



Child Care Scholarship Program Policy Manual

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****COVID-19 Information** Background**

On March 13, 2020, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster declared a state of emergency in response to the Novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Subsequent Executive Orders directed all public schools to close through April 30, 2020 (3/15/20); all non-essential state staff not report to work, physically or in-person, until further notice (3/19/20); and all "non-essential businesses, venues, facilities, services, and activities for public use close for the duration of the emergency (4/1/20).

As the Lead Agency for the Child Care Development Block Grant, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) is requesting a temporary waiver of some of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) requirements.

Waiver for Extraordinary Circumstances

Section 658I(c)(I) of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 985g(c)(I) and Part 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 598.19(a) of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) regulations allow the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to temporarily waive one or more of the requirements contained in the CCDBG Act or the CCDF regulations.

Section 98.19(b)(2) allows States to apply for waivers of no more than two years "in cases of extraordinary circumstances, which are defined as temporary circumstances or situations, such as a natural disaster or financial crisis".

According to CCDF regulation 45 CFR 598.19(c), waiver requests must:

- a) Indicate which type of waiver the State is requesting.
- b) Detail each sanction or provision of the Act or regulations that the State seeks relief from;
- c) Describe how a waiver from that sanction or provision will, by itself, improve delivery of child care services for children; and
- d) Certify and describe how the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received under this part will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.

Purpose of Child Care Waiver Request

South Carolina is requesting a waiver, effective March 13, 2020, based on extraordinary circumstances because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The end date is based on the date that the Governor ends the state of emergency for South Carolina. The need for short-term emergency child care services is critical to assist first responders, emergency personnel, emergency support personnel, essential government personnel, those in essential businesses in the local community, and health care professionals responding to public needs related to COVID-19. General policy changes are needed to support families and child care providers affected by COVID-19. The need for emergency funding is critical to manage the financial crisis child care providers are facing because of interruption of child care services, low enrollment of children, or center closures. The circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic are justifiably extraordinary circumstances.

Waiver Request

South Carolinas requested approval to waive relevant federal regulations in order to accomplish the following:

1. Use CCDF funds to provide direct services to families who do not meet CCDF eligibility requirements (waive provisions of 45 CFR §98.20).
2. Use CCDF funds to provide direct services and/or quality dollars to providers who do not meet the full scope of CCDF health & safety, training, and criminal background check requirements (waive provisions of 45 CFR § 98.41 and 45 CFR §98.43).
3. Modify processes for monitoring provider compliance with CCDF health & safety, training, and criminal background check requirements (waive provisions of 45 CFR § 98.41 and 45 CFR §98.43).
4. Temporarily suspend the following inspections required in 45 CFR §98.42(b)(2):
 - a. Pre-licensure inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards.
 - b. Annual unannounced inspection for compliance with all child care licensing standards; and

- c. Annual inspection for compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in § 98.41), and fire standards for child care providers (licensed and license-exempt) enrolled in the ABC Quality program.
- 5. Use CCDF funding for emergency and temporary child care centers to serve children and families affected by COVID-19, as part of SCDSS' Statewide Disaster Plan. These providers may not meet the full scope of CCDF health & safety, training, and criminal background check requirements.
- 6. Use CCDF funds to provide direct services and/or quality dollars to providers who do not meet criminal background check requirements as outlined in 45 CFR §98.43.
- 7. Use CCDF funds to implement changes to payment practices and absence/enrollment policies to support continuation and recovery of child care services. Direct service payments for full-time enrollment of children served through the Child Care Scholarship Program will be continued for up to 180 days for providers not able to serve families due to the impacts of COVID-19. During the emergency period, families/providers will have flexibility to transfer enrollments to temporary locations to continue care and meet increased demand. Thereafter, direct service payments may be extended for a period not to exceed 180 days if deemed necessary. SCDSS will also make direct service payments to eligible providers who provide care for children on a temporary basis while operations are restored to the original provider.

Certification of Health and Safety

During the waiver period, SCDSS will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation to child care providers and those in temporary care sites. SCDSS certifies the health, safety and well-being of children served will not be compromised as a result of these waiver requests.

SCDSS Child Care Scholarship Program Policy Change/Staff Alert

Parent Co-pays were suspended effective April 14, 2021 for all funding categories.

Effective 10/01/2023, co-pays were reinstated for the Strong Start-85% funding category only.

*In March 2020, COVID related child care categories did not require printing out CHIP screens for verification. Staff were still responsible for doing CHIP checks on all COVID related child care but not printed attachments were needed. The COVID related child care categories are COVID-19, COVID-300%, COVID-CARES, COVID-FC, CCDF-85% and Strong Start-85%

COVID-300%

Effective October 15, 2020, the income guidelines were expanded to 300% of poverty. For the period of October 15, 2020 – March 24, 2021 the income guidelines were as follows:

Family Size	Gross Family Income Limit	
	Monthly	Annual
1	\$0 - \$3,190	\$0 - \$38,280
2	\$0 - \$4,310	\$0 - \$51,720
3	\$0 - \$5,430	\$0 - \$65,160
4	\$0 - \$6,550	\$0 - \$78,600
5	\$0 - \$7,670	\$0 - \$92,040
6	\$0 - \$8,790	\$0 - \$105,480

Beginning March 25, 2021, the COVID-300% guidelines were updated as follows:

Family Size	Gross Family Income Limit	
	Monthly	Annual
1	\$0 - \$3,220	\$0 - \$38,640
2	\$0 - \$4,335	\$0 - \$52,260
3	\$0 - \$5,490	\$0 - \$65,880
4	\$0 - \$6,625	\$0 - \$79,500
5	\$0 - \$7,760	\$0 - \$92,120
6	\$0 - \$8,895	\$0 - \$106,740

Beginning February 28, 2022, the COVID-300% guidelines were updated as follows:

Family Size	Gross Family Income Limit	
	Monthly	Annual
1	\$0 - \$3,398	\$0 - \$40,770
2	\$0 - \$4,578	\$0 - \$54,930
3	\$0 - \$5,758	\$0 - \$69,090
4	\$0 - \$6,938	\$0 - \$83,250
5	\$0 - \$8,118	\$0 - \$97,410
6	\$0 - \$9,298	\$0 - \$111,570

Beginning January 2023, the COVID-300% guidelines were updated as follows:

Family Size	Gross Family Income Limit	
	Monthly	Annual
1	\$0 - \$4,553	\$0 - \$54,630
2	\$0 - \$6,160	\$0 - \$73,920
3	\$0 - \$7,768	\$0 - \$93,210
4	\$0 - \$9,375	\$0 - \$112,500
5	\$0 - \$10,983	\$0 - \$131,790
6	\$0 - \$12,590	\$0 - \$111,570

Beginning May 17, 2023, the COVID-300% guidelines were updated as follows:

Family Size	Gross Family Income Limit	
	Monthly	Annual
1	\$0 - \$3,645	\$0 - \$43,740
2	\$0 - \$4,930	\$0 - \$59,160
3	\$0 - \$6,215	\$0 - \$74,580
4	\$0 - \$7,500	\$0 - \$90,000
5	\$0 - \$8,785	\$0 - \$105,420
6	\$0 - \$10,070	\$0 - \$120,840

COVID-300% funding ended September 30, 2023.

A waiver was approved on September 22, 2022 indicating that staff were not required to call for verification on employment letters when all of the information was provided on those letters that we need for eligibility determination purposes. That waiver applied only to the following categories regarding the need for calling to verify employment letters: COVID- 19, COVID-300%, CCDF-85% and Strong Start-85%.

NOTE: All other funding categories required calls for verifications.

Effective 11/14/2023, the verification of employment form is no longer required. The information from the letter will be used to determine eligibility when all the information to determine eligibility is present on the letter. This applies to all COVID related child care categories, CCDF-85% and Strong Start-85% only.

****CCDF-85% - CCDF-85% funded began being used effective 5/16/2023. Any client that was at or below 85% SMI were categorized under CCDF-85%. If the applicant was over 85% SMI but was under 300% of FPL, then we were able to use COVID-300% funding.**

****Strong Start – 85% Child Care was effective 10/01/2023. This category is the only category with a co-pay at this time. **Note:** There was a system glitch for the dates of 10/01/2023-11/07/2023 where co-pays were not being assessed by the system. Our IT staff resolved this issue on 11/07/2023.**

Effective 06/18/2024, all eligibility for all child care categories will be based on 85% State Median income.

Effective 10/01/2024, all clients that are at or below 150% of federal poverty level will not be assessed a copayment.

Note: not all client fees pulled correctly due to an IT error. Corrected 11/10/2024 forward.

Effective December 1, 2025, the Child Care Scholarship Program placed a pause on accepting any new applications unless the families fall within a protected category. The pause affects determination and redetermination of eligibility for all cases except those in a protected category.

[SEE WHAT'S NEW!](#)

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Chapter 1

Introduction to The Child Care Scholarship Program

DSS Mission Statement

To serve South Carolina by promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families. This mission is accomplished through the core principles of competence, courage and compassion.

1.1 PROGRAM PURPOSE AND LEGAL BASIS

1.1.1 PURPOSE OF THE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) administers the child care subsidy program, hereafter referred to as the Child Care Scholarship Program. Child care services provided through this program are funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), and State dollars. The CCDF is under the administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families and is distributed to the states to provide child care services for low income families.

The purpose of the Child Care Scholarship Program is to:

- A. Increase the availability, affordability, accessibility and quality of child care for families in the state of South Carolina.
- B. Assist families in achieving and maintaining economic self-support and self- sufficiency.

The goals of economic independence and prevention of welfare dependency are promoted through the belief that continued employment results in more secure families. This program reinforces the idea that the strength of the family is important to the state's and the nation's economy. Targeting families that are attempting to achieve and maintain economic independence from welfare is a concern of state and federal government.

1.1.2 FEDERAL REGULATIONS

As the lead agency, SCDSS is responsible for implementing a program that complies with federal regulations associated with the CCDF. Under these regulations, SCDSS must ensure that:

- The program is made accessible to all eligible parents as funding permits.
- A parent is given a choice of eligible providers, and that the requirement of this program will not significantly restrict parental choice of the types of providers.
- A parent will have unlimited access to their child and to the provider who is caring for their child during normal hours of operation.
- A record of parental complaints is maintained and made available to the public on request.
- Consumer education information is made available to the public concerning:
 - Licensing and regulatory requirements
 - Complaint procedures
 - Health and safety information
 - Policies relative to child care services.
 - Payment rates will be sufficient to ensure equal access for an eligible child.

1.1.3 LEGAL BASIS

The following laws and regulations govern the administration of the child care services:

42 USC 1397c (Public Law 97-35, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981). Requires the state to publish an annual intended-use report for Title XX SSBG funds.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (P.L.101-508) as amended by P.L.102-401, P.L. 102-586, P.L.103-171 and found at Title VI, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L.104-193.

1.1.4 CHILD CARE SERVICE GOALS

The goals of the child care services are:

- To promote family independence by giving priority for the use of child care funds to Welfare Reform clients through the Family Independence Act.
- To enhance the quality and increase the supply of child care for all families, including those who receive no direct assistance under CCDF or SSBG.
- To provide parents with a broad range of options in addressing their child care needs.
- To strengthen the role of the family.
- To improve the quality of, and coordination among, child care programs and early childhood development programs.
- To increase the availability of early childhood development and before-school and after-school care services (school-age care).

The Child Care Scholarship Program incorporates the following elements which are beneficial to families, providers, and local communities:

- Families are offered information regarding accessible child care arrangements.
- Child care providers are afforded opportunities for participating in the delivery of paid care, less paperwork, timely payment, resources for staff training and program improvement.
- The consolidated management of publicly funded child care results in effective administration, planning, and reporting.

At many levels, information and referral options are being provided and applicants are learning about child care and what is available in the communities. A guiding principle of the Child Care Scholarship Program is a commitment to provide the applicant with information that allows informed choices regarding child care arrangements.

1.1.5 BASIC SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

Since the passage of the South Carolina Family Independence Act in 1995 and the related federal Welfare Reform Law of 1996, funding priority for the Child Care Scholarship Program is given to parents participating in the State's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program.

Child care is essential to parents who are:

- Participating in a training program
- Securing employment
- Pursuing educational opportunities
- Participating in TANF

1.1.6 USE OF POLICY MANUAL

The Child Care Scholarship Program Policy Manual, as well as any applicable procedural manuals and attachments, will be used by SCDSS staff to determine eligibility for child care assistance in a fair, consistent, and timely manner. All SCDSS staff are responsible for exercising prudent and reasonable judgment when applying policy.

