

ASSEMBLY, No. 5863

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 9, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

Assemblyman VINCENT MAZZEO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Assemblywoman JOANN DOWNEY

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblyman ROY FREIMAN

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

Assemblywoman GABRIELA M. MOSQUERA

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblyman CRAIG J. COUGHLIN

District 19 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttle and Jimenez

SYNOPSIS

Establishes child care revitalization fund in Department of Children and Families; appropriates \$100,000,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2021)

1 AN ACT establishing a child care revitalization fund, appropriating
2 \$100,000,000, and supplementing Title 30 of the New Jersey
3 Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. Working mothers in New Jersey and across the nation have
10 been disparately affected by child care and school closures during
11 the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

12 b. According to the United States Census Bureau, 1.6 million
13 fewer women with school-aged children were actively working in
14 January 2021, when compared with January 2020.

15 c. A Kaiser family Foundation survey conducted in late 2020
16 found that 30 percent of working mothers interviewed had taken
17 time off from work due to child care or school closures.

18 d. Without access to affordable, high-quality child care, New
19 Jersey's working mothers will continue to face the difficult choice
20 between caring for their young children and their careers.

21 e. Fully-operating schools and licensed child care providers are
22 critical to the New Jersey's reopening plan, as well as the State's
23 economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

24 f. Too many licensed child care providers have been unable to
25 re-open following pandemic-related closures, due to high operating
26 costs and reduced capacity required to slow the spread of COVID-
27 19.

28 g. It is in the public interest for the Legislature to create a fund
29 to address the critical child care and economic issues faced by the
30 State's working families and licensed child care providers.

31
32 2. a. There is created within the Department of Children and
33 Families a dedicated, non-lapsing fund to be known as the Child
34 Care Revitalization Fund for the purpose of supporting child care
35 providers, licensed pursuant to P.L.1983, c.492 (C.30:5B-1 et seq.),
36 who were severely impacted by high operating costs and reduced
37 capacity required to mitigate the health impact of the coronavirus
38 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

39 b. The Commissioner of the Department of Children and
40 Families, in consultation with the Commissioner of Human Services
41 and the Chief Executive of the Economic Development Authority,
42 shall establish processes by which licensed child care providers may
43 submit, through an online portal, applications for assistance through
44 the fund, and by which the allocation of resources from the fund
45 may be prioritized.

46 c. Authorized allocations from the fund are to be disbursed to
47 licensed child care providers within 21 days of the department's
48 receipt of a qualifying application, as submitted by a provider

1 through the online portal established pursuant to this act, prior to
2 September 1, 2021.

3 d. The commissioner, pursuant to the “Administrative
4 Procedure Act” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), shall adopt
5 such rules and regulations as necessary to implement the provisions
6 of this act.

7
8 3. There is appropriated \$100,000,000 from the General Fund
9 to the Department of Children and Families to effectuate the
10 purposes of this act.

11
12 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

13
14
15 STATEMENT

16
17 This bill establishes the Child Care Revitalization Fund, a
18 dedicated, non-lapsing fund to be administered by the Department
19 of Children and Families for the purpose of providing financial
20 support to the State’s licensed child care providers. The bill
21 authorizes the Commissioner of Children and Families, in
22 consultation with the Commissioner of Human Services and the
23 Chief Executive of the Economic Development Authority, to
24 develop processes by which licensed child care providers may
25 submit, through an online portal, applications for assistance through
26 the fund, and by which the allocation of resources from the fund
27 may be prioritized. Authorized allocations from the fund are to be
28 disbursed to licensed child care providers within 21 days of the
29 department’s receipt of a qualifying application, as submitted by a
30 provider through the online portal established pursuant to this act,
31 prior to September 1, 2021.

32 It is the intent of the bill’s sponsors to provide critical assistance
33 to the State’s licensed child care providers who were severely
34 impacted by high operating costs and reduced capacity required to
35 mitigate the effects of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.
36 Numerous surveys conducted since the start of the pandemic
37 evidence the staggering number of working mothers who have had
38 to choose between caring for their young children and their careers.
39 Without a sufficient network of high quality, affordable licensed
40 child care providers in our communities, parents of young children
41 will be unable to return to work on a full-time as the State economy
42 reopens in the coming months, and the State’s economic recovery
43 will falter.