

Employers Supporting Families with Children at Home During the Pandemic and Beyond

The COVID-19 pandemic presents many health, economic, and educational challenges to our community. Schools and child care programs run the risk of closing at any time. Working family members are now forced to manage their roles as employees and caretakers in entirely new ways. And employers are looking for creative solutions to support their employees while maintaining operations.



Flexible and family-forward policies are essential to retaining and recruiting valuable employees but are often difficult to design and implement. Thankfully, Johnson County employers are coming up with creative ways to help their employees meet the unique challenges of the pandemic.

A recent survey of area employers by the Johnson County Child Care Taskforce revealed some creative ways employers can support their employees with child care or remote school needs. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, so understanding employees' situations is an important first step when considering solutions.

Over for more



Ideas to support employees with child care or online school needs

1. Talk to your employees and identify their individual child care or online school needs.
 2. Provide local child care resources and referral agency information to associates, such as [Iowa Child Care Resources and Referral \(CCR&R\)](https://iowaccrr.org/families) (<https://iowaccrr.org/families>) or the [Iowa Department of Human Service \(DHS\)](https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/ClientPortal/ProviderSearch.aspx) (<https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/ClientPortal/ProviderSearch.aspx>).
 3. Offer a flexible spending account (FSA) that allows for dependent care reimbursement, with or without employer match.
 4. Educate employees on tax and subsidy eligibility, as well as EPSL and EFMLA benefits as part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
 5. Consider job sharing between multiple employees.
 6. Allow telecommuting or remote work arrangements.
 7. Offer compressed work schedules (e.g., four 10-hour shifts).
 8. Coordinate flexible work hours (working some hours earlier or later in the day).
 9. Allow employees to shift between full-time and part-time, maintaining their position.
 10. Contribute to or subsidize your employees' child care costs.
 11. Provide emergency or back-up child care or online school options (e.g., partnership with local child care providers or nanny services, on-site school work stations for employees' children).
 12. Partner with an existing child care center, in-home provider, or before-and-after-school program for discounted rates for associates.
 13. "Adopt" employees' child care or school programs and donate repairs or materials.
 14. Provide on-site or near-site child care or online learning services for associates.
 15. Be a partner in your community with organizations already addressing the need for affordable, quality child care.
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