State Sponsored Premium Assistance Program for Employees of Licensed Child Care Facilities

Administered by the Washington Health Benefit Exchange (Exchange), in partnership with the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and Yakima Neighborhood Health Services (YNHS)

Background: Washington Health Benefit Exchange

Washington Health Benefit Exchange is a state-based marketplace that runs *Washington Healthplanfinder (www.wahealthplanfinder.org)*, a streamlined online portal for both Medicaid and Qualified Health Plan coverage inWashington state. Over one in four Washingtonians use *Washington Healthplanfinder* to obtain health coverage.

New State Funded Premium Assistance Program Starting in 2021

During the 2021 legislative session, the Washington Legislature appropriated $30 million for a new state sponsored premium assistance program for employees of licensed child care facilities.

- **What Is the Program?**
  - Employees who work in licensed child care facilities can qualify for Cascade Care Silver health coverage for $0 premiums through *Washington Healthplanfinder.*
  - The Exchange, on behalf of the state, will make premium payments to insurance carriers for eligible program participants.

- **Who Is Eligible?**
  - Employees working in a licensed child care facility, including employees of licensed family home, center-based, and outdoor nature-based child care programs, who:
  - Have a household income below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (currently ~$38,640 for a family of one; ~$79,500 for family of four);
  - Enroll in a Cascade Care Silver qualified health plan through *Washington Healthplanfinder;* and
  - Accept all available federal premium subsidies.
- **When Will the Program Start? How Long Will These Savings Be Available?**
  - This program will begin by November 1, 2021 (and may be available as early as August, 2021).
  - Employees who qualify will be able to sign up using an existing special enrollment period.
  - The Legislature has funded this program through the end of 2023.
- **How Will Employees Sign Up?**
  - DCYF will identify employees working in licensed child care facilities and provide initial program information to them, including instructions on how to sign up.
  - Trained assisters at Yakima Neighborhood Health Services will conduct outreach, communicate program requirements and provide free enrollment assistance (free language assistance is available) to identified employees.

If you are interested in receiving information or have questions about this new program please email Genny Arredondo at Sponsor@WAHBExchange.org.