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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

**AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE: GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL LAUNCHES
BUSINESS NAVIGATOR PROGRAM TO MAKE CHILD CARE MORE AFFORDABLE
FOR WORKING FAMILIES**

Toolkit Helps Employers Support Employees in Finding Child Care Services

***Business Navigator Is Part of Governor Kathy Hochul's Ongoing Initiative to
Expand Families' Access to Affordable Child Care Statewide***

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced the launch of a Business Navigator Child Care toolkit designed to support employers who want to assist their employees with securing quality, affordable child care services for their children. The toolkit was developed by the Early Care & Learning Council using \$1 million in funding allocated by the Governor in last year's state budget. The Governor announced the initiative in last year's State of the State address. This initiative is part of Governor Hochul's historic \$7 billion investment to expand and improve child care accessibility and affordability for working families.

By equipping employers with a single source of up-to-date information on child care, the Business Navigator toolkit will help connect more working families in New York to supportive resources so that they are not forced to make difficult decisions when it comes to either advancing their careers, or safely caring for their children. More than 800,000 children in New York under the age of six have working parents, underscoring the critical importance of safe and nurturing child care environments both for children's development and parents' ability to work.

A Business Navigator toolkit has been established in each of New York State's ten Regional Economic Development Council regions. The toolkit – *The Business Navigator: Employer's Guide to Child Care Solutions in New York State* – was created to serve as a statewide employer child care guidebook and offer concrete steps that business leaders, business owners and human resources teams can use to develop a child care strategy that meets the needs of their employees with young children.

“As New York's first mom governor, I know what it's like to be a working professional with young children at home to care for,” **Governor Hochul said**. “For countless New Yorkers, it's a daily challenge that's been overlooked by businesses and workforce

leaders for too long. Today, we're investing in expanding access to child care and improving affordability for families by providing the right tools in our toolkit for our employers and businesses to utilize.”

The 56-page toolkit is being introduced at workshops for businesses in each of the 10 economic development regions with support from local Child Care Resource Centers. The first workshop was held today in the Capital Region at the Landing Hotel at Rivers Casino and Resort in Schenectady. This was held in partnership with Brightside Up, the Capital Region Chamber and the Center for Economic Growth. The remaining [nine workshops](#) will be held at various dates and locations statewide in January and February.

The Business Navigator initiative is based on one of the recommendations to come out of the first [New York State Child Care Availability Task Force](#) (CCATF) overseen by Kathy Hochul when she was lieutenant governor. Pursuing her push to provide assistance to both families and businesses, Governor Hochul proposed establishing a Business Navigator program in her 2023 State of the State address and allocated \$1 million for the initiative in the state fiscal year 2023-2024 budget. Governor Hochul's groundbreaking \$7 billion investment to provide affordable, easy access to necessary child care has made this initiative possible and will improve affordability for families across New York State. Additionally, under Governor Hochul's leadership, a historic \$1.8 billion state and federal investment in the [Child Care Assistance Program \(CCAP\)](#) was secured in the FY25 Enacted Budget.

OCFS Commissioner and Co-Chair of the Child Care Availability Task Force Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden said, “Safe, high-quality, and equitable early education and child care is vital to the well-being and healthy development of young children, as well as strengthening families and communities. There is a critical need for safe and nurturing environments for children while parents are at work. Each year, a lack of child care nationwide is responsible for \$122 billion in lost earnings, productivity and revenue. We are grateful for Governor Hochul's continued investments in child care, including the Business Navigator program. Supporting workers in their search for appropriate child care not only helps individual families and promotes healthy development of children, but also aids in building a thriving economy across this great State of New York.”

The [New York State Child Care Availability Task Force](#) 2021 report found that a majority of New York State business leaders felt that “the lack of accessibility and availability of high-quality child care for infants and toddlers negatively impacts their businesses and their ability to hire and retain employees.” Nearly 75% of business leaders also said they believed investment in access to child care for children from birth to 3 years old would have a positive impact on their business. In [a second report released earlier this year](#), the task force reiterated support for the Governor's Business Navigator program and for incentivizing more employers to assist with meeting their employees' child care needs. In 2023, the Governor announced a \$1 million commitment to create a Business Navigator program to support corporations that are interested in supporting their employees' child care needs.

