**Section 237.75 Child Care Centers During a Public Health Emergency**

a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Part to the contrary, if the Governor has declared a disaster due to a public health emergency under Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act [20 ILCS 3305], currently funded early childhood block grant programs, defined as public school districts and other entities that voluntarily choose to provide care for children ages 0 to 12 of essential workers, as defined in Section 2-3.71(c) of the School Code, may use funds in excess of what is necessary for the program to provide at-home materials for children in the program and to purchase supplies and equipment while caring for children of essential workers. Examples of funds include, but are not limited to, instructional supplies, field trips, professional development, or mental health consultations. Each program that re-allocates funds under this subsection must amend its budget to reflect the new expenditures.

b) Current early childhood block grant programs may utilize staff to support the caring for children of essential workers based on guidance from their local school boards or authorized officials. The State Board of Education supports the use of early childhood block grant funding to pay staff to care for children of essential workers. This funding may be utilized to pay existing full-time or part-time staff who are paid with early childhood block grant funds. If needed, and if funding allows, part-time staff may increase to working more than part-time to care for children of essential workers.

c) Each early childhood block grant program that provides care for children of essential workers must comply with any requirements concerning day care centers, as governed by the Department of Children and Family Services (see 89 Ill. Adm. Code 407), and nothing in this Section shall be construed to supersede those requirements.

(Source: Added at 45 Ill. Reg. 917, effective January 4, 2021)