



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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DEIDRE S. GIFFORD, MD, MPH
Commissioner

June 9, 2020

Re: Coronavirus Relief Fund Standard Payments and Hardship Payments to Nursing Homes

Dear Nursing Home Provider:

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7NN, Sections 5, 7, and 8, and Section 17b-11 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will make Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) grant payments to all qualifying nursing home providers that are enrolled in good standing in the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP).

All nursing home providers who wish to apply for the CRF payments shall: (1) complete and sign the attached CRF Payment Form; and (2) complete the follow-up Nursing Facility COVID-19 Emergency Period Reporting Form/Hardship Request ("Cost Report"), for the periods March 1 through April 30, 2020, and May 1 through June 30, 2020. All completed forms must be submitted to the DSS Office of Reimbursement and Certificate of Need at con-ratesetting.dss@ct.gov. The completed and signed CRF Payment Form must be received before DSS can process any CRF payments and should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than July 31, 2020. The Cost Reports are due as soon as possible, but no later than thirty days after the close of each applicable reporting period.

CRF payments may be utilized only for costs and expenses incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency consistent with federal law and CRF guidance¹. In order to enable these payments to be made quickly due to the emergency COVID-19 expenses already incurred by nursing home providers and to ensure uniformity in payments among different nursing home providers, the standard CRF payments will be calculated by DSS to approximate the value of a 10% rate increase for April 2020 on the rates in effect on July 1, 2019, and to approximate the value of a 20% rate increase for May and June 2020 on the rates in effect on July 1, 2019, adjusted for the projected impact of Medicare billings for a portion of COVID-positive patients. Standard CRF payments will be distributed based upon the most recent full quarter of data for the January to March 2020 period to ensure that it closely approximates the total of the expected rate-based distribution that would have occurred under Medicaid.

¹ Federal Guidance and supplementary Frequently Asked Questions documents related to the use of CRF funds may be found at the following links, and may be updated periodically:

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Guidance-for-State-Territorial-Local-and-Tribal-Governments.pdf>

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

In addition, the Commissioner of Social Services, under the direction of the Office of Policy and Management, may, in the Commissioner's discretion, distribute additional CRF funding to eligible nursing home providers that request hardship relief to avoid substantial deterioration of the facility's financial condition that may be expected to adversely affect resident care and the continued operation of the facility as a result of COVID-19 related expenditures and that demonstrate applicable hardship. Nursing home providers can request additional hardship relief through CRF payments for the period March 1 through June 30, 2020. Requests must be submitted using the same Nursing Facility COVID-19 Emergency Period Reporting Form/Hardship Request referenced above, which includes the required narrative explanation section and the amount requested. Nursing home providers may also submit supplemental documentation to detail their requests. Requests for hardship relief for the period of March 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020 must be submitted no later than June 30, 2020 and requests for hardship relief for the month of June 2020 must be submitted no later than July 31, 2020.

Please note that specifically with respect to COVID-19 testing expenses, the state shall be covering the cost of COVID-19 testing of staff, consistent with the COVID-19 testing requirements established pursuant to Executive Order 7UU, issued June 1, 2020, or as amended in a subsequent executive order, for the period June 3 through July 14, 2020, separate and apart from this CRF payment award. After the initial period of coverage by the state, ongoing expenses incurred by nursing home providers related to testing of staff may be provided through the employee's existing insurance coverage (with no out-of-pocket expense to the employee).

Additional details regarding the standard CRF payments (including the payment amounts for each provider) and hardship payments are included in DSS Standards for CRF Payments, posted to the DSS website at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DSS/Health-And-Home-Care/Medicaid-Nursing-Home-Reimbursement/Medicaid-Nursing-Home-Reimbursement>.

If you have any questions, please contact Kate McEvoy, Director, Division of Health Services, at Kate.McEvoy@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Commissioner