

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Note to ACT Now Members

ACT Now would like to acknowledge the challenges that our youth, families, colleagues, communities, and network partners are facing as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

We will continue to support you all by sharing resources and materials relating to COVID-19 from reputable federal and state agencies, through our newsletter and E-alerts, as well as our [webpage, specifically designated for COVID-19 resources](#), and our social media platforms.

We are available for questions and concerns remotely. Please contact our **Network Lead, Susan Stanton**: at stantons@actnowillinois.org or our **Youth Development Associate, Emma Spencer**: at spencere@actnowillinois.org.

COVID-19

Federal Policy Updates

H.R. 6201: Families First Coronavirus Response Act Signed Into Law

On **March 18, 2020**, the U.S. Senate passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act in order to provide paid sick leave and free coronavirus testing, expanding food assistance and unemployment benefits, and requiring employers to provide additional protections for healthcare workers. That same day, President Trump signed the Act into Law, making it **Public Law No: 116-127**. For more information on it, click [here](#).

State Policy Updates

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development: New Guidance

On **Saturday, March 21, 2020**, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development released a letter to the general public stating:

- **All child care centers licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and legally license-exempt centers outside of schools will be closed.**
- **All child care homes licensed by DCFS will be closed.**
- **Early education programs in public and private K-12 institutions are required to remain closed while the K-12 schools are closed.**
 - *This covers any early childhood program for children ages birth through five within public and private institutions.*

Effective March 21, 2020 and for as long as the public health emergency continues, **emergency child care will be available to essential workers in both homes and centers.** **Essential workers** are outlined in Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 2020-10.

- Child care homes may **serve up to six children of essential workers, while child care centers will be able to apply for emergency child care licenses to serve up to 10 children in one room** and may be located in schools, community-based organizations such as churches and social services organizations, or health care facilities or other workplaces for essential workers.

To read the entire letter from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, click [here](#).

Also, on **March 24, 2020**, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) presented a webinar on COVID-19. Specifically, the webinar presented policies, best practices, and resources relating to permitted childcare business operations during the pandemic. Click [here](#) to watch the webinar.

Illinois State Board of Education COVID-19 Response: 21st CCLC Grantee Guidance

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has created guidance for 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ISBE is permitting programs to **continue to pay full and/or part-time staff as long as its in furtherance of the programming.** **Some allowable uses are:**

- Online Professional Development for staff
- Virtual learning curricula and activities for students
- Working to coordinate resources and services for parents and families
- Working to support students' families
- Data collection
- Federal grant reporting

ISBE has not made a decision about whether or not grants will be amended due to school closures. Please send any questions regarding issues related to COVID-19 to COVID19@isbe.net. To read the letter sent to 21st CCLC grantees, click [here](#).

Events and Webinars

ACT Now: 21st CCLC Virtual Town Hall

ACT Now will be holding its second virtual conversation with 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs about responding to the COVID-19 pandemic on **March 31, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** ACT Now will review policy updates from federal and state agencies (such as ISBE) and share how current programs are navigating this public health crisis. To register for the call, click [here](#).

National Immigration Law Center Webinar: State and Local Advocacy Responses to COVID-19

The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) is hosting a webinar tomorrow, **March 26, 2020, from 2:15 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** to share critical information on how state and local advocacy groups are responding to COVID-19. The webinar will discuss how we can collectively act to promote immigrant rights. Topics will also include: an overview of federal aid packages, responses at the state level, and case studies of Colorado and Tennessee. To register, click [here](#)

Additional Resources

ACT Now: COVID-19 Resource Page

ACT Now has created a webpage to share with its members and network partners resources relating to COVID-19. ACT Now will continue to

monitor, update, share, and publicize the materials on this page. Click [here](#) to access it.

Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund

The [Chicago Community Trust](#) and [United Way of Metro Chicago](#) have launched a fund to help nonprofits address the impact of COVID-19 on local communities. The fund is called the [Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund](#), and its main objective is:

- To disburse funds raised by different types of community-based organizations, businesses, philanthropies, and individuals in the city to health and human services organizations across the region.
- The funds will be used to provide access to emergency food and basic supplies, rent and mortgage assistance, utility assistance, direct financial assistance for household supplies, and nonprofit safety and operations assistance.

COVID-19 Emergency Funding Resources

Forefront has compiled a list of emergency funds and other initiatives that have been created across the state of Illinois to help our communities during the COVID-19 outbreak. Click [here](#) to access it.

Navigating the Financial Impact on Nonprofits During Unprecedented Times Webinar (Recording)

On **Monday, March 23, 2020**, Forefront hosted a webinar to discuss the financial impact of COVID-19 on nonprofits and how to manage stress related to it. It also gave guidance on how to talk about the pandemic with funders. To view the webinar, click [here](#).

Policy Updates

For a list of previously listed policy updates, click [here](#).

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority: Technical Assistance Workshops

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is holding a series of technical assistance workshops to help programs apply and better understand the grant process for state grants generally. The workshop series may help those who are applying for the **Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program Grants**. To register for ICJIA's upcoming workshops, click [here](#).

For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, [click here](#).

Opportunities for Providers

For an archive of our previously listed Opportunities for Providers, [click here](#).

Upcoming Community School Training and Networking Events

Please check the next newsletter and our website for upcoming Community School Training and Networking Events.

Youth Opportunities

For an archive of our previously listed Youth Opportunities, click [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

For an archive of our previously listed Funding Opportunities, [click here](#).

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Call for Resources

Do you have valuable resources, stories, or best practices to share with the afterschool field? Please click [here](#) to share your resources with ACT Now and we will disseminate them (via our newsletter and website) to other providers across the state! If you have any questions, please contact **Emma Spencer (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate)** at Spencere@actnowillinois.org

NOTE: We are now sorting our trainings and resources by the Core Areas in the Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards to promote better understanding and implementation of the Standards. Dark blue headings denote a Core Area. To learn more about the Quality Standards, click [here](#).

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