



News from the Office of
Adam J. Bello
Monroe County Executive



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MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES ENHANCEMENTS TO THE COUNTY'S CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Reduced parent fees, quicker access to services, eligibility guarantees and payments to providers when children are absent make care more accessible for parents and stabilizes revenues for care providers.

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced additional enhancements to the county's child care subsidy program that will make care more accessible and affordable for residents and provide greater economic certainty for child care providers struggling to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the plan, families receive a one-year guarantee of child care with the average family saving almost \$900 a year.

"For many of our working families, child care can be both an economic necessity and a barrier to advancement and greater opportunity," said County Executive Bello. "These common sense changes make it easier for parents to access and afford the quality child care they need to work and provide for their families or pursue educational and other training opportunities. These changes also help struggling child care providers by ensuring they receive more consistent payment, even when children may be absent due to illness or other circumstance."

"Supporting working families is my top priority, and that means ensuring they have safe, reliable, and affordable options to care for their children," said Congressman Joe Morelle. "In addition to helping parents save money, these changes will stabilize revenue for providers and lead to greater workforce participation—but most importantly, they will provide piece of mind for families who are struggling. I'm proud to have secured funding to make this a reality and remain grateful to County Executive Bello for his leadership in making investments that uplift our entire community."

The changes are as follows:

- While the state Office of Children and Family Services requires all counties to cover the cost of at least 24 absences from day care each year, County Executive Bello has opted to cover up to 80 such absences, the maximum number allowable by law. This decision ensures parents can keep their child enrolled in their chosen program while helping stabilize revenues for child care providers. Effective Jan 1, 2022.
- Effective Feb. 1, 2022, Monroe County will decrease the parent fee for subsidized child care to 1%, the lowest allowed under state law. For working parents in the subsidized day care program, this translates to more than \$1.7 million in out-of-pocket savings just this year. More

than 1,800 families will see a reduction in out of pocket costs, with an average annual savings of \$939.

- In partnership with the Child Care Council, the county has enhanced the Department of Social Services' Certificate of Eligibility program that gives parents and guardians faster access to child care services. Parents can show this certificate to a provider of their choice, verifying eligibility for child care subsidies so they are immediately able to begin care in order to start or keep their employment. Effective Jan. 7, 2022.
- Effective retroactively to December 1, 2021, families are guaranteed one year of care, with limited exceptions; children turning 13 during a given year will be able to remain in the subsidized care program through the end of the authorization period. In addition, the "break in need" period – the time a parent remains eligible for subsidies while not utilizing the program due to job loss or other circumstance – has been increased to 3 months; and household income will be allowed to increase up to 85% of state median income (about \$89,226 for a family of four) during the one-year guarantee without affecting eligibility.

"Quality, affordable child care fulfills our society's fundamental obligation to provide for the well-being of our children. It is also an economic necessity: parents can't work when they don't have child care," said Larry Knox, the CEO of The Children's Agenda. "Parents are constantly telling The Children's Agenda about their struggles to afford quality care, having to choose between paying for child care or a job or school or other necessities. These changes in Monroe County will make child care assistance more flexible and affordable, and they keep struggling providers — many of which are small, woman-owned businesses on razor thin margins – open to serve families. We commend County Executive Bello and his administration for responding to our community's needs. Investing in quality, affordable child care now yields returns many times over by supporting the health, education, and lifelong success of our children."

Family Size	85% NYS Annual SMI
1	\$46,397.62
2	\$60,673.82
3	\$74,950.01
4	\$89,226.20
5	\$103,502.39
6	\$117,778.58

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