

COVID relief funding for home visiting

March 12, 2021

The COVID relief bill signed into law by President Biden yesterday includes \$150 million for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program to respond to the pandemic.

Allowable uses of the funding include:

- Serving families with virtual home visits
- Hazard pay or other staff costs associated with virtual home visits
- Training to help home visitors conduct effective virtual visits
- Devices and connectivity for home visitors and families to facilitate remote visits
- Emergency supplies, including diapering supplies, infant formula, food, hand soap and hand sanitizer, and gift cards to purchase fresh groceries.

While we assume that states and Tribes will receive funding in proportion to their current grants, HRSA and ACF have not yet provided information regarding how much each MIECHV awardee will receive. The emergency funds represent an increase of nearly 40% to the annual MIECHV budget. Advocates are encouraging the administration to make the funds available as quickly as possible, without time-consuming applications or other hoops that would delay getting relief out to home visitors and families.

Many in the home visiting field were disappointed that the emergency relief funds are directed to agencies administering MIECHV funds, and are not distributed more widely to home visiting agencies that do not receive MIECHV. Ultimately, Congress reached the conclusion that amending existing MIECHV agreements would be the fastest way to get relief to families that need it. The National Home Visiting Coalition, which has already begun working on MIECHV reauthorization, is advocating to increase MIECHV funds from the current \$400 million/year to \$1.2 billion/year so that additional families can benefit from home visits and additional programs and agencies can receive MIECHV funds.

You can sign up to receive information from the National Home Visiting Coalition at <https://nationalhomevisitingcoalition.org/>



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