If a child care worker is unable to reach a decision about a specific situation that is not addressed in the manual, the child care worker will contact the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center Supervisor or other identified supervisors for a decision. If a decision is still unable to be made, the Program Manager or Director will be consulted.

It is the responsibility of all SCDSS child care staff carrying out policies and procedures of the program in a timely, accurate, courteous, and non-discriminatory manner. SCDSS child care staff will be held accountable for ensuring proper application of policy.

1.1.7 NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Title VI Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title V Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, SCDSS will administer programs so that no person shall, solely because of race, color, national origin or qualified handicap, be: Excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by SCDSS.

1.2 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

1.2.1 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

All requests for information on specific clients or child care providers must be coordinated with the Office of General Counsel. When a request is made by individuals seeking access to public records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the child care worker should direct the individual to send written inquiries to:

Freedom of Information Officer
South Carolina Department of Social Services
P. O. Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202

The schedule of fees for FOIA requests are:

Search Fee: \$37.00 per hour

Redaction Fee: \$37.00 per hour

Copies (color): \$0.06 per page

Postage: Actual cost

Policy indicates that all client and provider case files are maintained by the appropriate worker for a period of three years or until all applicable audits have been completed. If an audit is in progress, all documents shall be maintained until the audit is complete. Applications for applicants who are not funded shall be maintained for 12 months. See [Retention Schedule](#).

1.2.2 CONFIDENTIAL CASE INFORMATION

The following case information is considered confidential and must be safeguarded:

- All information obtained during interviews with the applicant/recipient (A/R).
- All information obtained while verifying eligibility for the A/R.
- Name, address, and Social Security Number (SSN) of the A/R
- Information on the economic, social or medical circumstances of the A/R.

1.2.3 DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Confidential information may be disclosed in the following situations:

Verification: When the child care worker is attempting to verify eligibility and must disclose information limited to the facts required to determine eligibility.

Federal Assistance: When another agency administering a federal or federally assisted program, which provides needs-based assistance directly to an individual, is attempting to assist an A/R and requests information directly related to that agency's programs.

Audit: When a legislative body or designated audit body certifies the information is needed for auditing purposes.

Federal Program Investigation: When any investigation, prosecution, or criminal/civil proceeding is being conducted in connection with the administration of federal programs administered by SCDSS.

Child Abuse/Neglect: When child abuse and/or neglect is suspected.

Child Care Applicant Consent: When the applicant discloses information or when the applicant or their authorized representative request to view information in the applicant's case file.

EXCEPTION: The applicant may not view confidential medical reports from third parties nor give consent for this information to be disclosed.

1.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST WHEN DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

A conflict of interest is defined as a situation (actual or perceived interest) in which staff decisions are influenced by their personal interests. The definition includes any bias or the appearance of being bias in a decision-making process that would reflect a dual role played by staff.

Child care staff must maintain program integrity in all aspects of their jobs at all times and are to avoid any conflict or appearance of a conflict of interest. Child Care Scholarship Program staff are responsible for answering the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center phone lines for clients and providers and determining eligibility for child care services. The child care staff should not review, determine eligibility, nor consult on any case involving a person related to them or any case where there is any type of relationship, such as a friend or neighbor. Any case where a conflict of interest exists, or may exist, should be brought to the attention of a supervisor immediately. The supervisor must assign the case to another worker who is not related to, nor has any conflict of interest, with any person included in the case.

Note: Child care staff, including supervisors, should refrain from searching for or researching cases on staff, co-workers, friends, relatives and acquaintances.

1.4 VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

The Child Care Scholarship Program is a voluntary program. A licensed, registered, waived, exempt and/or approved child care provider may enroll into the program if they meet the enrollment criteria. Family, Friend, or Neighbor providers may also enroll but enrollment is specific to the family or families served.

1.5 MANDATED REPORTER

Child Care Scholarship Program staff, as well as all other agency employees, are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate entities. The following is an excerpt of the SC Code of Laws on Mandated Reporters:

SECTION 20-7-510. Persons required or permitted to report; method; confidentiality.

(A) A physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, or an employee of a county medical examiner's or coroner's office, or any other

medical, emergency medical services, mental health, or allied health professional, member of the clergy including a Christian Science Practitioner or religious healer, schoolteacher, counselor, principal, assistant principal, social or public assistance worker, substance abuse treatment staff, or childcare worker in a childcare center or foster care facility, police or law enforcement officer, undertaker, funeral home director or employee of a funeral home, persons responsible for processing films, computer technician, or a judge must report in accordance with this section when in the person's professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in Section 20-7-490.

If a person required to report pursuant to subsection (A) has received information in the person's professional capacity which gives the person reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by acts or omissions that would be child abuse or neglect if committed by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, but the reporter believes that the act or omission was committed by a person other than the parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the reporter must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

NOTE: Child care staff should refer any questionable situations to a supervisor.

1.6 THE CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTROL CENTER

The Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center, hereafter called the Control Center, is located at SCDSS. Staff are responsible for the:

- Daily operation of the Child Care Scholarship Program
- Coordination of child care eligibility
- Selection and payment to providers.

Toll-free lines for clients and providers are operated by the Control Center staff. Clients and providers may access the Child Care Scholarship Program by calling the toll-free telephone numbers between the hours of 8:00am- 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday. The toll-free lines are designed to:

- Provide information to a client receiving child care services.
- Provide information to an interested family wishing to apply for services.
- Provide technical assistance and resolution to a provider regarding payment information or for other situations encountered by a client or provider.

Parents may call 1-800-476-0199 for assistance and child care providers are to call 1-800-262-4416. Both lines are available Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The Control Center fax number is 1-800-310-5417.

The mailing address for the Control Center is:

**Child Care Scholarship Program
SC Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 100160
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-3160**

1.6.1 WEBSITES AND COMMON EMAIL ADDRESSES

- **General website:** www.scchildcare.org
 - General website that houses all information pertaining to the Division of Early Care and Education.
- **ABC Quality website:** www.abcquality.org
 - Website that specifically has information about ABC Quality.
- **Connection Forms:** Connectionforms@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address used for the submission of connection forms.
- **SC Child Care:** scchildcare@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address where general questions may be submitted by clients.
- **Provider Questions:** ProviderQuestions@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address where participating child care providers may submit questions regarding their payments or ask other issues around the children they serve.
- **Provider Rate Forms:** Providerrateforms@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address where the provider submits rate increase requests and documentation.
- **Special Needs:** SpecialNeeds@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address where the special needs clients, providers and referring entities submit information specific to special needs.
- **FFN Enrollments:** FFNEnrollments@dss.sc.gov
 - Email address where information is sent and received on family, friend and neighbor providers.

1.7 CHILD CARE PAYABLES

Child Care Payables is responsible for receiving all Service Voucher Logs (SVL's) for payment. This area reviews each SVL for proper documentation of enrollment. Properly documented SVL's are entered into the Child Care Scholarship Program database for payment. The payment process takes approximately 10-14 days to complete. A remittance advice and payment validation is generated and sent to providers detailing the services paid for each child enrolled and reflects the amount of funds deposited to the banking account or the amount of the check. Providers also receive with each remittance advice a new SVL to complete for payment for children with continued services.

Child Care Payables is also responsible for updating and entering banking information for providers requesting direct deposits to personal or business accounts. Providers **MUST** complete a direct deposit form, DSS Form 1105-1, Authorization Agreement and Enrollment Form for Electronic Vendor Payment and Remittance Advice and send in a VOIDED check when a deposit is made to a valid checking account. Providers electing to have funds deposited to a savings account must have their bank complete Section 3 of the direct deposit form for account verification. The form should be sent to Child Care Payables for entering into the E-pay system. A pre-note process is necessary in order for funds to be deposited to personal accounts. This process takes approximately 14 business days for proper verification of account information.

Child Care Payables is **NOT** responsible for the garnishment of payment due to notices of levy by other agencies such as SC Department of Revenue or the IRS. If the provider's payment is intercepted by any agency referenced above, the provider is responsible for contacting the imposing agency for negotiating the levy. The imposing agency is responsible for forwarding release of levy notices to SCDSS when garnishments are to be terminated and the imposing agency is responsible for administering any refunds due to the provider.

1.8 ACCESSING THE CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

A family interested in applying for child care assistance may inquire about the Child Care Scholarship Program by contacting the Control Center at 1-800-476-0199 or other identified entities. Child care assistance is based on available funding and specific eligibility criteria. Information regarding the Child Care Scholarship Program and enrolled child care providers may be obtained from the SCDSS child care website at www.scchildcare.org or www.abcquality.org. Interested families may also apply through the Child Care Scholarship Program Benefits Portal.

In order to consider the needs of the family in accessing support, materials, applications, and our website are all available in both English and Spanish. Additionally, our agency contracts with an organization that provides interpretation and translation services in over 100 languages.

1.9 CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS PORTAL

The Child Care Scholarship Program has a benefits portal that allows an applicant to create an account, electronically complete the child care application and upload all supporting documentation via the portal. The benefits portal is used for the majority of child care application submissions.

1.10 CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP WAIT LIST

Effective 10/01/2026, The Child Care Scholarship Program has implemented a wait list for interested parents to apply for the Working Families Child Care Scholarship. The families may add their names to the wait list and as funding is available, the family will be pulled from the wait list and given an opportunity to apply for child care services.

Chapter 2

Child Care Assistance

2.1 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

2.1.1 RESIDENCY

In order to receive child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the applicant must be a legal resident of South Carolina. When residency is questionable, the applicant may be asked to submit proof of residency. Proof of residency may include a current copy of one of the following:

- Lease agreement
- Utility bill (water, gas, light, cable, cell phone, etc)
- Driver's license
- State identification card
- Voter registration
- Homeowners insurance or renter insurance policy.
- Mortgage statement
- Property tax bill
- Other documents as approved by the Program Director.

NOTE: Notarized statements from friends or relatives are not acceptable methods for verification of residency.

2.1.2 AGE

In order to apply for child care assistance through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the applicant must be 18 years old or within six months of turning eighteen at the time of the application. If the applicant does not meet the age requirements to apply for child care assistance, the minor's parents must apply for child care services in their own name and use their family size and income, or **both** of the minor's parents must sign an emancipation statement.

NOTE: This does not apply to TANF and TANF/CO eligibility categories.

In order to receive child care assistance through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the child in need of care must be within the ages of birth up to age 13, unless the child has special needs, in which services may be approved up to age 19. Some sources of funding have different age requirements.

Exceptions to the age requirements for applicants and children will be made on a case-by-case basis and must be approved only by designated Child Care

Scholarship Program Staff, the Control Center Supervisor or their designee.

Child Care Scholarship Policy

See [Exception Criteria for CPS and FC Child Care Cases](#).

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

2.1.2 CITIZENSHIP/QUALIFIED NON-CITIZEN

A child served through the Child Care Scholarship Program must be a citizen of the United States or a qualified non-citizen. An applicant for and recipient of the child care scholarship must declare that the child for whom they are applying or receiving child care subsidy for is a citizen or qualified non-citizen. The parent's declaration that their child is a citizen or qualified non-citizen should be accepted unless there is reason to question the validity of the declaration.

If the applicant acknowledges that the child is a non-citizen, the child care worker must verify if the child is a "qualified non-citizen" able to receive federal benefits. If the child care worker has a suspicion that the documentation may be invalid or falsified, additional documentation should be requested. Incorrect reporting of citizenship or status may result in loss of child care eligibility even if otherwise eligible.

An applicant who is in the TANF Program or transitioning off of the TANF Program is to be considered already verified for citizenship or eligible alien status by the State for child care purposes and will need no further verification. Verification of citizenship/non-citizen status is required for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); therefore, requirement has taken place.

Note: Being a legal resident is not the same as citizenship. Applicants may be in the United States legally for work or educational purposes but may not be considered citizens or qualified non-citizens.

2.1.3 CITIZENSHIP/QUALIFIED NON-CITIZEN STATUS

When an applicant's statement on citizenship or legal non-citizen status is questionable or inconsistent with other information on the application, the child care worker will ask the applicant to provide acceptable verification of citizenship or legal non-citizen status. It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure and present valid documentation.

