  
  - STABLE grant application can be found [here](#). It can be accessed through 05/15/20. (05/07/20)  
  - Georgia Foundation for Early Care + Learning received a $250,000 grant award that will be used to provide assistance to child care programs and families within the 23-county Atlanta metro area. (04/20/20) Grant is open for applications. (04/28/20) |  |
| Ensure all child care programs to utilize KOALA to report the following within 48 hours of occurrence | N/A                       | DECAL guidance   |  
  - KOALA enhancement complete and allows providers to report operations and closures. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
  - DECAL is contacting providers that have not reflected their operation hour information. |  
  - IL: requesting sites to [report closure](#)  
  - PA: [report all closures](#) |

- Partial or full closures
- Open seats by age group
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| Suspend quality rated observations    | N/A                      | DECAL guidance  | • DECAL has suspended quality rated observations until 06/30/20. ([DECAL FAQ](#)) (04/09/20)  
• DECAL FAQ provides detailed updated information on quality rated. (04/28/20) |                                           |
| Address regulations for child care providers | N/A                      | EO              | Governor Kemp released an [Executive Order](#) (03/24/20) addressing revised regulations:  
• Providers to restrict family/guardian access to facility.  
• Providers to limit access to front door of facility and classrooms.  
• Suspend immunization requirements as a result of limited health care sector capacity.  
• Suspend field trips.  
• Child Care Centers must have 1 staff member and 1 administrator with a CPR and First Aid Certification on premises.  
DECAL provided guidance on health and safety protocol for child care providers. (03/25/20) |                                           |
| Continue [Georgia Pre-K](#) payments, regardless of closures | N/A                      | DECAL guidance  | • DECAL will make payments for April and May based on April roster. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
• All Georgia Pre-K will be closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. ([DECAL FAQ](#))  
• Guidance for programs regarding Work Sampling Online can be found [here](#). (04/28/20)  
• Guidance for programs regarding close-out can be found [here](#). (04/28/20) |                                           |

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| Continue CAPS payments, regardless of closures | N/A | DECAL guidance | • DECAL will make CAPS payments through service week 04/10/20, if the child has attended at least once since 03/01/20. (DECAL FAQ)  
• DECAL will continue to re-evaluate CAPS payment policy on a 2-week time span. |  |
| DECAL distribute food program participation guidance to child care providers | N/A | Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) guidance | • DECAL FAQ provides daily updates and clarifications to current food program protocol.  
• DECAL created a Nutrition Services Emergency Feeding Vendor Resource List. (05/6/20)  
• The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) created downloadable Team Nutrition resources regarding meal service flexibilities:  
  o Feeding Kids When Schools Are Closed Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). |  |
| Apply for requirement waivers for CACFP to address food access | USDA, FNS (03/20/20) issued nationwide waivers: 60-Day Reporting Requirement Non-Congregate Meals Meal time | DECAL submit waiver request to USDA, FNS | • DECAL (FAQ) will participate in the following nationwide waivers during the public health emergency for CACFP programs:  
  Nationwide CACFP State Agency Monitoring (Annual Review) Waiver: waives the requirement to complete CACFP monitoring on site. This waiver remains in effect until 09/30/20 or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. (04/24/20)  
  Nationwide 60 Day Reporting Requirement Waiver: waives the 60-day reimbursement claims deadline. This waiver applies for claims covering operations for January and February 2020. (04/01/20) |  |

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<td><strong>Activity Requirement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide Meal Pattern Waiver:</strong> programs are not required to meet all meal pattern requirements. This waiver <a href="#">has been extended</a> and will stay in effect until 06/30/20. (<a href="#">05/14/20</a>)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meal Pick Up</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide Onsite Monitoring Waiver:</strong> waives required CACFP site/facility review and review processes through 06/30/20. Available to all sponsoring organizations that elect to use it. Additional details can be found in the DECAL <a href="#">FAQ</a>. (<a href="#">03/27/20</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meal Pattern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide Meal Pick Up Waiver:</strong> program can distribute meals to parents/guardians. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per <a href="#">USDA extension</a>. (<a href="#">05/18/20</a>)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>On-Site Monitor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide Non-Congregate Feeding Waiver:</strong> meals do not have to be served in a congregate setting or consumed on site. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per <a href="#">USDA extension</a>. (<a href="#">05/18/20</a>)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide Meal Service Times Waiver:</strong> sites are not required to follow meal service time requirements. Allows CACFP sponsors to align meal times w/ available community programs and services. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per <a href="#">USDA extension</a>. (<a href="#">05/18/20</a>)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationwide No Activity Requirement for Afterschool CACFP:</strong> No enrichment or educational activity needed during At-Risk-After-School programs. This waiver remains in effect until 06/30/20 or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. (<a href="#">03/20/20</a>)</td>
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| Apply for requirement waivers for SFSP to address food access | USDA, FNS issued nationwide waivers: 60-Day Reporting Requirement Non-Congregate Meals Meal time Activity Requirement Meal Pick Up Meal Pattern On-Site Monitor | DECAL submit waiver request to USDA, FNS | • DECAL submitted the following SFSP waiver: Allow SFSP sponsors of open, restricted open, and enrolled sites (all in good standing, and within DECAL discretion) to serve up to 2 meals and 1 snack per day. (03/18/20)  
• DECAL ([FAQ](#)) will participate in the following nationwide waivers during the public health emergency for SFSP programs:  
  Nationwide Extension of Unanticipated School Closures Waiver: delays transition from National School Lunch Program to Seamless Summer Option and SFSP. (04/27/20)  
  Nationwide Food Service Management Contract Waiver: waives contract duration, use emergency noncompetitive procurement for a one-year extension. (04/24/20)  
  Nationwide 60 Day Reporting Requirement Waiver: waives the 60-day reimbursement claims deadline. This waiver applies for claims covering operations for January and February 2020. (04/01/20)  
  Nationwide Meal Pattern Waiver: programs are not required to meet all meal pattern requirements. DECAL provides guidance for menu alternatives. This waiver remains in effect until 04/30/20 or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. (03/25/20)  
  Nationwide Onsite Monitoring Waiver: postpone requiring SFSP onsite visits. Additional details can be found in the DECAL [FAQ](#). (03/27/20)  
  Nationwide Meal Pick Up Waiver: program can distribute meals to parents/guardians. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per [USDA](#) extension. (05/18/20) | |
TABLE KEY: □ = in progress □ = need more information or forthcoming □ = not being implemented

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<td>Allow Exempt Summer Programs to provide services for school age children</td>
<td></td>
<td>DECAL guidance</td>
<td><em>Nationalwide Non-Congregate Feeding Waiver:</em> meals do not have to be served in a congregate setting or consumed on site. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per <a href="#">USDA extension</a>. (05/18/20) <em>Nationalwide Meal Service Times Waiver:</em> allows SFSP sponsors to align meal times w/ available community programs and services. This waiver remains in effect until 08/31/20 per <a href="#">USDA extension</a>. (05/18/20)</td>
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