



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Human Services Secretary Highlights Work of Child Care Providers During the Pandemic, Availability of COVID-19 Vaccines for Child Care Professionals

Shiremanstown, PA – Department of Human Services Secretary Teresa Miller today visited the Children's Garden of St. John's to highlight Pennsylvania's ongoing work to facilitate COVID-19 vaccinations for child care providers through the retail pharmacy partnership.

Pennsylvania's child care industry has been greatly challenged during the pandemic. This initiative is easing access to COVID-19 vaccines for dedicated child care workers across the commonwealth, many of whom care for children of essential workers, and will help keep child care facilities safe for staff, children in care, and their parents and families that rely on this vital service.

"Pennsylvania's child care industry has displayed incredible resilience through this difficult year. Many mobilized quickly to ensure that children of essential workers had a safe place to go during the initial shutdowns, and they have continued to operate through a changed and difficult environment, so parents are able to go to work knowing their children are safe and cared for," said Secretary Miller. "They have been on the frontline through all of it, and as we finally have vaccinations that are a critically effective tool in this fight, we are grateful to be able to ease access to COVID-19 vaccine for this dedicated workforce."

Earlier this month, Governor Wolf announced that Pennsylvania would use its initial supply of the one-dose Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine for PreK-12 teachers, other school staff, and child care and other early childhood education (ECE) workers not affiliated with an intermediate unit or school district. This special initiative is allowing Pennsylvania to quickly and efficiently get vaccines into the arms of educators and school professionals to help schools safely resume in-person operations or phase back into full-time in-person instruction.

More than 17,000 child care and other ECE workers at nearly 3,700 facilities have signed up to be vaccinated through this initiative. These totals include independently-owned family child care homes and group child care settings with a few staff, as well as large child care centers and community-based agencies that operate Head Start or Early Intervention 0-3.

Approximately \$220 million in funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Response, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was allocated to support child care providers across Pennsylvania since the COVID-19 crisis began. The funding supports this critical educational and economic infrastructure for children and families. The distribution method of CARES funding was based in part on the [findings of researchers at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs](#), who studied the impact of COVID-19 on Pennsylvania's child care industry. More than \$300 million was allocated to Pennsylvania through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) that was signed into law in December

2020. Funds for providers available through this will begin to be distributed in April. Child care providers seeking more information on CRRSA funds can visit [PA CRRSA Funding Opportunity](#).

The American Rescue Plan Act also contained significant financial support for child care providers. Pennsylvania is currently evaluating the enacted law and available funds to determine how they will be distributed, and more information will come as plans are finalized.

For more information on child care providers operating during the COVID-19 public health crisis, visit www.findchildcare.pa.gov.

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