**FORT BELKNAP TRIBAL CHILDCARE PROGRAM**

FORT BELKNAP INDIAN COMMUNITY

 FORT BELKNAP AGENCY

 656 AGENCY MAIN STREET

 HARLEM, MONTANA 59526

FORT BELKNAP OFFICE

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**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**FROM THE FORT BELKNAP CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

**03/26/2020**

The Fort Belknap Child Care Program in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic will implement the following emergency actions.

1. For supply and retention of our current providers due to the cancelation of school and the Tribes guidance to parents to stay at home with their children, we will continue to pay our providers based on child slots and not attendance. The Child Care Program has advised our providers, for the safety and well-being of their programs and the safety of our children and families.
2. The program will implement the following eligibility guidance; due to the closure of schools and for parents that still need to work;
3. The program will continue to accept child care assistance applications, (applications can be found on the ftbelknap.org website, click the forms/doc tab and scroll down to child care), scan and email to bquisno@ftbelknap.org this is to reduce contact and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. When you have scanned and emailed your application, call me at 353-4468 for phone interview.
4. To address displaced children and families due to school closure and parents that are health care providers and first responders or parents that are required to still need to work, the program will implement the following; 1) we will enroll new providers to meet the demand of the COVID-19 crisis, 2) we will temporarily waive the eligibility requirement for kinship care in such ways that we will waive certain health and safety requirements, ie, health & safety training, background check requirements, first aid/cpr requirements, home inspections, provider immunization. When the application is complete I will need the applicant to call me at 353-4468 for a phone interview, this will determine the kinship care you will be providing.
5. To address the income eligibility of parents needing child care, the program will implement the following; 1) the program will designate children and families that are income ineligible as children/families in protective custody, 2) families designated as needing protective custody will only be eligible on a case-by-case basis, 3) the health care providers, first responders and families that still need to work in this crisis, will still have to apply for the child care program, 4) the program will require the online application to be emailed to bquisno@ftbelknap.org and required to call 353-4468 for a phone interview.

If you have any questions please contact me at (406)353-4468.

Blossom Quisno, Child Care Director