Acceptable forms of verification include:

- Birth certificate
- INS certificate of citizenship or naturalization
- US passport

Acceptable documentation for the following specific groups of non-citizens include:

Qualified Non-Citizen	Documentation
Refugee A person who is admitted into the US as a refugee under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)	I-94 indicates "refugee" per section 207 of the INA or I-551 stamped RE-6, RE5, RE7, RE8, RE9
Asylee A non-citizen in the United States or at a port of entry who is found to be unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality, or to seek the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of prosecution.	I-94: stamped "Granted Asylum under Section 208 of the INA.", a I-551, or a court letter showing asylum has been granted
Cuban/Haitian Entrant Any individual granted parole status as a Cuban/Haitian entrant or granted any other special status subsequently established under the immigration laws for nationals of Cuba or Haiti, regardless of the status of the individual at the time assistance or services are provided; and Any other national of Cuba or Haiti who is not subject to a final, non-appealable and legally enforceable removal order and who meets the following criteria: Is in removal proceedings under the Immigration and Nationality Act; or Has an application for asylum pending with USCIS.	I-94 stamped "Cuban/Haitian Entrant, or I-94 Arrival/departure code with a stamp showing paroled into the US or showing Status Pending CHS Adjustment code on the I-551, Permanent Resident Card, Cuban or Haitian passport with a {212(d)(5)} stamp dated after 10-10-80 (passport may be expired) DHS Form 1-862 Notice to Appear; DHS Form 220-A, Order of Release on Recognizance, DHS Form I-122, Notice to Applicant for admission detained for hearing before an Immigrant judge. EOIR-26, Notice of Appeal, date stamped by the Office of the Immigrant Judge.

	1-766 Employment Authorization Document (EAD) with code C08 or C10; or 1-688B Employment Authorization Document, showing that application for suspension of deportation/cancellation of removal submitted. DHS receipt for filing Form I-589 (Application for Asylum and withholding of Removal)
Amerasian A person fathered by a US citizen and born in Vietnam between January 1, 1962 an January 1, 1976 and close family members admitted as immigrants.	I-94 is stamped: "Processed for I-551" with codes AM1, AM2 or AM3, or I-551 is stamped with codes AM6, AM7 or AM8.
Deportation Withheld A person whose deportation is withheld under Section 241(b) (3) or 243 (b) of the INA.	I-688B: Employment Authorization Card; or I-766: Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
Victim of severe forms of trafficking A person forced into prostitution, slavery, and forced labor through coercion, threats of physical violence, psychological abuse, torture and imprisonment.	Victim of trafficking will have a letter of certification from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Washington D.C. or I-94: stating admission under Section 212(d)(5)
Deportation Withheld A person whose deportation is withheld under Section 241(b) (3) or 243 (h) of the INA.	I-688B: Employment Authorization Card; or I-766: Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
Veterans and active duty servicemen and their families A person who served in the active military, naval or air service and who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable; full-time servicemen who work on a military base and can be deployed at any time, and their families.	A discharge certificate (Form DD-214) Military ID card

Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants Non-citizens granted Special Immigrant Status under section 101 (a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) who are eligible for the same benefits available to refugees admitted under section 207 to the same extent, and for the same periods of time, as such refugees. Principal applicant, spouse, or unmarried child under 21 years of age, Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant Principal Applicant, spouse, or unmarried child under 21 years of age of Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant in P6 Category Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant Principal Adjusting Status in the United States	Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV (Immigrant Visa) Category S11 and DHS stamp or notation on passport or 1-94 showing date of entry DHS Form I-551 (“green card”) showing Iraqi or Afghan nationality (or Iraqi or Afghan passport), with an IV (immigrant visa) code of S16
Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (Non-SI Parolees) Individuals paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of the INA (8USC 1182 (d)(5)) Afghan citizens and nationals paroled into the US between July 31, 2021 and September 30, 2023; their spouses or children paroled after September 30, 2022 and their parents or guardians paroled after September 30, 2022, if the Afghan citizen or national is an unaccompanied child.	Form 1-94 with COA codes – OAR, OAW, PAR, DT, PAROLED or Humanitarian Parole (per INA section 212 (d)(5)(A)) Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp with COA codes OAR, OAW, PAR, DT, PAROLED or Humanitarian Parole (per INA section 212 (d)(5)(A)) Interim Notice Authorizing Parole (INAP) noting parole under INA 212 (d)(5)(A) Form 1-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD) receipt notice with code

	C11 Form 1-766 Employment Authorization Document (EAD with code C11.
Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees Individuals paroled into the United States under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA (8USC 1182 (d)(5). They are eligible for TANF benefits and services until the end of their parole term. Citizens or national of Ukraine (or persons who last habitually resided in Ukraine) paroled into the US between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023 Their spouses or children paroled after September 30, 2023 Their parents, legal guardians or primary caregivers paroled after September 30, 2023, if the Ukrainian citizen or national is an unaccompanied child.	For 1-94 noting humanitarian parole (per INA section 212 (d)(5) or 8 USC §1182 (d)(5)) Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting “DT” Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Uniting for Ukraine or “U4U” Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee or “UHP” Form 1-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD) receipt notice with code C11 Form I-766 Employment Authorization Document (EAD with code C11

The burden of proof to provide these documents is always on the parent. If the qualified non-citizen status cannot be determined or documentation cannot be obtained, the application will be denied.

Keying a Client When the Parent is not a Legal Citizen, but the Child is

When entering a case for a child where the parent is not a legal citizen, but the child is, a [pseudo-SSN](#) must be created for the parent in order to process the application. The application is entered in the name of the parent using a pseudo social security number.

2.1.4 ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

There must be an established need for child care prior to applying for services. In order to be eligible for child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the applicant must be working, in school, or in a training program at least 15 hours per week (including travel time) or as determined by the child care funding source. A TANF parent may not be required to participate for a minimum of 15 hours; however, they must be in compliance with their Family Plan.

Note: This means a parent may be working a minimum of 10 hours, adding 5 hours of travel time equals 15 hours which meets the need requirement of 15 hours.

2.1.5 ESTABLISHING IF THE APPLICANT IS ELIGIBLE FOR FULL TIME OR PART TIME CARE

Parents are eligible for either full time or half time care.

Full time is determined in one of the following ways:

- The client is working full-time hours (travel time is included) of 25 or more per week.

Determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 20 hours per week. 20 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 25 hours which equals full time eligibility.

Note: Policy was updated 10/01/2024 to reduce the number of hours from 30 to 25 for eligibility to full time care.

- The client is in school full time (12 or more credit hours per week or full time as determined by the school).
- If the client is in school part time based on the credit hours for eligibility and is working part time, as determined above, the client will be eligible for full time care.

Half time care is determined in one of the following ways:

- The client is working part time hours (including travel time) of 15-24 hours per week.

Determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See

[Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 15 hours per week. 15 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 20 hours which equals half time eligibility.

- The client is in school part time only.
- If the client is in school part time and not employed enough hours to equal part time employment, then they are eligible only for half time only.

NOTE: When calculating the hours worked, follow the mathematical rule of rounding and always round the to a whole number. Example: If working 37.5 hours, round to 38. If working 20.4 hours, round to 20 hours.

2.1.6 TRAVEL TIME

Travel time to work, school or training is considered when determining the type of child care needed. An average of one hour of travel time per day (5 hours per week) should be given. However, additional travel may be considered if documented. **Acceptable documentation of travel time includes print outs from internet resources such as MapQuest, Google Maps, Bing Maps, or any other mapping sites that document the travel time from the applicant's home to their work, school, or training location.** Travel time may be used and should be notated on the eligibility worksheet when determining the number of hours working or participating per week.

2.1.7 FAMILY DEFINITION

All family members are identified in order to determine the family household unit and the gross monthly income. For eligibility purposes, the family household unit is defined as the number of persons counted as indicated below who reside in the same household and who may be responsible for the financial support of the child whose eligibility for child care services is being determined. Additionally, all children in the household should be considered when determining the family household unit. If a child is between the ages of 18-21 and in school, the child is counted. If between the ages of 18-21 and not in school, the child is **not** counted. The following information outlines who should be included and excluded when determining the family household unit:

Who **IS** counted when determining the family household unit:

- Natural/adoptive parent, caretaker or grandparent, or an individual acting [in loco parentis](#), such as a relative or non-relative who has been granted custody or guardianship by a court of law
- Married spouse of the parent or caretaker, if residing in the same home;
- Families in same sex marriages, if residing in the same home;
- Second parent or alleged parent of the child needing care when they are residing in the home, even if unmarried to the parent/caretaker;
- Dependent child in the household. A dependent child is defined as an unmarried child under age 18 or under age 21 if a student in secondary school or equivalent vocational/technical school;

NOTE: The following only applies to Welfare Reform eligibility categories (TANF, TANF/CO, and TCC): A dependent child aged 0-13, or 13-19 if special needs, living in the household of a caretaker/relative, but not included in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) budget, is eligible to receive child care services.

- Family members living temporarily away from home, i.e., military spouse, not residing in the same household due to being stationed away from home;
 - Stepparent
 - Grandparent;
- Teen parent who has their own TANF benefit case but resides in the household of their parent or caretaker. The teen parent and child make

up their own family household unit. A teen parent must be participating in school and/or working as a part of his/her TANF Family Plan;

- Applicant of child care who is 18 years of age or older is considered a separate household from their parent even if the applicant resides in the same house;
- Foster child when in a family case that is applying for non-foster care services for their own children.
- Foster child is considered a one-person family and only the child's income is counted.
- Emancipated minor is defined as a minor 18 years or under whose parent has entirely surrendered the responsibility of the care and custody of the minor and the right to the minor's earnings and is under no legal obligation to support the minor.
- An emancipated minor with a child living in the home of their parent is counted as a separate household. This minor is not included in the TANF or SNAP budgets. A minor is emancipated if they meet one of the following conditions:
 - The court legally released the minor from parental control,
 - Both parents of the minor have signed an [emancipation statement](#). This statement must be notarized,

NOTE: The Child Care Scholarship Program uses this statement for eligibility purposes only. However, this information may be made available under the Freedom of Information Act.

- The minor has legally married, OR
- The minor has been legally divorced or become widowed but has not returned to parental support.
- An un-emancipated minor is counted in the family size of their parent. Applications for child care will be taken in the parent's name and the parent must meet all eligibility criteria, unless the following circumstances apply:
 - The teen parent has no parent or legal guardian whose whereabouts is known.
 - No parent or legal guardian of the teen parent allows the teen to live in their home.
 - The teen parent lived apart from their own parent or legal guardian for a period of at least one year before the birth of the dependent child.

Child Care Scholarship Policy

- The physical or emotional health or safety of the teen parent or dependent child would be jeopardized if they resided in the same residence with the major parent or legal guardian.
- There is otherwise good cause for the teen parent or dependent child to receive assistance while living apart from the major parent, legal guardian, another adult relative, or an adult supervised supportive living arrangement.

NOTE: Documentation of good cause includes, but is not limited to, written statements from at least two corroborating persons showing that it is not in the best interest of the teen parent to live with their parent or legal guardian. One of these corroborating persons should be a professional such as a school counselor, social worker, or mental health professional.

Those **NOT** counted when determining the family household unit:

- Incarcerated family member, such as a parent or sibling, is not included in the family size.
- Adults who are not married but reside in the same household are not considered part of the same family household unit unless they are the parents of the same child.

2.1.8 INCOME DEFINITION AND CALCULATIONS

For eligibility purposes, gross family income is defined as the source and amount of current gross income earned by all adult family members identified in the family household unit through the receipt of:

- Wages
- Tips
- Salaries
- Commissions
- Piece-rate payments
- Cash bonuses
- Armed services pay, including uniform and living allowances.

The income of the following individuals is counted when determining eligibility:

Individual	Special Instructions
Dependent child	Earned income of a dependent child is excluded.
Minor (under 18 years old)	Earned income of any minor is excluded.
Teen Parent Adult	All earned and unearned income of the teen adult parent is counted unless specifically excluded.
Parent in the home	All income is counted unless specifically excluded.
Caretaker relative other than child's parent	Income is counted if need is included in the benefit calculation unless specifically excluded. If married, and caretaker relative is included in the family household unit , both spouse and caretaker relative living in the home must be included in the family household unit.
Stepparent in the home	All income is counted unless specifically excluded.

Calculating the Gross Monthly Income

The family's monthly income is calculated by adding the gross monthly income of each adult family member identified in the family household unit. Income such as regularly received child support payments or Social Security benefits for a child under age 18 must also be included in the calculations. A family member living temporarily away from home must be included in the family size and their income included in the calculation. See [Family Definition](#).

