

ARRANGING FOR CHILDCARE

Our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated our extraordinary resolve and commitment to providing exceptional health care for our community. Thank you for everything you have done to help us respond to this unprecedented challenge.

Below outlines the support available to our employees who cannot work remotely and may be struggling to find child care.

As you are likely aware, starting Monday, March 23, the Commonwealth has closed all licensed child care facilities, including the closing of public schools earlier in the month. To address this challenge, we have arranged for a number of support options.

PREFERRED: Private arrangements made through family, friends, or by utilizing Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports:

- If you are not able to work from home and have been unable to arrange for child care, Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports offers free premium access to Sittercity, an online site that connects you with nannies, babysitters, elder care resources, and other services.
- To access the tools and resources available through Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports, visit <https://clients.brighthouse.com/Partners>. Click on “Additional Family Supports,” which will bring you to Partners’ Sittercity homepage, where you can create a username and password to gain access and begin to search for the solution to your care needs.
- Please note: Partners is only able to provide financial assistance for the short-term and emergency options outlined below.

Emergency Care Options

The following alternatives are intended to provide temporary support while more permanent arrangements can be made, or if your child care arrangements are briefly interrupted. Long-term arrangements should be made through family, friends, or by utilizing Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports as noted above.

Emergency In-Home Backup

- Care.com has in-home providers available for employees at all Partners affiliates. Starting April 1, we also will offer in-home child care through Bright Horizons.
- This cost is \$8 per hour (for up to 3 children from the same family), effective March 23, until further notice. Partners will pay the remainder.

- In-home care will be available for 20 uses. As this situation continues to change, we will monitor the need for additional days and adjust accordingly.
- To access Care.com, sign up online using one of the [customized links set up for Partners](#) or call Care@Work by Care.com at 855-781-1303 (note: If your hospital/organization is not listed, please use the PHS link). We will provide information on how to use Bright Horizons backup as we get closer to April 1.

Emergency In-Center Backup

- The Department of Early Education & Care (EEC) has confirmed that we can run the Partners Child Care centers as Exempt Emergency Child Care programs, starting tomorrow.
- At the Commonwealth's direction, centers are only available as **emergency Child Care for those who have no other option for care during this public health crisis**. All others must abide by social distancing standards laid out by the CDC and the Commonwealth. Priority will be given to people including, but not limited to, health care workers and other essential workers. The State requires that all individuals requesting in-center child care must attest in writing at the time of registering for care that they have no other options for child care and that they are essential workers who are unable work remotely.
- In addition to our six centers, three Bright Horizons locations are open for the exclusive use of Partners employees who require emergency child care.
- All In-Center Backup listed below is \$25 per day; \$40 per day for two or more children, effective March 23, until further notice.
- Contact information (locations are available to Partners employees from any affiliate):

Location	Address
Brigham and Women's Backup Center	850 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill
Mass General Backup Center	Warren Building, 55 Fruit St., Boston
The MGH Children's Center	3 Thirteenth St., Charlestown
IHP Children's Quarters	36 First Ave., Charlestown
McLean Child Care Center	115 Mill St., Belmont
Partners Children's Center at Assembly Row	251 Grand Union Blvd., Somerville
Bright Horizons Brookline	138 Harvard St., Brookline
Bright Horizons at Beacon Hill	100 Cambridge St., Suite 104, Boston
Bright Horizons at Newton	320 Needham St., Suite 150, Newton

Starting April 1, we expect to offer a mobile app through Bright Horizons to arrange for care at all of the sites above along with Bright Horizons In-Home Care.

Other Locations and Options for Child Care

- As part of the State's Emergency Child Care program, additional locations have been approved. These providers/locations are listed on the State's [Early Education & Care site](#).
- Many local school systems and municipalities and other organizations have been adding emergency child care locations. All of these groups should be listed in the State's website above. Among these groups, several YMCA organizations are offering exempt emergency child care programs including the [YMCA of Greater Boston](#), the [YMCA of Cape Cod](#), and the [YMCA of Merrimack Valley](#).
- The Partners Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (eap.partners.org; 866-724-4327) can direct you to other available child care options and resources
- PLEASE HELP: If you learn of other child care resources that may be of interest to others, please send them to childcare@partners.org.

FAQs About Child Care and Remote Work

106. I am able to work remotely. Am I allowed to watch my children while working, or do I need to make different arrangements? What if my children are at an age where they cannot entertain themselves while I work at home? Can I use the Partners subsidized rate for in-home care?

During this time remote workers must keep their children at home. If caring for your children will significantly impact your productivity, please speak with your manager about how best to balance your work and family responsibilities as we all deal with the pandemic.

If you prefer to have in-home child care while you work from home, we respectfully ask that you make arrangements that do NOT take advantage of the limited number of Partners subsidized slots through Care.com and Bright Horizons. The subsidized rate is for use by those who are not able to work remotely. During this pandemic, we need our direct care providers and those who support them to be at work and focused on caring for our sickest patients.