The child care task force experts recommended engaging employers as key partners in establishing an affordable and accessible high-quality child care system by enhancing engagement with the Regional Economic Development Councils and creating a toolkit for employers on why and how to support child care. Governor Kathy Hochul is fulfilling these recommendations through establishing the new Business Navigator outreach program and toolkit.

The toolkit includes information for businesses to determine the child care needs of employees; resources on finding child care that can be shared with employees; descriptions of federal and state tax incentives available to businesses; and examples of child care benefits that businesses may consider offering their employees – including creating on-site child care or contracting for child care for employees' children.

For a digital copy of the Business Navigator toolkit, including additional resources, please visit the [Early Care & Learning Council website](#). For more information on child care services and assistance in New York State, please visit the [Child Care Services page](#) on the OCFS website. Employers who wish to attend one of the upcoming in-person toolkit workshops may register at the [Business Navigator Toolkit Regional Live Launch](#).

New York State Department of Labor Commissioner and Co-Chair of the Child Care Availability Task Force Roberta Reardon said, “Affordable child care is one of the most important investments we can make in New York’s workforce. The Business Navigator Childcare toolkit will help to ensure working parents have access to the resources they need to support and care for their young children while also providing for their families and advancing their careers. I applaud Governor Hochul for her leadership in supporting parents across New York State.”

New York State Assemblyman John McDonald said, “The Business Navigator Child Care Toolkit is an important effort to address child care issues that our families face. Cost of living is a main concern for many, and childcare is a major driver. As an employer of over 40 years, I know firsthand how investments in child care pay great dividends for children, families, businesses, and the economy. It is in the best interest of business owners to explore this toolkit because it helps employers meet their needs. Child care is critical for economic development and we need to ensure that businesses have what they need to support their employees so they can come to work and know that their child is being taken care of. Thank you to OCFS and the Governor for providing this toolkit that will be available statewide.”

Business Council of New York State President and Chief Executive Officer Heather Mulligan said, “The Business Navigator guide is a valuable resource for employers throughout New York State. It offers business leaders actionable strategies and resources to effectively address the child care needs of their employees. This guide is not just about supporting working parents – it’s about supporting New York’s workforce and sustainable growth.”

Capital Region Chamber of Commerce President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Eagan said, “One of the most pressing challenges facing businesses today is how to support working parents and caregivers in a way that strengthens both families and workplaces. This toolkit is a game-changer. It provides employers with actionable strategies, practical tools and valuable resources to address child care needs in their organizations. By implementing solutions like these, businesses not only help their employees achieve a better work-life balance but also boost productivity, enhance recruitment and retention, and build a reputation as family-friendly workplaces.”

[Brightside Up](#) Deputy Executive Director Keely Weise said, “We are proud to host the launch of the Business Navigator Child Care Toolkit here in the Capital Region, where businesses and families alike are striving for innovative solutions to workforce challenges. This toolkit is a vital resource for our local employers, offering practical strategies to support working parents and create family-friendly workplaces that strengthen our community.”

Early Care & Learning Council Executive Director Meredith Chimento said, “The launch of the Business Navigator Child Care Toolkit marks an important milestone in our work to support employers and families across New York State. We’re thrilled to see this initiative kick off in the Capital Region and look forward to additional regional launches in the coming weeks as we continue this vital work statewide.”

Business Council of Westchester Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer John Ravitz, said, “One of the Business Council of Westchester’s top legislative priorities has been to increase state funding and awareness regarding New York State’s child care system. All employers must take an active role in helping their employees find safe and sustainable child care for their family. The Business Navigator will be an important program to achieve this.”

About the New York State Office of Children and Family Services

The Office of Children and Family Services serves New York’s public by promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of children, families and communities. The agency provides a system of family support, juvenile justice, youth development, child care and child welfare services and is responsible for programs and services involving foster care, adoption and adoption assistance, child protective services, preventive services for children and families, and protective programs for vulnerable adults.

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