To arrive at the gross monthly income for an applicant who receives wages, child support, or other earned/unearned income, follow the formulas below according to how often the income is received:

- Weekly – The gross weekly salary is multiplied by 4.33.
- Biweekly (every other week) – The gross bi-weekly salary is multiplied by 2.16.
- Semi-monthly (client is paid twice a month) – Add the gross amounts of the two checks together.
 - When you have only the hourly rate and hours worked per week for a client paid semi-monthly, income should be calculated by multiplying the hourly rate of pay x the number of hours worked. That total should then be multiplied by 52. That amount should be divide by 24. That amount should then be added together to get the semi-monthly amount:
Example: \$15/hour at 40 hours per week, paid semi-monthly should be calculated as $\$15 \times 40 = \600 . $\$600 \times 52 \text{ weeks in a year} = \$31,200$ yearly salary. Divide $\$31,200$ by 24 (number of semi-monthly pay periods) = $\$1,300$ per pay period. $\$1300 + \$1300 = \$2,600$.
- Monthly (client is paid once a month). Use the gross monthly amount.
- Through self-employment. Use the adjusted gross reported on the profit loss statement. Use adjusted gross income and divide by 12. If the adjusted gross income is a negative number, the gross monthly income = 0. Enter zero on eligibility worksheet and in the child care scholarship database. If only the yearly salary is provided, use the annual amount and divide by 12 to determine the gross monthly income.
- Seasonal or irregular gross income must be averaged.

NOTE: The 4.33 and 2.16 formulas are used to calculate average monthly income, as some months have more weeks. The federally standardized formulas ensure a more accurate reflection of the household income.

eligibility for child care. The child care eligibility worker may use agency databases available such as CHIP, SCOSA , etc for information to verify income when other documentation is not provided. Child care eligibility staff will review check stubs to ensure there is **NO** appearance of the check stubs being tampered with, falsified, etc. If there are discrepancies, third-party verification will be obtained and documented.

Earned vs. Unearned Income

Earned income is income earned through wages, salaries, tips and other taxable income. Unearned income is income received from a source other than work. ie..TANF benefits, Social Security, child support, alimony, etc.

2.1.9 GRADUATED PHASE-OUT

The Child Care Scholarship Program sets the initial eligibility threshold at 55% of State Median Income and the exit threshold at 85% of state median income (SMI)

2.1.10 CHILD SUPPORT

Written verification of child support is not required. However, the applicant should disclose all applicable sources of income. The amount listed on the application will be used to calculate the child support amount. If the applicant indicates that they are not receiving the child support on a regular basis, you may not count the child support income. Eligibility workers will use only what is listed on the application for counting child support. Since the CHIP database is not always current, we will not include any child support listed in an open case if it is not included on the application submitted by the client.

Note: Child support is calculated the same way as gross income. If child support is received weekly, multiply the amount by 4.33, bi-weekly by 2.16, etc.

2.1.11 TREATMENT OF OVERTIME INCOME

Overtime income will be counted when it appears on at least half of the paystubs submitted with a child care application, even if the overtime pay amounts vary with each paystub. Unusual pay amounts will be counted only if they appear on at least half of the paystubs submitted with a child care application. If paid weekly, overtime should be on at least two pay stubs. For bi-weekly or semi-monthly, on at least one.

2.1.12 TREATMENT OF IRREGULAR FLUCTUATIONS OF EARNINGS

For initial child care determination and redetermination of eligibility irregular fluctuation in earnings will be considered. Temporary increases in income,

including temporary increases that result in monthly income exceeding 85% SMI, does not affect eligibility or family copayments. Seasonal income or irregular income must be averaged over a period of time; typically, three months.

For example, an applicant is employed as a waitress and submits four paystubs with the application. Three of the paystubs show \$250 gross per week; the fourth paystub shows \$1000 gross for the week. The client lives and works in North Augusta and the paystubs submitted are for the month of April. The \$1000 paystub is for the same week as the Master's Golf Tournament in North Augusta. It is not typical for the client to receive a \$1,000 paycheck. That paystub is an unusual pay amount and would not be considered in determining the applicant's gross monthly income. For this example, to determine the client's gross monthly income, the three \$250 paystubs would be averaged; the \$1000 paystub would not be included.

Pay stubs should be representative. Pay stubs that are received that have vastly differing amounts should be carefully examined. If one or more pay stubs are not representative, staff may use the pay stubs they have to average the income based on the client's normal rate of pay, hours and earnings.

2.1.13 TREATMENT OF SHIFT PREMIUM, SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL AND PAID TIME OFF

Shift premium and shift differential is pay that an employee receives for working the least desirable hours at a business. Paid time off is pay that an employee receives as part of having available sick or vacation time. For initial child care determination and redetermination of eligibility, the **pay** from shift premium, shift differential and paid time off **are** counted, paid time off and holiday hours only are counted. The shift differential **hours are not** counted as they are part of the regular hours indicated on the pay stubs.

2.1.14 INCOME INCLUSIONS

The following types of income are to be considered when computing the amount of gross income for eligibility purposes:

Alimony

Allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, paid to an individual by the spouse or former spouse after a legal separation or divorce or while legal action is pending. Any alimony amount listed on the application will be counted. If the client has an open CHIP case and had not indicated alimony income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the alimony income is accepted, and child care staff should use the amount of alimony income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. Alimony income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

Child Support

Allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, for the support of a child. The child care applicant may provide self-declaration of the amount and frequency of the receipt of child support payments.

Social Security

Social Security pensions, survivor's benefits, and permanent disability insurance benefits paid by the Social Security Administration (SSA) before deductions for medical insurance. Railroad retirement insurance benefits from the U.S. Government. If the client has an open CHIP case and had not indicated social security income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the social security income is accepted and child care staff should use the amount of social security income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. Social Security income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

Veterans' Pensions

Money paid periodically by the Veterans Administration to a disabled member of the armed forces or to a survivor of a deceased veteran, as well as subsistence paid to a veteran for education and on-the-job training, and "refunds" paid to a veteran as G.I. insurance premiums. If the client has an open CHIP case and had not indicated pension income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the pension income is accepted, and child care staff should use the amount of pension income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

Pensions and Annuities

Pensions or retirement benefits paid to a retired person or their survivor by a former employer or by a union, either directly or through an insurance company.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (also known as TANF)

Assistance payment to aid a family with a dependent child who is in the financial assistance budget. The CHIP database will be used to verify receipt of a TANF stipend.

Unemployment Compensation

Compensation received from a government unemployment insurance agency or a private or public insurance company for an injury incurred at work. The cost of this insurance must have been paid by the employer and not the individual. The length of time the individual is expected to be out of work due to injury should be included in the narrative. If the client has an open CHIP case and had not indicated unemployment income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the unemployment income is accepted, and child care staff should use the amount of unemployment income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. Unemployment income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

Workers' Compensation

Compensation received periodically from a private or public insurance company for an injury incurred at work. The cost of this insurance must be paid by the employer and not the individual. The length of time the individual is expected to be out of work due to injury should be included in the narrative. If the client has an open TANF or SNAP case and had not indicated workers compensation income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the workers compensation income is accepted, and child care staff should use the amount of workers compensation income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. Workers' compensation income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

Wages or Salary (Includes seasonal work/income)

Total money received for work performed as an employee, including:

- Wages
- Salary

- Commissions
- Tips
- Piece-rate payments
- Cash bonuses
- Armed forces pay, BASE pay and any Special Duty Pay
- Shift differential pay
- Holiday pay
- Leave pay
- Schedule C for self-employment
- Military Leave Earning Statement (LES). This is the only acceptable form of verification for a member of the military.

Self-Employment (Non-Farm)

Adjusted gross income or net income earned in self-employment in one's own business, professional enterprise or partnership. A schedule C is the only acceptable verification of income for self-employment employed for over a year.

If the applicant is newly self-employed (less than a year) and tax information is not available, the applicant may complete the **Newly Self-Employment Form (DSS Form 1010)** and submit to be considered for eligibility purposes.

NOTE: Reference [Verification of Self-Employment](#).

Farm Self Employment

Gross receipts minus expenses from the operation of a farm by a person on their own account as an owner, renter, or sharecropper.

If the applicant is newly self-employed and tax information is not available, the applicant may complete the **Newly Self-Employment Form** (DSS Form 1010) and submit to be considered for eligibility purposes.

Farm income is usually available only at the end of the crop year but may be prorated over the next 12 months.

Dividends from Stocks and/or Bonds

Benefits received by a person who holds shares of stock (interest in a company) or bonds (interest bearing certificates), or benefits received from profits of an insurance company with whom they have a policy, or as a result of their membership in an association which shares its profits with its members. The amount received may be documented by placing a copy of the individual's dividend statement in the record.

Interest on Savings or Bonds

Benefits accrued as a result of a savings account or bonds. This includes all such income whether paid directly or reinvested in the savings account or bonds.

Income from Estate or Trusts

Periodic receipts from estates or trust funds. This may be verified through probate court or the institution handling the trust fund.

Net Rental Income

Income from the rental of a house, store, or other property, minus expenses necessary to the upkeep of the rental property. This amount may be verified by copies of rent receipts and expense records placed in the file. Further verification should be obtained from those persons paying a rental fee to assure accuracy.

Income from Boarders/Lodgers

Income from boarders/lodgers minus expenses necessary to provide room and/or board. This may be verified in the same manner as net rental income.

Net Royalties

This includes the following:

- The share of proceeds paid to the applicant as owner of a right (for example, a patent) for permission to use it or operate it.
- The share of proceeds paid to one from whom land rich in oil or minerals is leased.

- The share, usually a specified percentage, or proceeds from the work of a composer or writer and paid to the individual.

This amount should be verified by placing a copy of the royalty contract in the record.

General Assistance

State-funded assistance payment to the totally and temporarily disabled. This may be verified by checking the assistance payments case record.

2.1.15 INCOME EXCLUSIONS

The following types of income are not to be considered when computing the amount of gross income for eligibility purposes:

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Supplemental Security Income issued through the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Optional Supplement issued by SCDSS.

Funds Connected with Judgments of Indian Claims

Per capita payments or funds held in trust for any individual in satisfaction of a Judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court Claims.

Income from Property Sold

Money received from the sale of property (such as stocks, bonds, a house, or a car) is to be disregarded unless such individual was engaged in the business of selling such property.

Supplemental and Special Food Programs

Exclude the value of supplemental food assistance under the National School Lunch Act, as amended.

Payment from Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970

Children's Earnings

No inquiry shall be made regarding the earned income of a dependent child under 18 years of age unless the child is emancipated or is a teen parent with a TANF benefit case in their own name. See [Family Definition](#).

Certain Loans and Grants

Disregard income from loans and grants, such as Scholarship, obtained and used under conditions that preclude their use for current living costs. Also, disregard any loans or grants to any undergraduate student for educational purposes made or issued under any program administered by the Commissioner of Education under the Higher Education Act (e.g., Pell or Carl Perkins grants or Montgomery GI Bill).

Home Products

Disregard the value of home produce used for household consumption.

Value of Meals Received Through Special Programs

The value of meals received through congregate dining programs, etc., is excluded regardless of funding source for such programs.

Volunteers in Services to America (VISTA) Income

The income received by volunteers under the VISTA program must be disregarded.

Foster Care Board Payments

These payments, including clothing allowances, are excluded from the income of both foster parents and foster children.

Earnings Received Under Job Training Partnership Act of 1983

Adoption Subsidy

Lump Sum Payments from Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI),

Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and child support payments in arrearage

Bank Withdrawals

Borrowed Money

Tax Refunds (to include payment or refunds from Earned Income Tax Credit or Dependent Care Credits)

Gifts

**Lump Sum Inheritances or Lump Sum
Child Care Scholarship Policy**

Insurance

Payments Capital Gains

Value of SNAP Allotment

Income from Work-Study Programs

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Donated Food Value. Funds from the Cobell Settlement

Income received from Cobell v. Salazar settlement, codified in the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 is excluded. The settlement is the result of a lawsuit originally filed by Eloise Cobell over the mismanagement of Native American trust assets.

AmeriCorps

2.1.16 ASSET LIMIT

In order to receive child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the applicant must not have assets that exceed \$1,000,000. This is a self-declaratory question on the child care application. If the applicant does not check yes or no on the asset question, staff will call the applicant to receive verbal confirmation and will document on the application that they verbally received the yes or no answer. If questionable, the applicant can be asked to provide verification of assets. If an applicant indicates that their assets exceed \$1,000,000 the application will be automatically denied.

2.2 VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

2.2.1 VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All child care eligibility staff and Child Care Scholarship Program staff have access to the database also known as Client History and Information Profile System (CHIP), which contains a client's information about TANF/SNAP benefits. Staff also have access to the Child and Adult Protective Services System (CAPSS), which contains case information about children involved in CPS and foster care cases. These systems are used to confirm whether a client currently has an open in TANF, CPS or foster care cases, before determining child care eligibility. CHIP must be checked on all applications

prior to eligibility determination and notated on the eligibility worksheet.

