



AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN & SOCIAL SERVICES

“Matagaluega Tautua ma Alagamanuia mo Tagata Lautele”

Wednesday, February 03, 2021

GOVERNOR

Lemanu P.P.S. Mauga

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PRESS RELEASE - American Samoa Allocated \$12,731,089 for Supplemental Child Care Development Program Funding to Address the Needs of Child Care Providers and Families Resulting from COVID-19

DHSS Acting Director Muavaefa'atasi John E. Suisala is pleased to announce that the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care (ACF OCC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, confirmed today that American Samoa's allocation for supplemental Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program funding through the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (P.L. 116-260) is **\$12,731,089**. These funds will be available through October 30, 2023.

As the lead agency for the CCDF program in American Samoa, the DHSS Child Care Division will use these funds to supplement initiatives that mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 across our early learning and care system by providing data-driven services that are **child-focused, family-friendly, fair to providers, and supportive of workers**. In a press release issued by ACF OCC this morning, they announced that the *“funds can be used for a range of activities, including continuing payments and assistance to help child care providers in the case of decreased enrollment or closures and to ensure that providers are able to remain open or reopen; providing child care assistance to essential workers without regard to income eligibility requirements; delivering technical assistance to help child care providers implement practices in line with guidance from state, territory, and local health departments and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the safe provision of child care services; and supporting other allowable CCDF program activities”*.

“Providing the best possible services for the people we serve.”

DHSS Acting Director Muavafa'atasi commented, *“We appreciate the Federal government's continued support to address the needs of child care providers and families resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and we are also thankful for the continued assistance and support from our ACF OCC Region IX counterparts”*. He added, *“We are also grateful for the support and guidance from Governor Lemanu P.S. Mauga as we develop a proposed plan for the use of these funds”*. More information on service enhancements and initiatives under this funding will be shared with child care stakeholders and the general public once plans are approved by the Region IX Office.

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