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COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance Program Funds Still Available to Help Families as More Local Residents Return to Work and Temporary State Child Care Funding Phases out

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS (May 20, 2020) – [United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County](#), the [San Antonio Area Foundation](#) and the City of San Antonio's [Department of Human Services](#) announced today that funds are still available from the [COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance Program](#) to support local families as more and more residents return to work during this period of economic recovery.

“In light of Tuesday’s vote by the Texas Workforce Commission to begin phasing out temporary child care subsidy programs for low-income parents and essential workers, the COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance program can provide much needed gap funding for many local families,” said Chris Martin, president and CEO of United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County.

“As businesses phase in their re-openings according to local and State guidelines, the cost of childcare remains a looming concern for many families,” he added.

To date, the COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance program has supported 336 children who have either completed the funding process, are being funded or are about to be funded.

“Thanks to grants from several local partners, we’re able to continue to provide assistance for this vital service to give parents and guardians a little peace of mind as they navigate through new back-to-work expectations and protocols,” Martin said.

United Way and the San Antonio Area Foundation launched the child care assistance program in late March with donations of \$50,000, respectively. United Way’s initial \$50,000 gift came from [Women United](#), whose signature cause is to support education through the [Childcare Scholarship Program](#). The 3,300-member group of women philanthropists recently contributed an additional \$50,000 to support the fund. Women United is dedicated to developing successful children, helping

students succeed in school and strengthening families in our community. In late April, [Truist Financial Corporation](#) awarded United Way a \$100,000 grant, part of the financial services company's [Truist Cares initiative](#), to help provide childcare relief. [Bank of America](#)'s Community Response Funding also supported the childcare program with a \$25,000 grant.

"Women United is proud to support this important program providing relief for parents and giving children a safe and stable environment for learning and growth," said Debbie Marino, Women United Chair. "It is an extension of our membership's heartfelt care and concern for others as we all face challenges in this COVID-19 environment."

Three weeks of emergency assistance for working parents during this coronavirus time can be available to eligible families through the COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance program.

"It's just me and my three and a half-year-old son here in San Antonio, and I work really hard to provide the necessities for us, said recipient Amy Slomka, a caregiver with a San Antonio health services company. "These three weeks of paid child care is a HUGE deal to me and allows me to catch up on other bills, too. Thank you so much!"

Many parents or guardians who must leave home to go to work are struggling to respond to the demands of providing childcare for their children, including young babies, pre-school-aged children and school-age youth 12 years old and younger whose schools are now closed. Many summer programs for children are also in flux, either cancelled or with diminished capacity, adding to a family's strain.

Parents or guardians eligible for assistance will receive a letter and voucher to provide to the childcare center. Initially up to three weeks of childcare assistance will be provided in an effort to help as many families as possible. The two funding nonprofits, along with the City's Department of Human Services, will monitor local conditions to determine if additional assistance can be made available.

Applicants with children through middle school age, (ages 6 weeks through 12 years), should call the [United Way 2-1-1 Help Line](#), available 24/7/365, to inquire about meeting following criteria:

- Children 6 weeks through 12 years old of working parents needing to physically go into work during this time.
- Valid current pay stub and verification of Bexar County residency; various forms of income verification will be allowable.

-- Temporary emergency childcare assistance (3 weeks) will be provided for licensed and registered childcare center or licensed/registered home care. Reimbursement will be issued directly to the childcare center, following Workforce Solutions Childcare Center reimbursements rates.

“Ensuring families have access to safe and affordable child care options as we begin transitioning back to work as a community remains a priority for the City of San Antonio,” said Melody Woosley, Human Services Director.

“As the community moves from crisis to recovery, ensuring more parents and guardians have access to quality childcare is a vital part of the equation,” shared Marjie French, CEO of the San Antonio Area Foundation. “We are grateful to the caring and generous donors who invested in a collaborative solution through the COVID-19 Response Fund.”

“The goal is to ensure that this emergency childcare assistance will relieve some of the financial stress associated with the current health environment,” Martin said. “One local mother describes the assistance she received as ‘a blessing in disguise.’ Similarly, many other parents will be able to transition back to the workplace knowing their children will have a safe learning environment,” he added.

The COVID-19 Emergency Childcare Assistance program followed a partnership announcement by United Way and the San Antonio Area Foundation, the [COVID-19 Community Response Fund](#), which includes over a dozen corporations, foundations, philanthropists and individuals who have committed over \$6.2 million to the effort. The Fund also accepts donations from the general public. Donations benefits local nonprofits impacted by coronavirus restrictions while serving clients experiencing food insecurities, homelessness, rent and utility shortfalls, unemployment and many other personal and family challenges. Currently [167 grants](#) totaling \$5.1 million have been awarded. To make a contribution to the COVID-19 Response Fund, visit www.helpsatx.org or text “helpsatx” to 41444.

About United Way

[United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County](#) focuses on preparing children for school and life, helping students graduate and succeed, strengthening the well-being of individuals and families, and providing safety net services (food, clothing, shelter, and emergency care.) United Way also operates the [2-1-1 Help Line](#) and fosters volunteerism through the [Volunteer Center at United Way](#).

About the San Antonio Area Foundation

The San Antonio Area Foundation has served as the sole, designated community foundation for the San Antonio area for over half a century, growing to become one of the top 20 foundations in the nation based on asset size. The Area Foundation helps donors achieve their charitable goals, managing more than 500 charitable funds exceeding \$1 billion in assets. Coordinating efforts with numerous area nonprofits, the Area Foundation serves as a collaborative leader, connecting donors to address key community issues and investing in our future. Since 1964, over \$500 million in scholarships and grants have been awarded to enhance the quality of life in our region. Learn more at www.saafdn.org.

About the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services

The [Department of Human Services](#) provides leadership, develops collaborative strategies, and maximizes resources to improve the quality of life for children, families and seniors in our community.

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