When researching cases and verifying information submitted by applicants, clients, or child care providers, staff may use the internet as a resource. Searching information on general websites for verification of addresses, phone numbers, public record searches for marriage licenses, births, etc. is permissible for all child care staff and may be used when determining eligibility.

Based on child care funding eligibility criteria, in order to be eligible for child care assistance, the applicant must be working, in school, in a training program, complying with the TANF Family Plan, or permanently or temporarily disabled. If a two-parent household, both parents must be working, in school or in a training program or permanently or temporarily disabled. Income from employment, enrollment in school or participation in a training program will be verified. Also, an applicant who is disabled will verify disability income and submit a doctor's statement (DSS Form 1247) to verify disability.

An applicant must be determined eligible for child care based on the number of hours per week child care is needed. In addition to the number of hours the client is working, in school or training, credit hours or actual clock hours in school or training and travel time are considered. The hours child care is needed may not always coincide with the work hours of the parent. For example, a parent who works third shift needs to sleep during the day; therefore, child care may be approved during the day to help support the family.

NOTE: Study time is not considered when determining hours needed.

The goal is to use a reasonable approach that supports the family's efforts to be productive. A non-welfare reform parent must need a minimum of 15 hours of child care services per week per child. A TANF parent may not be required to participate a minimum of 15 hours.

2.2.2 ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF VERIFICATION

Acceptable methods of verification of employment include the following:

Pay Stubs - The preferred method of employment verification. The most recent 30 days of pay stubs should be submitted when an applicant submits an application. Pay stubs are required when a client has been employed over 60 days.

Letters from employers - Letters of employment will be accepted only when a client has started a new job, has a documented commitment of employment to begin within 2 weeks or is returning to work after being on leave. If the letter of employment indicates that the client has been employed for over 60 days, pay stubs will be requested.

Offer Letters - Offer letters will be accepted only for applicants who are within two weeks from starting a new job. The offer letter must also be signed by the applicant indicating the acceptance of the job.

Clients Paid in Cash - If a client is paid only in cash and does not receive pay stubs, a letter on company letterhead or from the employer must be submitted. Calls must be made by staff to verify these letters. Staff must call the employer to verify.

Leave Earning Statement - For an applicant in the military, a Leave Earning Statement (LES) is the only acceptable method of verification. When determining the pay, use only the BASE pay and any special duty pay (bonus) when calculating the income. For determining the hours of employment, use what the applicant indicated on their application. If paid monthly, only one LES is required. If paid bi-weekly or semi-monthly, two LES' are required.

Self-Employment - For an applicant who is self-employed a schedule C is the only acceptable method of verification for an applicant that has been self-employed for over one year. If the applicant is newly self-employed and tax information is not available, the applicant may complete the **Newly Self-Employment Form (DSS Form 1010)** and submit to be considered for eligibility purposes.

The burden of proof is always on the applicant.

NOTE: The IRS has started using tax transcripts in order to protect PII. If only the tax transcripts are available and it clearly identifies the profit loss for the applicant, then we may accept the tax transcripts as verification.

NOTE: Exceptions to these acceptable forms of documentation may be made on a case-by-case bases by the Program Manager or Program Director.

Wage forms are not accepted as proof of employment.

2.2.3 VERIFICATION OF AN ABSENT PARENT

If an applicant is married but separated during the time of the application, verification will be required in order to prove separation. Legal papers verifying marital separation, or a maintenance order is preferred. However, in the event that court documentation is not available, the applicant may submit proof of separate residences via one of the following documents:

- Utility bills (electric, gas, water, landline, cable or cell phone bill) that is no more than 30 days old. The bill must indicate the actual service address.
- Homeowner/Renters insurance that is no more than 30 days old that lists the insured name and address.
- Copy of a current mortgage.
- Copy of a current lease.
- Tax bill for property, real estate, or automobile.
- Copy of automobile, mortgage or rental insurance.

For applicants with newborn babies, under 10 months of age, that do not have the other parent listed on the application, proof of separate residences will be requested. One of the following documents may be used to verify separate residences:

- Utility bills (electric, gas, water, landline, cable or cell phone bill) that is no more than 30 days old. The bill must indicate the actual service address.
- Homeowner/Renters insurance that is no more than 30 days old that lists the insured name and address.
- Copy of a current mortgage.
- Copy of a current lease.
- Tax bill for property, real estate, or automobile.
- Copy of automobile, mortgage or rental insurance.

These documents will be used for verifying separate addresses for those

applicants who are not married but have recent child in common and indicate they are not in the same home. The burden of proof is on the client to provide the necessary information for verification of the absent parent. Effective 10/01/2026, the previously allowed Absent Parent form will no longer be allowed for verification of separate residences as this is a program integrity risk to the program. If the parent is unable to provide proof of separate residences, the application will be denied.

The following are some common scenarios, in addition to the above situations, and the acceptable documentation:

Scenario	Acceptable Documentation
Absent parent is incarcerated	Incarceration documents or mug shot proving current incarceration
Absent parent is deceased	Copy of death certificate or obituary

Effective 10/01/2026, birth certifications that indicate “no father listed” will no longer be accepted as proof of the absent parent.

Child care staff should attempt to obtain proof of a different address for the absent parent. If staff cannot obtain proof of separate addresses via the methods indicated above, the parent will be denied services. The burden of proof will be on the applicant to provide

NOTE: Notarized statements from parents, friends, or relatives are not accepted as methods of verification.

2.2.4 WORK

Employment for child care purposes also includes subsidized employment, i.e., On-the-Job Training, sheltered workshops through Vocational Rehabilitation, or unsubsidized employment, including self-employment. It may also include part-time, post-secondary work-study assignments of at least 15 hours per week (the 15 hours may include travel time. Example: 10 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel time to equal the 15 hours). Volunteer activity (such as a Vista Volunteer) is not considered employment. Employment income from a child under age 18 is excluded.

An applicant is considered employed if they are working at an occupation where they are paid a wage/salary or have a documented commitment of employment that will begin within two weeks from the application date. An applicant participating in a work-study program will be considered employed; however,

their income from the work-study program is not considered. Substitute teaching or other as needed (PRN) employment or job assignments are not considered employment unless they are long-term placements of a month or more. Verification of the long-term assignment is required. If verification of a long-term assignment cannot be provided, the application will be denied. An applicant who has a new commission-only job may receive three months of child care in order to establish a work history. Continued eligibility will be re-determined at the end of this time period.

Additionally, a retired individual does not meet the criteria for working, school or training.

In order to meet the work criteria and receive child care services, the non-welfare parent/guardian must be:

- Employed full-time: Average of 25 or more hours per week

Determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 20 hours per week. 20 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 25 hours which equals full time eligibility.

- Employed part-time: 15 -24 hours per week.

Determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 15 hours per week. 15 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 20 hours which equals half time eligibility.

NOTE: Travel time may be considered when determining the number of hours worked per week. See [travel time](#).

TANF parent may not be required to participate a minimum of 15 hours. If both parents are in the household, both parents must be working, in school, or in training. If one or both parents work only part-time, then only part-time care will be given.

NOTE: The burden of proof of income and work, school or training status is upon the applicant.

2.2.5 VERIFICATION OF WORK

It is preferred that the applicant submits current 30 days worth of consecutive paystubs with the child care application to verify income and employment. The pay stubs must be relevant pay dates to the date the

applicant is applying. If the applicant submits paystubs for less than 30 days and there is a year-to-date amount included on the paystubs, the year-to-date amount may be used to calculate gross monthly income. If less than 30 days of check stubs available, worker can average the available stubs, document the calculation used and ensure documentation of calculations is imaged with the case file. **Example:** The pay stubs should be representative. If only three stubs are available when the client is paid weekly, staff may average those three pay stubs, divide by three and multiply by 4.33 to get the gross monthly income. If four stubs are received for non-consecutive dates, those stubs may also be used as long as the amounts and hours are representative. In situations where there are three pay stubs with one missing time period, staff may figure the amount of the missing pay stub for calculations. Additionally, if staff have pay stubs that have a year to date on the stubs and there is enough time in the year to average at least one month of income, the year to date may be used to compute income. All of these options are acceptable ways to calculate the work from pay stubs.

NOTE: For an applicant in the military, a Leave Earning Statement (LES) is the only acceptable method of verification. When determining the pay, use only the BASE and any special duty or special pay when calculating the income. For determining the hours of employment, use what the applicant indicated on their application.

PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY PROCESS FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT AND JOB SEARCH CATEGORIES

Presumptive eligibility is used on a limited basis and is used to assist a Child Care Scholarship Program client with child care who has obtained a new job and is in the process of obtaining verification of the employment or for the funding categories that allow for job search such as Homeless, DLL, Head Start, etc. The client is in need of child care to maintain their new job or when allowed, to seek employment. The client will be given twelve weeks (3 months) of full time or half time care based on how many hours the client or case manager initially indicates they are working, in school, or in training. If the client is in a funding category that allows for job search, 12 full time weeks will be given, unless otherwise indicated.

Child Care staff will follow the procedures listed below in order to process the

extension of services when a client was originally approved for presumptive and has submitted the required documentation:

1. Print the application from the Benefits Portal, On-base or SCOSA system, if needed
2. Complete a new Eligibility Worksheet
3. The same application number previously assigned for the presumptive care will be notated and a note added to the eligibility worksheet indicating that the client has provided the documentation to support work/school/training.
4. Update the application from the Benefits Portal, On-base or SCOSA to include the new employment information and initial the changes.
5. If eligible, staff will extend the connection for the child through the end of the original 12 months of eligibility under the correct half time or full-time funding (to avoid a potential increase in co-pay).
6. Staff document the client's memo field indicating that the client was initially determined eligible for presumptive services and that documentation has been received and services extended through the full 12 months.
7. Send the eligibility worksheet along with the supporting documentation to be imaged.

If the client does not provide the documentation within the 12 weeks (3 months) allowed, or if the documentation provided caused the client to not qualify for child care, the services will end after that 3-month presumptive period.

NOTE: If 30 days or less remain on the Child Care Scholarship Program eligibility period at the time the change is requested, the child care eligibility worker will request the client to complete a new application.

Note: If a client reports changes that would make them eligible for only half time care only when they were originally given full time care, no changes are made. The child care services continue at the original level of services approved. Example: If a client was approved for full time services initially but reports a reduction in hours of work, etc that would qualify for half time based on hours, the services will not be reduced to full time. The client will continue to receive the full-time child care service that was originally approved.

2.2.6 VERIFICATION OF SCHOOL

An applicant is considered participating in an educational program if the program results in one of the following:

- High school diploma
- General Equivalency Diploma (GED)
- Associate's degree
- Other college degree.

An applicant attending high school or is obtaining a GED, must submit a copy of their school schedule. If the applicant is in college or other type of educational program, a copy of their schedule and proof of payments made towards registration/tuition for the term in which they are applying must be submitted to the Child Care Scholarship Program. Units of service for school participation may also be used. A client's statement is acceptable for verification of school attendance for a dependent child aged 18 or under 21 in the household. If the situation is questionable, verification of the paid school registration/schedule will be requested.

NOTE: Actual class instruction time issued for programs that do not use a credit hour system and travel time are considered; however, study time is not counted when determining eligibility and the need for care.

When a parent/guardian attends school, the child care services for which they are eligible is determined by whether they are a full-time student or a part-time student. A student who is registered in school for full-time, as determined by the institution, will be given full-time child care services as long as they are otherwise eligible. A student who is registered in school for part-time, as determined by the institution, will be given half-time child care services if school attendance is the only criteria they meet, i.e., they are not also working. When a client is registered for less than 12 credit hours but has required labs, seminars, or practicums for which they do not receive credit, those may be counted for consideration to receive part-time or full-time child care services. Graduate schools consider a full-time student to be registered for nine or more credit hours; therefore, full-time child care may be authorized. Typically, 3-11 credit hours is considered part time unless otherwise determined by the school. Twelve or more credit hours is considered full time. When questionable, child care staff may ask for further clarification.

NOTE: Once determined eligible, the parent will be given 12 months (52 weeks) of child care.

On-line computer courses from an accredited college or university that count as credit hours leading to a degree are acceptable courses for post-secondary education. Distance education/on-line courses may be countable under limited circumstances.

NOTE: Schools offering distance education must be accredited by one of the following:

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) if located in South Carolina Department of Education of any other state in which the program is located US Department of Education.

Vocational educational training programs are provided by the following:

- Employment and training providers contracted by SCDSS
- Accredited vocational-technical schools
- Certificate programs at accredited secondary, proprietary schools
- Non-profit organizations
- Secondary schools that offer vocational education
- Post-secondary educational institutions
- Accredited internet-based institutions offering distance learning intended to prepare the participant for specific occupations.

