

# NC Pre-K Program Guidance - COVID-19 Crisis

## ***COVID-19 Pandemic Relief for NC Pre-K Classrooms***

**March 2, 2021**

This guidance document is intended to provide information to NC Pre-K programs and Contracting Agencies regarding COVID-19 Pandemic Relief funding for NC Pre-K classrooms.

**It is the responsibility of the NC Pre-K Contracting Agencies to ensure that this guidance is shared with all NC Pre-K programs.**

### **I. Purpose**

In the fall of this year, we shared our intentions to provide additional resources to NC Pre-K programs during the COVID-19 pandemic to support the provision of services to children with an emphasis on in-person instruction. As part of that effort, and our continued commitment to supporting the financial stability of the NC Pre-K program, the Division of Child Development and Early Education will provide **COVID-19 Pandemic Relief** to NC Pre-K classrooms. Funding will be made available for all eligible NC Pre-K classrooms that have provided access to direct services. Classrooms that provided in-person instruction to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and further stabilize the program may qualify for an increased amount of Pandemic Relief funding.

NC Pre-K programs are encouraged to use this funding to purchase materials and supplies for the NC Pre-K classrooms such as, but not limited to:

- Technology for NC Pre-K staff and/or children (e.g., tablets)
- Curriculum and assessment materials
- Classroom materials (manipulatives, books, puzzles, consumables, etc.)
- Professional development for NC Pre-K staff

### **II. Classroom Eligibility Requirements for NC Pre-K Pandemic Relief Funding**

In order to be eligible to receive COVID-19 Pandemic Relief funding the NC Pre-K classroom **must have 1 or more allocated NC Pre-K slots** in the NC Pre-K Plan database **as of February 15, 2021**.

- Classrooms that have been allocated slots by February 15, 2021 will receive Pandemic Relief funding regardless of child enrollment/attendance or teacher qualification.
- Classrooms that are allocated slots **after** February 15, 2021 will **not** receive Pandemic Relief funding regardless of child enrollment/attendance or teacher qualification.

### **III. Classroom Eligibility Requirements for Supplement for In-Person Services**

At the end of January, NC Pre-K contracting agencies completed a survey regarding the provision of in-person instruction for each NC Pre-K classroom with allocated NC Pre-K slots. The purpose of this survey was to identify NC Pre-K classrooms that provided in-person instruction to NC Pre-K children **prior to January 31, 2021**.

Contracting agencies responded to the following question based on the guidelines below:

- **Did this classroom provide ANY face to face instruction (traditional/in-person or hybrid) to NC Pre-K children AT ANY POINT this school year?**
  - If the classroom provided any amount of in-person/face to face instruction to some or all NC Pre-K children at any point during the 2020-2021 school year, please respond “yes”.
  - If the classroom has operated in a fully remote mode all year with NO in-person instruction for NC Pre-K children, please respond “no”.
  - If the classroom has not provided instruction to any NC Pre-K children this year (no children have been enrolled), please respond “no”.

NC Pre-K classrooms that were reported as providing in-person instruction to NC Pre-K children **prior to January 31, 2021** will receive an additional 25% supplement to the COVID-19 Pandemic Relief funding.

If you are concerned that you have reported this information inaccurately, please contact your NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant by **Friday, March 5, 2021**.

### **IV. Funding Amounts**

- a) NC Pre-K classrooms that meet the eligibility criteria described in Section II will receive Pandemic Relief funding in the amount of \$3,452 per classroom.

Example: Hope County has 51 total classrooms. 36 classrooms meet the eligibility criteria for Pandemic Relief funding as outlined in Section II but do NOT meet the eligibility criteria for the additional supplement as outlined in Section III. (36 classrooms x \$3,452= \$124,272)

- b) NC Pre-K classrooms that provided in-person services as described in Section III will receive Pandemic Relief funding plus an additional 25% supplement for a total relief amount of \$4,315 per classroom.

Example: Hope County has 51 total classrooms. 15 classrooms meet the eligibility criteria for Pandemic Relief funding as outlined in Section II **and** meet the eligibility criteria for the additional supplement as outlined in Section III. (15 classrooms x \$4,315 = \$64,725)

## V. Contract Budget Amendment

- a) COVID-19 Pandemic Relief funding will be added to each NC Pre-K contracting agency's Direct Services funding through NC Pre-K Contract Amendment 2 effective July 1, 2020.
- b) **Contractors will not need to send in a Line Item Budget** as this funding will be placed in the direct services budget category in the contract amendment.
- c) The funding breakdown will be included in the budget narrative as outlined below:

Example: Funds budgeted for Pandemic Relief funding for 36 classrooms (36 classrooms x \$3,452= \$124,272); and Pandemic Relief Funding Plus Supplement for In- Person Services for 15 classrooms (15 classrooms x \$4,315 = \$64,725) for a total Pandemic Relief funding amount of (\$124,272 + \$64,725= \$188,997).

## VI. Payment Distribution

Contracting agencies will request the additional funds as part of the reimbursement process for March services and will be responsible for distributing relief funding to NC Pre-K providers.

The NC Pre-K Plan and NC Pre-K KIDS database systems have been modified to capture appropriate funding amounts for all eligible classrooms. NC Pre-K programs and contracting agencies will submit March attendance and reimbursement requests following **all usual processes**. DCDEE staff will be responsible for entering the relief funding for each classroom in the NC Pre-K Plan and ensuring the amounts are accurately reflected on the March Summary of Attendance forms.

### Who to Contact?

<b>NC Pre-K Classroom Eligibility Criteria</b>	Janessa Nieves, NC Pre-K Manager <a href="mailto:janessa.nieves@dhhs.nc.gov">janessa.nieves@dhhs.nc.gov</a>
<b>Payment Distribution Process (as it relates to NC Pre-K Plan or NC Pre-K KIDS)</b>	
<b>In-person Instruction Survey Responses</b>	<b>NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultants</b> Frances Minton ( <i>North East</i> )      Jennifer Griffith ( <i>West</i> ) <a href="mailto:francis.minton@dhhs.nc.gov">francis.minton@dhhs.nc.gov</a> <a href="mailto:jennifer.griffith@dhhs.nc.gov">jennifer.griffith@dhhs.nc.gov</a> (919) 604-7626      (919) 609-6921
	Jeanne Barnes ( <i>South East</i> )      Sharon Stukes ( <i>Central</i> ) <a href="mailto:jeanne.barnes@dhhs.nc.gov">jeanne.barnes@dhhs.nc.gov</a> <a href="mailto:sharon.stukes@dhhs.nc.gov">sharon.stukes@dhhs.nc.gov</a> (919) 814-6357      (704) 594-0151
<b>Payment Distribution Process (as it relates to FSR submission)</b>	NC Pre-K Budget Staff <a href="mailto:dcdee_ncprekfsr@dhhs.nc.gov">dcdee_ncprekfsr@dhhs.nc.gov</a>
<b>Contract Budget Amendments</b>	Candice Bailey, Contracts Manager <a href="mailto:candice.bailey@dhhs.nc.gov">candice.bailey@dhhs.nc.gov</a>