

## COVID-19 FAQs for accelerateSC Call Center

### SNAP Benefits/Food Assistance

#### Are Emergency SNAP benefits available now?

Due to economic conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, SCDSS received a federal waiver that provided three months (March through May) of emergency SNAP supplements to address temporary food needs for SNAP households. Emergency SNAP supplements are only for those households who are already receiving SNAP benefits or households who meet all income or other eligibility requirements for the regular SNAP program. SNAP households who already receive the maximum benefit amount **will not** receive an emergency supplement. **No additional waiver has been received for ongoing allocation of Emergency SNAP benefits.**

#### How can I apply for food assistance/SNAP benefits?

You may apply for SNAP and/or TANF benefits online; submit your completed application form in the secure, outside drop box at any DSS county office; mail or fax your application.

- To apply online, visit [SCMAPP.sc.gov](http://SCMAPP.sc.gov).
- To apply or renew via fax, send to (803) 734-2012.
- If you need an application or a renewal form mailed to you, please call 1-800-616-1309.

### ABUSE and/or NEGLECT REPORTING for Children and Vulnerable Adults

#### How do I make a report if I believe a child or vulnerable adult is at risk for abuse or neglect?

Call the SCDSS Abuse and Neglect Reporting Hotline at **1-888-CARE4US**, that's **1-888-227-3487**.

#### Who is considered a “mandated reporter” of abuse and/or neglect?

SC State law requires certain professionals who are 18 years of age to report suspected abuse or neglect. A list of mandated reporters can be found here:

<https://dss.sc.gov/abuseneglect/mandated-reporters/>

#### Why is the risk of abuse and neglect heightened during COVID-19?

As families are challenged with maintaining their children's learning, loss of jobs, food and financial instability, illness and other stressors, the risk of abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults is heightened. Professionals who are identified as mandated reporters, such as teachers, counselors, medical professionals and clergy, have less contact with children and vulnerable adults who may need help. Read more [here](#).

### CHILD CARE

### **How can I find a list of licensed child care centers in South Carolina?**

To learn more about the health and safety of children, or search for a child care provider, please visit [scchildcare.org](http://scchildcare.org)

### **Is child care assistance still available for parents considered “Essential Workers”?**

Unfortunately, the deadline (May 8) has passed for acceptance of child care applications for Essential Workers that were made available through the federal CARES Act.

### **What questions do I need to ask when choosing child care?**

These questions are designed to help parents make an informed decision about where to send your child during the COVID-19 Emergency:

- **Is the provider licensed or registered by the Department of Social Services?**  
Under state law certain operations are exempt from licensing. Please be aware that a family, friend or neighbor may only care for one unrelated family to be within the law. If they wish to care for more than one unrelated family, they must be registered and should call Child Care Licensing at (803) 898-9020.
- **Is this provider required to have background checks?**  
Regulated providers are required to pass central registry, sex offender and fingerprint background checks to care for children.

### **Can a regulated child care provider expand their capacity to serve more children in an emergency?**

The Governor has declared a State of Emergency for the COVID-19 emergency, and emergency plans for child care licensing are in effect. If you are a licensed child care center and can expand your capacity to serve foster children, children of DSS staff and First Responders or displaced children, please contact Child Care Licensing at 1-888-825-7174 as soon as possible.

### **Can I be considered for a temporary license to provide child care during COVID-19 response?**

If your organization has the ability to set up a temporary child care site, please contact Child Care Licensing at 1-888-825-7174. You may be allowed to operate without a license for a maximum of 30 days in accordance with state law (63-13-440). **Child Care Licensing must grant approval for temporary child care arrangements.**

## **FOSTER CARE**

### **If I am a licensed foster parent and believe a child(ren) in my care may have COVID-19, what should I do?**

Caregivers assisting children and youth in foster care who experience symptoms consistent with COVID-19, can use the FREE MUSC COVID-19 screening service by calling 1-843-985-8888. This telehealth screening prevents caregivers from using their own personal insurance information. A telehealth screener will ask questions and submit to a healthcare professional to determine if a COVID-19 test is necessary.

Foster parents with questions or who need support can email: [FPHelp@dss.sc.gov](mailto:FPHelp@dss.sc.gov) or call the DSS Foster Parent Liaison at 1-803-898-4174.

### **Can I pursue foster care licensing or adoption approval during COVID-19?**

DSS partner Heartfelt Calling is actively taking inquiries from those interested in foster home licensing or adoption approval at this time. Anyone interested should call 1-888-828-3555.

- Families can begin collection of required documentation including medical and financial information and submit those documents to their licensing professional.
- DSS licensing professionals are continuing to work to process licensing packets already submitted and follow up with families where more information is required.
- The DSS licensing unit is also practicing unprecedented use of technologies like Skype and FaceTime to do virtual walk-throughs of potential foster adoptive homes. Licensing professionals will have to do an actual physical home inspection before license can be issued. Currently LLR in the state fire marshal to prioritize fire inspections. Preservice training is web-based to allow flexibility for scheduling and completing.

## **CHILD SUPPORT**

### **If I owe past-due child support, will my CARES Act stimulus payment be affected?**

Stimulus payments made to eligible noncustodial parents who owe past-due child support and who are subject to intercept under the Federal Income Tax Refund Offset Program will be offset by the amount of past-due child support.

The CARES Act does not provide states the option to suspend federal interception, so this action takes place prior to the funds being received by the SCDSS Child Support Services Division.

For more information or assistance, call the Child Support Services Call Center at 1-800-768-5858.

### **If I am paying child support under a court order and am eligible for unemployment insurance benefits, will child support be deducted?**

Your child support payment will be withheld from your regular, state-issued unemployment benefit, but should not be withheld from the additional federal unemployment relief provided by the CARES Act.

For more information or assistance, call the Child Support Services Call Center at 1-800-768-5858.