SELF-PACED/DISTANCE LEARNING

An applicant may be in school or in a training program that is designed to allow them to complete their schooling or training at their own pace. Applicants enrolled in self-paced or distance learning programs will be approved only for half time care and for no more than 10 hours.

2.2.7 VERIFICATION OF TRAINING

An applicant is considered participating in job-training if the training is to teach marketable skills in the competitive labor market. A non-welfare reform parent must need a minimum of 15 hours of child care per week per child (travel time may be included). A TANF parent's hours of care will depend on participation required in the TANF Family Plan. Verification of training will be required.

Note: This means a parent may be in a training program a minimum of 10 hours, adding 5 hours of travel time equals 15 hours which meets the need requirement of 15 hours, which is half time care.

Full Time: 25 or more hours of training per week.

Full time is determined by number of hours in training plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client is in training 20 hours per week. 20 hours of training plus 5 hours of travel = 25 hours which equals full time eligibility.

Part-time: 15 -24 hours of training per week

Half time is determined by number of hours in training plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client is in training 15 hours per week. 15 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 20 hours which equals half time eligibility.

2.2.8 VERIFICATION OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Self-employment income is earned income received directly from one's own business, trade, or profession, instead of receiving a specified wage from an employer.

NOTE: Child care may be denied for a client who has been employed in the same self-employment business for at least one year and is not making at least minimum wage.

A schedule C is the only acceptable method of verification for an applicant that has been self-employed for over one year.

If the applicant is newly self-employed and tax information is not available, the applicant may complete the **Newly Self-Employment Form** (DSS Form 1010) and submit to be considered for eligibility purposes.

The burden of proof is always on the applicant.

Some self-employed applicants may submit an IRS form 1120-S if they are part of an S Corporation or a K1 partnership which allows income, deductions and credits to bypass corporate level taxation and flow directly to the shareholder. For income determination, the line indicating ordinary business income should be used.

If the spouse of the self-employed parent is working for the company, pay stubs are required as proof of employment. A statement from the self-employed spouse is not acceptable verification of employment for the other parent. If an IRS 1040 can be provided that shows the income from the schedule C for the self-employed parent as well as separate income from the other parent, the tax documents may be used.

If the applicants cannot provide proof of separate income, the application will be denied as both parents must be working, in school or in training. The burden of proof is on the client.

UBER, LYFT, INSTACART, SPARK and taxi drivers, they are considered independent contractors and therefore are considered self-employed. If the UBER, LYFT, INSTACART, or other similar types of work (any independent contractor, social media influencer, etc) applicant has been in the job for over a year, a Schedule C, profit loss statement, is the only acceptable method of verification.

If the applicant is newly self-employed and tax information is not available, the applicant may complete the **Newly Self-Employment Form** (DSS Form 1010) and submit to be considered for eligibility purposes.

2.2.9 HOME-BASED BUSINESS

A parent who works in the home (i.e., medical transcriptionist) may be eligible for assistance with child care. The child care worker may obtain verification of income from the employer, either through check stubs from the employer or a notarized declaratory statement denoting:

- Nature of the home-based business
- Hours worked per day AND
- Day-to-day business duties.

If self-employed, a schedule C must be submitted to verify income.

2.2.10 VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY

Eligibility criteria in some child care categories may not allow the applicant to be disabled. See [Specific Child Care Categories](#) for clarification. If one or both parents are temporarily or permanently disabled, verification will be required. The applicant must submit a physician's (DSS Form 1247) or other health professional's statement to verify the disability along with proof of disability income, if applicable. The applicant must submit a statement from the physician stating that the applicant **cannot work**. If the disability form indicates the applicant can work, they must provide proof of employment or school in order to be considered for eligibility. If they can work but are not employed or otherwise in school or training, the application may be denied. If the disability is temporary, the duration of the temporary disability must be indicated and a date that they may return to work, along with any applicable disability income. The client must also submit a return-to-work letter from the employer indicating the return to work date, hours worked, rate of pay and frequency of pay. The statement may also include if the applicant is capable of caring for their own child. Temporary disability typically is a result of a short-term injury, pregnancy, etc.

A disability may be physical or mental, and must be verified by a physician or other health professional who includes:

- Physician assistant
- Nurse practitioner
- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist

- Physical therapist
-  Other professional qualified to make a clinical diagnosis.

If the client has previously applied and is permanently disabled, previous verification may be obtained from child care imaging (On-Base) and used as verification. For temporary disability, new documentation will be required.

Military disability will be handled the same way. The DSS 1247 form must be completed and must indicate that the parent cannot work. Military statements that indicate percentages of disability are not accepted as verification.

If the applicant is disabled and determined by the physician that they cannot work, full time care will be given.

If the client has disability income, they may submit proof of that income or may self-attest the amount they receive each month. If the client has an open TANF or SNAP case and had not indicated disability income on the application, the amount in CHIP may be used. Otherwise, self-attestation of the disability income is accepted, and child care staff should use the amount of disability income indicated on the application and calculate the amount based on the frequency listed by the client. Disability income reported will be calculated using the same formulas of income multiplied by 4.33 if received weekly, 2.16 if bi-weekly, 2 if semi-monthly or if a monthly amount is given, the monthly amount will be used.

NOTE: DSS Form 1247, Medical Release/Physician's Statement, should be used to verify the client's disability.

2.3 CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS

Children determined eligible for a child care scholarship will receive 12 months of child care regardless of temporary changes in a parent's work, school or training activities or family income, as long as the income does not exceed 85 percent of state median income (SMI), or other income thresholds if established for certain funding sources. Child care assistance may not be terminated prior to the end of the 12-month period if a family experiences a temporary job loss or temporary change in participation in a training or school activity.

Parents will have continuous eligibility throughout the 12-month period as long as the income does not exceed 85% SMI or experience a non-temporary change. If a parent experiences a non-temporary loss of work, school or training, child care assistance can be terminated however, child care assistance

must be provided at the same level for a period of three months to allow parents to engage in job search, resume work, or to attend an education or training program as soon as possible.

2.3.1 TEMPORARY CHANGES

During the period of time between eligibility determination and redetermination, if the child met all of the eligibility requirements, the child shall be considered eligible and will receive services at least at the same level regardless of:

- A change in family income, if the family does not exceed 85% of SMI for a family of the same size;
- Any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to reasons such as need to care for a family member or an illness;
- Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons;
- Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education;
- Any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education;
- Any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or educational program that does not exceed three months or longer period of time
- Any change in age, including turning 13 years old during the eligibility period; and
- A change in residency within the State, Territory or Tribal area.
- Reduction in work, school, or training hours (as long as the parent is still in work, school or training)

2.3.2 NON-TEMPORARY CHANGES

Non-temporary changes are defined as a situation that may exceed 3 months (use calendar days to compute). These situations may be terminated provided child care assistance is provided for three months. These changes, include but are not limited to the following:

- Stop participating in the TANF program
- CPS case closes
- Foster Care case closes
- Adoption is finalized

2.3.3 USE OF THE 10-DAY TERMINATION POLICY

The effective date of termination using the 10-day termination policy is the first Monday following the 10th working day from the date of determination (Holidays and weekends are not considered work days). Termination reasons include but are not limited to the following:

- Client moves out of state.
- Client is determined to have intentionally committed fraud.
- Client exceeds 85% SMI after a non-temporary change.

2.3.4 WHEN A CLIENT WANTS TO VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAW OR INDICATES SERVICES ARE NO LONGER NEEDED

If a parent indicates that they want to voluntarily withdraw from the Child Care Scholarship Program or indicates that no services are needed, the child care database will be updated with a status code 20- Services on Hold Per Client and the memo field documented to reflect that the parent indicated that services were no longer needed or wants to voluntarily withdraw. Services are not to be terminated. Any connected services should be ended with proper notice to the child care provider and the provider notified of the ending of the services. The case will remain in the 20- Services on Hold Per Client status for the remainder of the client's 12-month eligibility. At any point, if the client comes back in during that eligibility period, the status may be updated to 57-Active and the client may resume services until the end of their original eligibility period.

2.4 SPECIFIC CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

A client may be eligible for more than one eligibility category. However, the eligibility category with the most stringent eligibility requirements for which the client qualifies takes priority. As a family's eligibility changes, the client may be switched from one eligibility category to another based on the client's status and availability of funds. A parent may apply for child care services for a dependent child who resides in the caretaker's household.

2.4.1 PROTECTIVE SERVICES DEFINITION/CATEGORIES

The Child Care Scholarship Program extends eligibility to specific populations of children, otherwise not eligible, by including them in the agency's definition of "children who receive or need to receive protective services". The categories identified under protective services for the purpose of not requiring a co-pay and/or (one or both) not requiring a parent to meet the work, school, or training criteria. Those categories are: children in foster care, kinship care, under court supervision or any child welfare category. Children in head start programs, families experiencing homelessness, and families affected by natural disasters. Additionally, children eligible for the 4K program to include siblings (4K+Siblings), Special Needs, First Steps evidence-based program initiative, child care after adoption (AdoptCC), Kinship Guardianship (KinGap), child care after reunification (Reunify CC), CCDF-Caretaker Relative (CCDF-CR), Family Literacy, Head Start, SNAP E&T, Starlight, The Dream Center and Criminal Domestic Violence.

2.5 TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

The Family Independence Act of 1995 established the TANF Program administered by SCDSS. The purpose of child care through TANF is to provide the necessary child care for a family to participate in approved employment, education, training, or to comply with their TANF Family Plan. A fundamental goal of TANF is to emphasize parental responsibility and self-sufficiency.

SCDSS must provide support services such as child care to enable the parent to move into employment, education or training. A parent participating in TANF is not required to pay a fee to the provider. However, the parent is responsible

for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the provider charges, if applicable. The TANF case manager will submit a referral to the child care worker using DSS Form 1269 (Request for Support Services) TANF child care will be authorized for 12 months (52 weeks) at a time as needed based on the component in which the client is participating.

In order to receive child care through this category, the individual must meet the following criteria:

- Be receiving a TANF stipend
- Be a TANF participant who is either:
 - Working
 - Attending school
 - Attending training
 - Complying with the Family Plan as agreed upon with the TANF CM OR
 - Participating in a TANF countable component OR
 - Attempting to start a TANF countable component within two weeks.
- Have a need for child care for a child under age 13

NOTE: A child aged 13-19 with special circumstances may be considered for eligibility. A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

- Attempting to remedy a sanction (up to 30 days)

In the case of an employed TANF recipient who becomes temporarily disabled and is unable to work and unable to care for child, they may continue to receive child care assistance as long as they remain employed and can verify that they are on leave from their employment.

2.5.1 CHALLENGING ADULTS THROUGH REHABILITATION, EDUCATION AND SERVICES (CARES)

Child care may be paid for a TANF client in the CARES Program. In order to be included in the CARES Program, the incapacity of the adult recipient must prevent the individual from participating in a TANF work activity for a period of 90 days or more. An individual diagnosed with a physical or mental disability expected to last 90 days or more, and accepted for treatment by Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD), or Mental Health, is also eligible for the CARES Program.

Child Care Scholarship Policy

NOTE: A recipient who is permanently and totally disabled will be included in CARES regardless of their ability to work or participate full-time. A case in which an individual works full-time even though they are totally and permanently disabled would continue in the CARES Program.

The medical incapacity is subject to reevaluation at intervals that are specific to each recipient's circumstances, at a minimum, at annual redetermination. This interval is dependent on what has been determined by the doctor or other health professional and what is documented on the [DSS Form 1247](#), Medical Release/Physician's Statement or other verification which is completed and signed by a physician.

NOTE: Support services funds may be used to pay to have medical forms completed for a participant in the TANF Program once they have been determined eligible and have been participating in the CARES Program.

NOTE: Child care services may be provided to comply with the Family Plan as agreed upon by the TANF CM. The TANF CM must notify the child care worker if there is a change in medical capacity. TANF-CARES child care authorization will be 12 months (52 weeks) at a time.

If child care assistance is needed, the TANF CM will send the TANF child care unit via the ABC Mailbox in SCOSA the [DSS Form 1269](#), Request for Support Services, and the [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program Application, and other documentation as appropriate to request child care.

2.5.2 TANF TWO-PARENT PROGRAM

In order to be included in the Two-Parent program there must be two parents in TANF. Case management of Two-Parent cases begins with an evaluation and assessment of the adults in the family. The evaluation will be an overall picture of the strengths and growth areas within a family unit. A Family Plan will be developed with the two-parent family and will indicate the activities in which they are required to participate. Support Services, including child care is available to two-parent families in need of care.