If you are working remotely and need in-home assistance, we ask that you use Bright Horizons Additional Family Support, through Sittercity. Please see FAQ #95 for more information.

107. Are there any resources to help me create structured learning for my children while schools are closed?

Yes. We have created a [Home Learning Resource Guide for Children](#) that we hope will be

helpful to you. In addition, many school systems are starting to provide virtual learning programs for children so please watch for updates from your local school system.

FAQs About In-Home Child Care

108. How can I arrange for in-home child care?

The best option is to make private arrangements made through family, friends, or by utilizing [Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports](#). If you are not able to work from home and have been unable to arrange for child care, Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports offers free premium access to Sittercity, an online site that connects you with nannies, babysitters, elder care resources, and other services.

To access the tools and resources available through Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports, visit <https://clients.brighthorizons.com/Partners>. Click on “Additional Family Supports,” which will bring you to Partners’ Sittercity homepage, where you can create a username and password to gain access and begin to search for the solution to your care needs. Please note: Partners is only able to provide financial assistance for the short-term and emergency options outlined below.

If you are unable to arrange for care through family and friends, or Sittercity, Partners offers backup, in-home care through [Care.com](#), a backup child care provider for employees of all Partners hospitals and affiliates. [Sign up online](#) or call Care@Work by Care.com at 855-781-1303. Starting April 1, in-home child care also will be available through Bright Horizons; we will provide information on how to use this service as we get closer to this date.

109. What are the screening procedures for in-home child care providers, such as those from [Care.com](#)? I trust the employees of the Partners Child Care centers, but would be hesitant to allow anyone into our home without being screened.

Care.com caregivers are vetted and employed by either [Care.com](#) or its network of agencies and certified in both first aid and CPR. All caregivers are required to complete orientation and health and safety training and go through extensive background checks.

110. People who are not at work or school because of Coronavirus have offered to help with child care. How can I let others know about these offers?

The care and wellbeing of children is a paramount concern for all of us and it is heartening to see so many willing to help in times of crisis. However, due to concerns about child safety, **Partners does not encourage or support distribution lists of people who have not been vetted and background checked.**

We recognize that colleagues may learn about child care providers from one another, and we are trying to provide support for people who wish to arrange for background checks (see FAQ #100).

111. I already have a Care.com membership but my experience has been that the people I find on there are employed by me, not Care.com. Since I pay them directly how does the subsidy works?

To receive the subsidy, you must register as a Partners employee and use a [customized link for our employees](#). Care.com offers the Care Concierge program to Partners employees. Care Concierge sitters are employees of Care.com or their partner agencies and are fully vetted by Care.com or their partner agencies unlike some of the caregivers offered on their website. As a result, Partners employees cannot choose their own caregivers when participating in the subsidized Care Concierge program.

112. Will I get a choice of providers through Care.com or Bright Horizons for in-home care?

Care.com: [Care.com](#) offers the Care Concierge program to Partners employees. Care Concierge sitters are employees of Care.com or their partner agencies and are fully vetted by Care.com and their partner agencies unlike some of the caregivers offered on their website. As a participant in the Care Concierge program, Partners employees cannot choose their own caregivers.

Bright Horizons (starting April 1): Families will have a choice of providers after reading about the individual in the caregiver's profile. Before arrangements are finalized, families can have an introduction call with the caregiver.

113. I am arranging for my own child care at home. How can I obtain a background check on the person I hire?

We hope to have a resource available for free background checks identified. We will update these materials as soon as we know more.

114. I have identified a child care provider through my personal connections. Is Partners providing any financial support for arrangements that are not made through [Care.com](#) or Bright Horizons?

At this time we are not able to provide financial assistance beyond the subsidy offered through [Care.com](#) (and as of April 1 Bright Horizons). However, this is something we are looking into to address situations like this. We will continue to update the FAQs so please watch for any new information.

115. I am working remotely. Can I still bring my child to the Partners Child Care Services (PCCS) center where they are currently enrolled?

Our child care centers remain open, but only as emergency child care for those who have no other option. At the direction of the State, if you can work remotely you must have your child with you at home. You will not be charged for child care if you withdraw your child temporarily and your spot will be maintained for when work returns to normal. Please note there are specific COVID-19 screening protocols in place at the centers.

116. I am not able to work remotely. How can I take advantage of the onsite child care facilities offered by Partners?

We encourage the use of in-home care as outlined in the introduction to this section. At the Commonwealth's direction, Partners Child Care centers are only available as emergency Child Care for those who have no other option for care during this public health crisis. All others must abide by social distancing standards laid out by the CDC and the Commonwealth. Priority will be given to health care workers and other essential workers. The State requires that all individuals requesting in-center child care must attest in writing at the time of registering for care that they have no other options for child care and that they are essential workers who are unable to work remotely. In addition to our six centers, three Bright Horizons locations are open for the exclusive use of Partners employees who require emergency child care.

