

Governor Phil Murphy

# ICYMI: Human Services to Offer Limited Reopening of the Child Care Assistance Program Application in December

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**TRENTON** – Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman today announced that the Department will start the process of reopening the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for a limited number of slots, with the goal of allowing applications for new children in January. Reopening the application will extend this vital assistance to 75,000 children.

The opportunity to apply will be first issued to families who fall into the program’s priority groups and who complete a registration form starting in December. The limited number of available slots will be offered to priority groups (in accordance with state regulation) that include families with children experiencing homelessness, children with special needs, and children from households with very low incomes. Due to the limited funding available, not all applicants who fall into a priority group and who are invited to apply may be granted assistance.

“For most New Jersey families, child care isn’t a luxury, it’s a necessity. The child care assistance program is a vital economic lifeline that helps pay for high quality early childhood education and allows parents to continue their careers. That is why reopening applications to maximize utilization for this program is so important. We encourage families to complete the registration form as soon as it becomes available,” **said Commissioner Adelman.**

“Today’s decision to reopen the Child Care Assistance Program to new applicants is a significant victory for the vitality of our families, our early childhood workforce, and our state. I am grateful for the Administration’s partnership in bringing this relief back to our communities, and for the sustained efforts of the advocates, parents, and community leaders whose voices made clear just how fundamental this program is to our collective well-being,” **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz.** “Child care is not just a service; it is a central cog in the system that supports our labor force, children’s academic attainment, and broader economic development. With this restoration, more families can work with confidence, knowing their children are cared for in safe, enriching, and well-resourced environments.”

Families will need to complete a registration form by entering some basic information and will be notified when they can complete the full application. The registration form will be available starting in December through [ChildCareNJ.gov](https://www.childcarenj.gov/). Families can sign up now at [ChildCareNJ.gov](https://www.childcarenj.gov/) (<https://www.childcarenj.gov/>) for an email and/or text message alert for when the registration form goes live.

“Child care is an essential expense that families cannot avoid, and we recognize the strain that it can place on household budgets. By prioritizing the most vulnerable, we are ensuring that assistance reaches those who need it

most, providing relief to families working hard to manage their expenses,” **said Deputy Commissioner for Social Services Michael J. Wilson.**

“The cost of child care continues to rise, but thanks to the tireless work of the advocates, elected leaders, parents, and Governor Murphy, this restoration will bring relief to more working families and their children,” **said Senator Angela McKnight.** “By continuing to invest in the CCAP, we are investing in stronger families, stronger communities, and a stronger future for our state. This is progress that uplifts all of us.”

“Reliable care can be the difference between stability and stress for so many households across our state, and as these next steps unfold, I look forward to working with the Administration and our childcare providers to strengthen this system while making sure families know they have support they can count on,” **said Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez.**

“Today’s announcement is an important and welcomed step toward stabilizing New Jersey’s child care system, particularly for infants and toddlers,” **said Assemblywoman Shanique Speight.** “Child care is a critical part of New Jersey’s infrastructure. It allows parents to work, supports healthy child development, and strengthens our economy. The re-opening of Child Care Assistance Program applications will be an enormous asset to parents, caregivers and providers who rely on this critical support in their daily lives.”

“Reopening the Child Care Assistance Program, even in a limited capacity, ensures that there is a lifeline for working class parents striving to stay employed while raising young children by helping to alleviate the oftentimes crushing price of child care,” **said Senator Britnee Timberlake.** “As a legislator with children of daycare age, and as a working mom who knows firsthand the struggle and high expense of childcare, I understand the urgency of this issue for families who make less. I commend the families and advocates who pushed for accessible child care, because it is pivotal in nurturing our children’s development and helps families from every background and income level across New Jersey. This restoration would not have been possible without the tireless work from our communities to bring attention to this program’s undeniable significance. And I want to be clear: as your Senator, I am committed to working with providers, parents, and advocates nonstop until the daycare system works for all.”

CCAP helps income-eligible parents who are working, in school, or in job training to pay for child care. The program stopped accepting new applications as of August 1, 2025, due to limited funding. The pause in applications affected only new enrollees; children who were already enrolled and being served by the program continue to receive assistance.

“We encourage families to review their eligibility on our website and sign up to be notified when the registration form will be available. Families can also find information about their local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies, which are available to all New Jersey families and can refer those who are not CCAP-eligible to affordable child care services,” **said Division of Family Development Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson.**

Families can also check whether they are eligible for the [Head Start \(https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Types\)](https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Types) child care program or if their [school district \(https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Types\)](https://www.childcarenj.gov/Parents/Types) has free child care for three- and four-year-olds.

Since 2018, the Murphy Administration has invested more than a billion dollars in new funding for child care, and, as part of those investments, child care provider rates have more than doubled. The FY2026 budget allocated \$79.5 million in new funding for the child care program; however, a funding gap remained due to increasing enrollment and

unfunded federal policy changes, including the requirement to make enrollment-based payments.

Continue to visit [www.ChildCareNJ.gov](http://www.ChildCareNJ.gov) (<https://www.childcarenj.gov/>) for information and updates.

## Governor Phil Murphy

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