NOTE: Any support services payments offered to participants in the TANF Work Program must also be offered to participants that meet the criteria for inclusion in the Two-Parent program.

If child care assistance is needed, the TANF CM will send the TANF child care unit via the ABC Mailbox in SCOSA the [DSS Form 1269](#), Request for Support Services, and the [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program Application, and other documentation as appropriate to request child care.

NOTE: Both parents will need to be in an approved component in order to be approved for child care.

2.5.3 TANF - CHILD ONLY (TANF/CO)

A parent/caretaker relative who is receiving a TANF benefit (TANF Child Only case) for a child may be eligible to apply for TANF/Child Only (TANF/CO) child care. These cases contain caretaker relatives, SSI parents, or disqualified parents. The following criteria must be used in determining child care eligibility:

- Child must be a TANF or SSI recipient.
- Parent/caretaker relative must be employed at least part-time (15 – 24 hours), in school or training or have a verified disability at the time of application. Employment may be in conjunction with training or attending school.
- In two-parent families, both parents/caretakers must be working at least part-time, in school/training, or have a verified disability.
- Parent/caretaker relative must meet income guidelines to be eligible for TANF/CO.
- Authorization will be for 12 months (52 weeks).
- The child is under the age of 13 (or the child is aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

PROCESSING OF TANF/CO CHILD CARE CASES

Due to TANF/CO cases not having a TANF CM in the DSS county offices, child care eligibility staff will be responsible for obtaining a Child Care Scholarship Program Application from the parent/caretaker relative. The following process will be followed:

1. Review the CHIP database to ensure that the child is receiving a TANF benefit in a Child-Only case (use the child's SSN to inquire on a specific child). This review will serve as the child care referral.
2. If the child is receiving a TANF benefit and the parent/caretaker relative meets the specific TANF/CO eligibility criteria as outlined in TANF-Child Only (TANF/CO) (See Section 2.6.3), then the child care eligibility worker can mail, email, or fax the Child Care Scholarship Program Application to the parent/caretaker relative and request income verification or training verification if the parent/caretaker relative is on SSI, according to policy.

An individual who meets qualifications will be eligible to receive 12 months of services and may re-apply for an additional 12 months as funding permits and as long as the child continues to receive TANF benefits. The application must be filed in the name of the parent/caretaker relative and entered into the Child Care Scholarship Program database using the FI/CO eligibility category. A parent/caretaker relative whose TANF/CO case closes due to income exceeding the limit is eligible to apply for transitional child care services.

2.5.4 TANF - CHILD ONLY – PROTECTIVE SERVICES (TANF/CO-PS)

Caretaker/Relatives (aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.) receiving a TANF benefit for a dependent child may be eligible for child care assistance. Child care may be provided for child(ren) who have experienced emotional, physical, or other trauma.

- Child must be a TANF recipient.
- The family will receive 12 months (52 weeks) of child care. The family can re-apply for services at the end of the twelve months if child remains eligible and funding is available.
- The parent/caretaker is the applicant, and all the information on the application relates to the family.
- Parent/caretaker relative must be employed at least part-time (15 –24

hours) at the time of application and remain employed to continue receiving services. Employment may be in conjunction with training or attending school. A parent/caretaker who receives SSI may be eligible for child care assistance if they are either employed at least part-time or participating in an activity (training or education) that will enable them to become employed in the future.

- In two-parent families, both caretakers/relatives must be working at least part-time. Exceptions to this policy are made if one of the caretaker/relatives meets the following criteria: **A caretaker/relative in a two-parent family who has a verified temporary or permanent disability.**
- The applicant **does not** have to meet the income guidelines.
- Only licensed child care providers may be used for TANF/CO-PS child care. If there is a situation in which a licensed provider cannot be obtained, an exception to the policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in order to determine approval by State Office. See [Exception Criteria for CPS and FC Child Care Cases](#) below.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.
- The child is under the age of 13 (or the child is aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

2.6 TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE (TCC)

An individual who has received a TANF benefit and whose benefit ends due to one of the following is eligible to apply for transitional child care assistance:

- Employment
- Increase in earned income.
- Expiration of earned income disregards.
- Waiver of earned income disregards.
- Voluntary closure requests when excluded income exceeds the income limit.
- 24-month TANF time limit.

A parent is eligible based on meeting the child care income limit guidelines and the fact that they are employed at least part-time (15 – 24 hours per week). Travel time is also considered when determining the number of hours worked each week.

Full time: 25 or more hours per week

Full time is determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 20 hours per week. 20 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 25 hours which equals full time eligibility.

Half time: 15 -24 hours per week

Determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 15 hours per week. 15 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 20 hours which equals part time eligibility.

A client that is employed who becomes temporarily disabled and is unable to work and unable to care for child, they may continue to receive child care assistance as long as they remain employed and can verify that they are on leave from their employment (see [Establishing a Need](#)). A parent receiving child care through this category does not have a co-pay. TCC services will be authorized for 12 months of child care.

There are four different types of transitional categories:

- Transitional Child Care 1 ([TCC1](#))
- Transitional Child Care 2 ([TCC2](#))

- Transitional Child Care 24 ([TCC24](#))
- Transitional Child Care – Full Family Sanction ([TCC/FS](#)).

Note: Each year of Transitional Child Care will receive 12 months of eligibility.

Federal Time Limits

A client is not eligible for child care services when their TANF closes due to Federal Time Limits.

TWO-PARENT FAMILY

In a two-parent family one parent must be working at least part-time (15 – 24 hours per week). Travel time is also added when determining the number of hours worked per week. See [Establishing the Need for Child Care Services](#). The parent can also attend school in conjunction with work. The second parent must be working or going to school at least part-time or have a verified disability. If one or both parents work or attend school or training part-time, only part-time child care will be given.

Full Time: 25 or more hours per week.

Full time is determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 20 hours per week. 20 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 25 hours which equals full time eligibility.

Half-time: 15 -24 hours per week

Half time is determined by number of hours worked plus travel time of 5 hours per week (more travel time may be used if determined necessary. See [Travel Time](#)). Example: Client works 15 hours per week. 15 hours of work plus 5 hours of travel = 20 hours which equals part time eligibility.

NOTE: A family household unit where one parent works at least part-time and the other attends only school is eligible to apply for such assistance.

2.7 TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE 1 (TCC1)

Availability for TCC1 begins the first month of TANF benefit ineligibility. The child care eligibility worker will use the CHIP database to determine that the TANF benefit case has been closed for a transitional closure reason. To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- Be closed from TANF due to earned income exceeding the TANF income guidelines or due to voluntary withdrawal due to earned income as indicated by

closure code VE.

- Have received a TANF benefit in the month immediately preceding the first month of ineligibility.
- Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.

If the client does not apply in the month immediately following the closure date of TANF, the 12 months will start when the client applies and is determined eligible.

NOTE: A child aged 13-19 with special needs may be considered for eligibility. A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

- Be working part-time or full-time. A parent who is attending school and working at least part-time is eligible for child care assistance for both school and work. Total hours must be a minimum of 30 hours per week (travel time can be considered).
- Be income-eligible based on current income standards.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

NOTE: TCC1 will be authorized for 12 months of child care.

Action by FI CM	CHIP Code	Code Reason
Closure	EX	Closed Due to Earned Income
Closure	DX	Closed Due to Loss of Disregards
Closure	IN	Closed Due to Earned Income
Closure	CX	Closed Due to Child Support Income
Closure	TL	Closed Due to TANF Time Limit
Closure	VE	Voluntary Withdrawal Due to Earned Income
Closure	FA	Full Family Sanction
Closure	AT	Full Family Sanction
Closure	RJ	Full Family Sanction
Closure	DS	Full Family Sanction

SEAMLESS ELIGIBILITY FOR FIRST YEAR OF TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE

Child Care Scholarship Program services should be continued in a timely manner without interruption, and in an effort to ensure that there is no break in services for a family moving between TANF child care to the first year of TCC, a child care application from the client will not be required. If the TANF benefit effective date of closure is within 30 days of the processing date, the seamless process can be used. If the TANF benefit effective date of closure is over 30 days, then the client will complete a new child care application and submit income verification.

If the seamless TCC case is approved, the child care eligibility staff will determine the effective transitional closure date in the CHIP database and close out the TANF child care accordingly. If the effective transitional closure date in the CHIP database has passed, then closeout the TANF child care effective the first available Monday and insert the new TCC application into the Child Care Scholarship Program database, which will produce an approval/connection letter that will be sent to the client and provider. Child care eligibility staff will call the client and the provider to make them aware of the change in connection.

To allow for continued child care services, the child care eligibility staff will:

- Review the CHIP database to ensure that the client's TANF benefit case has been closed appropriately for a transitional reason code.
- Determine the effective date of closure in the CHIP database and pick up transitional child care services with no break in service. Note: Child care services will be authorized for 12 months (52 weeks) of child care.
- Review the Child Care Scholarship Program database to ensure that the client is currently receiving TANF child care. If the TANF participant is not receiving TANF child care, a [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program Application, must be completed.
- Use information from the CHIP database, SCOSA or On-base to update the Child Care Scholarship Program database, as appropriate, with a current address, family composition, family size, employer information, and income.
- Determine income using the current wage information in CHIP. Verify that the income does not exceed the child care income standards.
- Complete a new child care eligibility worksheet (DSS Form 37110) and attach the following from CHIP:
 - Client Profile Page
 - Case Profile Page 1
 - Case Profile Page 2
 - Household Summary Page 1 and 2
 - Notice History Screen
 - Update the information into the Child Care Scholarship Program database for the first year of TCC and obtain an application number.
 - Call the client and the provider to make them aware of the changes such as the category change, the copay, number of weeks approved, etc.

NOTE: If during the review of the TCC case, the seamless TCC case is denied, the TCC worker will complete a termination according to policy for the case so that a termination notice will go to the client and provider.

- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

2.8 TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE 2 (TCC2)

The transitional child care, second year (TCC2), eligibility category is for:

An individual whose first year of transitional time period is ending. An additional 12-month eligibility period may begin under TCC2 when any of the aforementioned categories end. If receiving TCC1, the Child Care Scholarship Program sends an automated notification to the parent and provider 60 days prior to services ending.

A former TANF participant who was eligible to apply for TCC but failed to do so. If the participant is eligible, 12 months of child care will be approved.

Eligibility for child care begins effective the first Monday after the TCC1 eligibility period has ended. A new application is required, and income eligibility must be re-determined.

- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- Not be receiving a TANF benefit, and the TANF benefit case closed for a transitional reason.
- Be working full-time or part-time (second parent may be permanently or temporarily disabled verification required). If working and attending school, employment and education hours must be for a minimum of 25 hours per week.
- Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.

NOTE: A child aged 13-19 with special needs may be considered for eligibility. A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

- Be income-eligible based on current income thresholds.

2.9 TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE 24 (TCC24)

2.9.1 TCC24-1

- Eligibility for TCC24-1 (first year) begins the first month of TANF benefit ineligibility due to 24-month TANF time limits.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- Be closed from TANF benefits due to time limits.
- Be working full-time or part-time (second parent may be permanently or temporarily disabled. Verification required)
- Have a need for child care for a child under age 13

NOTE: A child aged 13-19 with special needs may be considered for eligibility. A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

- Be income-eligible based on current income standards.

2.9.2 TCC24-2

The transitional child care is due to TANF benefit case closing due to the client using all of their 24-month TANF benefit time limits. Second year uses child care category TCC24- 2.

2.10 TRANSITIONAL CHILD CARE - FULL FAMILY SANCTION (TCC/FS)

2.10.1 TCC/FS – 1

Eligibility for TCC/FS -1 (first year) begins the first month of TANF benefit ineligibility due to full family sanction. A family household member who becomes employed or increases earnings during a full family sanction and the earnings cause the family household unit to become ineligible for TANF benefits may be eligible to receive child care services under TCC/FS.

To request TCC/FS during the full family sanction, the TANF CM must:

- Verify new employment or increased earnings AND
- Complete a mini-budget to determine if income exceeds the TANF gross and/or net income limit.
- All available earned income disregards must be given to determine eligibility or ineligibility.

If case is income ineligible for TANF benefits, the TANF CM must:

- Make a referral to the child care worker on the [DSS Form 1269](#), Request for Support Services
- Indicate on the referral that the TANF case benefits originally terminated due to full family sanction AND
- Indicate that the individual is now employed or has had an increase in earnings.

