



# RI Department of Human Services

## Responses to CEC May 2023 Follow-Up Questions

### Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

- What would be needed to accommodate the forecasted increase in CCAP spots in terms of staffing or other provider investments?

**Answer:** As of April 21, 2023, the number of children participating in CCAP is 6,301. The capacity for child care statewide is approximately 34,303, inclusive of private pay and CCAP. Based on this, CCAP represents approximately 19% of the current capacity. With this in mind, child care utilization could increase by up to 19% because every child may not attend child care now. However, there could likely be no increase in utilization because every child who would be eligible for CCAP is currently in child care and paying privately.

For families who are new to the system or seeking care and unable to find space, staffing capacity remains a significant issue. DHS has implemented the pandemic retention bonus program and will be implementing a pilot program to support the early childhood system by attracting and retaining staff members. During each round of the retention bonus program, DHS has seen an increase in the number of staff members who have applied for the pandemic retention bonus by an average of 9%. These retention bonuses are currently disbursed every three months. Based on current statistics and what the agency can project, even if the 19% increase in caseload is an increase to utilization of the child care system, DHS is forecasting a 9% increase of staff every three months.

However, because the basic economics of child care have not fundamentally changed, programs remain unable to offer competitive wages to child care workers. To specifically support CCAP families in accessing care, DHS will work with providers to help ensure CCAP children on waitlists receive the same priority as private pay families to the greatest extent possible, such that the lower rate of CCAP pay is not a barrier to entry. Additionally, DHS will have an opportunity to review more robust information through the RISES system, which will aid the agency in further understanding the cause of staff turnover to develop more strategic recommendations.

Most recently, the Governor's Workforce Board also released [a April 2023 report](#) regarding the child care staffing crisis and opportunities to address it, which DHS provided information for as well.

### State Supplemental Payment (SSP)

- Please provide a breakout of the assisted living transaction fees.

**Answer:** The SSA transaction costs, reported in Appendix A, are entirely for the administration of the assisted living monthly payments. The estimated cost for mailed checks, as reported in DHS testimony, is not included in those transaction costs and do not relate to the assisted living payments.