

Memorandum



Date: March 3, 2022

To: Honorable Chairman Jose “Pepe” Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor *Daniella Levine Cava*

Subject: Report Regarding Emergency Childcare Services for First Responders, Healthcare Workers and Essential Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic - Directive 201449

Agenda Item No. 2(B)(7)
June 1, 2022

The following report is provided pursuant to Resolution No. R-765-20, sponsored by Commissioner Jean Monestime and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) on July 21, 2020, which directed the County Mayor or the County Mayor’s designee to partner with an educational entity, museum, or other facility or entity to develop and implement a program to provide emergency childcare services for first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential personnel assisting our community during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic, and authorized the County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee to negotiate and execute any documents required to assist with carrying out the purposes of this resolution; and requiring reports.

As part of my operation to catch up on the backlog of items, we are bringing you reports that were pending from the previous administration.

In April 2020, the Florida Department of Education, Office of Early Learning, funded the Early Learning Coalitions across the state to provide state-funded childcare to first responders and healthcare workers. Locally, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe (ELC) administered the program with more than 2,400 children served. Childcare services for first responders and healthcare workers were made available regardless of income, and scholarships were provided to cover childcare and out-of-school care for children ages 0 to 13 years old. In the summer of 2020, the ELC had both physical capacity and funding to accept new families. To inform Miami-Dade County first responders, the previous administration sent written communication to all Mayors, County Managers and Hospital Administrators, encouraging them to inform their employees of the benefit along with information on how to apply. Additionally, information about the program was sent to all County employees, and the general public was informed through a media release.

The state of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) has regulatory oversight of childcare centers and licensure. There are more than 1,800 licensed childcare facilities in Miami-Dade County. During the pandemic, the requirements for childcare facility licensing remained unchanged. Organizations interested in providing traditional childcare services must meet DCF requirements as delineated on their website www.myflfamilies.com to become a licensed provider.

In early summer of 2020, childcare centers were provided guidance via the Miami-Dade County New Normal Guidelines, developed by a team of medical and subject-matter experts, to safely re-engage children and families. The guidelines were updated on April 12, 2021. Additionally, the

County’s Head Start/Early Head program and Miami-Dade County Public Schools have reopened and offer in-person services.

Lastly, on September 30, 2020, former Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava sponsored Resolution No. R-908-20 to provide up to \$3 million in Cares Act Relief for the purchase of COVID-19 preventative equipment to be distributed to eligible childcare providers in the unincorporated municipal service area (UMSA). The Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD) led the **Defense for Tot Box** initiative. Working closely with DCF, 759 licensed providers in UMSA were identified and invited to apply for the Defense for Tot Box program of which 440 responded and 438 were approved. The Defense for Tot Box included: one Handheld Electrostatic Sprayer (used to disinfect high touch areas), a supply of disinfectant for the Electrostatic Sprayer, and one Free Standing Temperature Screening System.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sonia Grice, Director, Community Action and Human Services Department, at 786-469-4616.

Per Ordinance No. 14-65, this report will be placed on the next available Board meeting agenda.

- c: Geri Bonzon-Keenan, County Attorney
- Gerald Sanchez, First Assistant County Attorney
- Jess McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney
- Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
- Sonia Grice, Director, Community Action and Human Services Department
- Jennifer Moon, Chief, Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs
- Yinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor
- Basia Pruna, Director, Clerk of the Board
- Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator, Office of Agenda Coordination