All in-center backup care at the locations listed above is \$25 per day; \$40 per day for two or more children, effective March 23, until further notice.

117. I am worried about leaving my child(ren) in group care because of risk of exposure to the virus. What measures will be taken to keep them safe?

PCCS and Bright Horizons follow strict infection control policies to ensure the safety of staff, children and families in the child care centers.

118. Will the BWH and MGH Backup Centers be running their April 2020 Vacation Club programming?

No. Due to all areas of the Partners HealthCare System working diligently in response to COVID-19, the BWH Backup and MGH Backup April 2020 Vacation Club programming has been cancelled to allow for continuation of the emergency child care services mentioned above.

FAQs About Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports

119. What is Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports?

Partners is working with Bright Horizons to provide resources that can help you better manage your work, family, and personal responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports offers free premium access to Sittercity, an online

site that connects you with nannies, babysitters, pet care providers, and housekeepers. The program also includes elder care resources, discounts on tutoring and test prep services, and special privileges for full-time child care, such as preferred enrollment at Bright Horizons centers.

120. What services are included with this benefit?

Your free premium Sittercity membership enables you to quickly find nannies, babysitters, and more from among 6+ million providers, and includes unlimited basic background checks at no cost. The service also includes online forums, tools, and resources that will help you choose caregivers that meet your preferences and needs for occasional and everyday child care, care for children with special needs, household help, and even pet care.

121. How do I access Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports?

To access the tools and resources available through Bright Horizons Additional Family Supports, visit <https://clients.brighthouse.com/Partners>. Click on “Additional Family Supports,” which will bring you to Partners’ Sittercity homepage, where you can create a username and password to gain access and begin to search for the solution to your care needs.

122. If I am already a registered Sittercity customer, do I have to re-register?

No, you do not have to re-register. You can use your existing username and password to access the Sittercity website. You will however need to contact the Sittercity Membership Services team at 1-888-748-2489 to have your account moved under your Partners account.

123. What is the typical cost of care on Sittercity?

The cost of care varies based on geographic region, type, number of children or pets and level of care (i.e., infant care prices often differ from the cost of care for school-age children). In the Trust and Safety Center on the Sittercity site, you can use a rate calculator to determine the appropriate pricing based on region, number of children and years of experience the caregiver has. Also, if you post a job, you are able to indicate the rate preferred per hour and work with caregivers that best fit your financial requirements.

124. How can I evaluate and select the caregiver that seems right for my family?

Sittercity has a variety of filters to help match caregivers to your needs and preferences. You also have access to caregiver profiles, which may include pictures, references, and reviews from other care seekers and users on the site. In addition, through your Partners-sponsored benefit, you have the ability to run unlimited basic background checks and can run an up-to-date background check on any caregiver at any time, free of charge. If you’d like to run additional background checks, there are options available on the site at discounted pricing through your employer-sponsored benefit.

125. What kind of background checks do I have access to?

As a Sittercity registered user, through the partnership negotiated by your employer, you can run an unlimited amount of basic background checks and view results of those you previously completed.

126. Can I get a more enhanced background check if I want it?

Yes. You can get an enhanced background check for an additional fee (ranging from \$20-\$60).

Miscellaneous Child Care FAQs

127. What are my other options for childcare?

The Partners Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (eap.partners.org; 866-724-4327) can direct you to other available child care options. We are actively considering other options regarding backup child care services as needs arise; please watch for email updates from your local leadership.

128. I don't work the same hours every week and this impacts my child care needs. What are my options?

Care.com and Bright Horizons provide in home backup child care 24 hours a day seven days a week.

129. My partner and I both work in health care. Not many people are willing to watch the children of someone who is very likely being exposed to COVID-19 at work daily. What are our options?

Partners is working with Care.com and Bright Horizons to provide in-home backup child care to essential employees and Partners Child Care Services and Bright Horizons will be providing center-based child care to essential personnel during the COVID-19 crisis.

130. Our daycare closed but we still have to pay tuition to hold my child's spot. Will Partners provide reimbursement or subsidized childcare in these circumstances?

Partners employees will receive subsidized, in-home backup child care for \$8/hour through Care.com and Bright Horizons. In addition, backup care provided at Partners and Bright Horizons centers will provide child care for \$25 per day for one child, or \$40 per day for two or more children.

131. I live outside of the city and the Partners Child Care centers are not convenient for my family. Is there a possibility of more centers being opened?

We recommend that employees who do not live near one of the backup care centers offered by Partners Child Care Services or Bright Horizons (see FAQ #102) utilize the in-home child care offerings through Care.com and Bright Horizons.

132. Can I bring my child to work while schools are closed?

Children are not allowed to accompany their parent(s) to work.

133. Whom can I contact with other child care questions?

Please direct any specific questions to childcare@partners.org. We are actively looking to identify additional child care services and will update this document as new information is available.