The client may be eligible for seamless child care eligibility if they were receiving TANF child care in order to cure their sanction. If the client was not receiving TANF child care, a Child Care Scholarship Program application must be completed. An individual who qualifies may receive TCC/FS for 12 months and may reapply for an additional 12-month period based on the availability of child care funding.

2.10.2 TCC/FS – 2

A client may reapply for an additional 12-month period based on the availability of child care funding. The child care category in the Child Care Scholarship Program database for the second year is TCC/FS -2.

2.11 CHILD WELFARE CHILD CARE

Child care assistance may be provided if funding is available for a family that has an open Child Protective Services (CPS) treatment case or a child in an open foster care (FC) case. Cases in the investigative phase are not eligible to apply for child care. The case must be in an open/active status. Specialized and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services (IFCCS) foster child care cases will also be approved on a case-by-case basis (follow exception criteria below). A child may also be in the process of being adopted, but the adoption has not been finalized. Services are provided to a child's family to prevent further abuse or neglect or to provide a stable and consistent routine for a child to compensate for stressful experiences. A child is eligible for child care through age 12. However, a child, 13 years old through age 18, who should not be left unsupervised or who has emotional problems may receive child care after the age of 12. Documentation should support the reasons child care is needed after age 12.

NOTE: Only children in the custody of South Carolina are eligible for child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program. If the child is in the custody of another state, it is the sending state's responsibility to provide assistance to the child.

Only licensed child care providers may be used for CPS and FC child care. If there is a situation in which a licensed provider cannot be obtained, an exception to the policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in order to determine approval by State Office. See [Exception Criteria for CPS and FC Child Care Cases](#) below. Also see [Out-of-State Provider](#).

2.11.1 EXCEPTION CRITERIA FOR CPS AND FC CHILD CARE CASES

Child care arrangements for CPS and Foster children must be in licensed facilities enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program. However, exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis. The Human Services (HS) worker should request exceptions via email to Shelah Strange at shelah.strange@dss.sc.gov. Documentation should also be made in the CAPSS system and the Case manager should coordinate with their supervisor to ensure the arrangement is appropriate. The request should detail the following:

- Caretaker's name and SSN
- CPS/FC child's name and SSN

Child Care Scholarship Policy

- Reason the particular facility is requested
- Worker's assessment that the facility meets the child's assessed Needs
- Documented approval from the Human Service (HS) program supervisor for the child to receive child care services in a facility that is registered or exempt from regulatory requirements.

Approval for requests for exceptions are not guaranteed. Therefore, requests should be made as far in advance as possible. If the approval is granted by State Office, the child care worker must notate the approval in the memo field.

2.11.2 APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CPS AND FC CHILD CARE

The HS worker will refer cases for child care to the child care worker using the DSS Form 3004, Child Care Referral Form. Child care services should be authorized by the child care worker prior to the start date for services. Therefore, referrals must be made in a timely manner.

The child care worker with a caseload in the county of case management (county in which the case originates) is responsible for determining eligibility for CPS and FC cases. This policy includes those cases managed through Specialized Foster Care and IFCCS. A CPS client will receive 12 months of child care.

NOTE: When a CPS case is closed or no longer active, the child care case will be terminated according to Child Care Scholarship Program's termination policy upon notification from the HS worker or via verification from agency databases.

2.11.3 CPS-IN

A case is considered to be a CPS-In case when the child continues to live in their own home. An application will be processed by the child care worker if the following eligibility criteria are met:

- The family must have an open treatment CPS case managed by an HS CM.
- The CPS family will receive 12 months of child care per year.
- The parent/caretaker is the applicant, and all the information on the application relates to the family.
- The applicant **does not** have to meet the income guidelines or be working, in school or in training, because the service is provided in conjunction with protective services.

- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
 - If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.

NOTE: CPS clients receive full-time child care for the purpose of supporting family stability.

The HS CM must provide information to the child care worker to include:

- Completed [DSS Form 3004](#), Child Care Referral Form
- Completed [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program Application.

NOTE: It is preferred that the parent/caretaker sign the application. If the parent/caretaker refuses to sign, it is recommended that the HS CM sign the application.

- Verification of income.

A CPS-In client must need the service for one of the following reasons:

- To enable the child to remain in the home while the parent pursues rehabilitation.
- To reduce the detrimental effects of abuse and neglect by providing the child with developmentally appropriate experiences in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care
- The family may be responsible for the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship system pays and what the child care provider charges.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- CPS clients receive full-time child care.

Child Care Scholarship Policy

- The child is under the age of 13 (or the child is aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

2.11.4 CPS-OUT

A case is considered to be a CPS-Out case when the child is living in the home of a relative or designated caretaker.

An application must be processed by the child care worker, and the following eligibility criteria met:

- The family must have an open treatment CPS case managed by an HS CM.
- The CPS-OUT family will receive 12 months (52 weeks) of child care.
- The caretaker/relative is the applicant, and all the information on the application relates to the caretaker.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.
- The applicant **does not** have to meet the income guidelines or be working, in school or in training, because the service is provided in conjunction with protective services. If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- The family may also be responsible for the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship system pays and what the child care provider charges.

NOTE: CPS clients receive full-time child care, in order to support family stability.

The HS CM should provide information to the child care worker to include:

- Completed [DSS Form 3004](#), Child Care Referral Form
- Completed [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program application. **It is preferred that the caretaker sign the application. If the parent/caretaker refuses to sign, it is recommended that the HS CM sign the application.**
- Verification of income, if applicable.

A CPS-Out client must need the service for one of the following reasons:

- To enable the child to remain in the home of the caretaker/relative while the parent pursues rehabilitation.
- To reduce the detrimental effects of abuse and neglect by providing the child with developmentally appropriate experiences in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development.
- The family is not responsible for the weekly copay but may be responsible for the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship system pays and what the child care provider charges.
- The child is under the age of 13 (or the child is aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

2.11.5 THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN (ICPC)

The ICPC is a statutory agreement between the states that governs the placement of children from one state to another. It includes requirements that states must follow before a child can be placed in another state. The purpose of the ICPC is to ensure that children placed in another state receive the same services, oversight and protections that would be afforded if they remained in their home state.

It is the sending states responsibility to pay for all child care costs.

2.11.6 FOSTER CARE CRITERIA

Child care services may be provided to a foster child if there is an open/active foster care case. A child in a licensed group home or emergency shelter is not eligible to receive child care. An application is completed in the name of the foster

child. It is preferred that the application is signed by the foster parent on behalf of the foster child. Since the foster parent is caring for a child of the State, No fee is charged for child care assistance for the foster child. However, a foster parent will be responsible for the difference between what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays for and what the provider charges. A foster child whose case is transferred to Adoption Services remains eligible for child care benefits until the adoption is finalized by the court, as long as the foster parent and/or adoptive parent meet the eligibility criteria for the Child Care Scholarship Program.

NOTE: A foster parent who owns a licensed or registered family child care or group child care home or center cannot receive child care assistance to provide child care for their own foster child.

The information on the application relates to the foster child and the foster child's income. The following eligibility criteria must be met if exception not granted:

- For entrance into the program, the foster child's monthly gross income shall not exceed 55% of the state median income based on a family size of one. The foster child may remain in the program, as long as the other eligibility criteria are met and the foster child's monthly gross income does not exceed 85% of the state median income for a family of one. Child care will be authorized for 12 months (52 weeks).
- Only the foster child's income is used for eligibility. The case must be entered using the foster child's actual income. If there is no income, enter \$0.
- The foster child is under the age of 13 (or the child is aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).
- The case is entered using the foster child's name and SSN.

NOTE: If the foster child does not have a valid SSN, the child care worker must use the child's birth date to construct a [temporary pseudo SSN](#).

A client receiving assistance under this program can choose only licensed facilities or programs. The only exception is when the HS CM has received prior authorization from State Office Child Care Scholarship Program staff.

Child Care Licensing works in coordination with the South Carolina Department of Public Health (SCDPH) as necessary to help obtain needed immunization records for foster children. Child care providers contact their regional licensing office.

when assistance is needed with obtaining immunizations and/or other health and safety paperwork. Child care licensing works with the foster care case manager as needed to obtain this information. Foster children are given a 90-day grace period to provide proof of immunizations.

2.11.7 CHILD CARE AFTER ADOPTION - ADOPTCC

Child care scholarships may be provided for a full 12 months (52) weeks in order to support the family when there is a child who is legally adopted child that once had an open/active foster care case in South Carolina. This applies only to children who were in the custody of SC Department of Social Services. Private adoptions, ICPC, or other out of state adoptions are not eligible to apply for child care under this category.

In order to qualify for child care under this category, the following criteria must be met:

- Child has been legally adopted and no longer has an open/active foster care case.
- The child care application should be in the name of the adoptive parent.
- The adoptive parent does not have to be working, in school, or in training.
- The adoptive parent does not have to be income eligible.
- The child needing care must be under the age of 13 or have a verified special need which may allow for services from the ages of 13-19.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- One time - 12 months of care (52 weeks) of age-appropriate care will be given.
- The family must choose an enrolled ABC Quality provider.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

The process for applying for this category is:

- Adoptive parents may request a child care application by emailing FosterChildCare@dss.sc.gov.
- Adoptive parents must provide a copy of the adoption finalization court order.
- The adopted child will receive 12 months of child care if otherwise eligible. Upon receipt of the referral form and child care application, eligibility staff will check CAPSS to verify closure.

- Eligibility staff will determine eligibility and key, fund and connect the children to enrolled ABC Quality providers for 12 months of child care.
- The funding source will be AdoptCC.
- All applications will be tracked on the Foster Care spreadsheet under the tab Adopt Child Care.

Adopt CC child care is authorized only for the child who is being adopted. Other children in the home will be approved only if CCDF funding is available and the child care services will be dual funded and services aligned for all children.

2.11.8 SPECIALIZED AND IFCCS FOSTER CARE

Child care eligibility for a child in a licensed Specialized and IFCCS foster home may be approved on a case-by-case basis. These cases must be emailed to Shelah Strange, shelah.strange@dss.sc.gov, in Child Care Services. Follow [Exception Criteria for CPS and FC Child Care Cases](#).

Child care can only be considered when the child is placed in a licensed home. The referring Foster Care CM is responsible for:

- Completing the [DSS Form 3004](#), Child Care Referral Form
- Completing the [DSS Form 3791](#), Child Care Scholarship Program Application
- Obtaining the necessary signatures
- Requesting authorization from State Office to approve child care for a child in specialized or intensive foster care AND
- Submitting a waiver request, as appropriate, for use of a child care facility that is not licensed.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

2.11.9 CHILD CARE FOR BABY OF A FOSTER CHILD

A foster parent may receive child care assistance for the baby of a foster child when SCDSS does not have custody of the baby. The baby will be eligible as long as the mother (foster child) remains in foster care and the child resides in the care of the mother. The application should be entered in the name of the foster child and all income information will be based on the foster child's income. The funding category for this type of child care is Foster Care funding. There is no co-pay for this category of care. Children approved under this category will receive 12 months of child care.

If the minor foster child (in the case of a teen parent) is in a group home or shelter and has an open/active foster care case, services may be provided. The application would be entered in the teen parent's name and their income would be counted.

2.11.10 REUNIFICATION CHILD CARE

Child care may be provided for families where a foster child or a child in a family preservation case outside of the child's home is closed and the child is reunified with the biological parent or original guardian.

In order to qualify for child care under this category, the following criteria must be met:

- Child has no longer has an open/active foster or family preservation case and has been reunified with the biological parent or original guardian.
- The child care application should be in the name of the biological parent or original guardian name.
- The parent does not have to be working, in school, or in training.
- The parent/guardian does not have to be income eligible.
- 12 months of age-appropriate care will be given.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.
- The family must choose an enrolled ABC Quality provider.
- Would serve a family up to age 5 or 52 weeks, whichever is longest.
 - Example: If a child is reunified at the age of 2 years old, the child may receive services until they are 5 years old.
 - For sibling groups, for children over 5, they would receive 12 months (52 weeks) of child care only.
- There is no copayment for this category, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.
 - If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.

The process for applying for this category is:

- All DSS case involvement (foster or family preservation case) must be closed.
- Upon closure, the case manager will forward a child care referral form (DSS Form 3004) and the child care application into the Child Care Scholarship Eligibility Unit. The 3004 is needed for the initial request only.

- Upon receipt of the referral form and child care application, eligibility staff will check CAPSS to verify closure.
- Eligibility staff will determine eligibility and key, fund and connect the children to enrolled ABC Quality providers for 12 months of child care.
- The funding source will be ReunifyCC
 - All applications will be tracked on the Foster Care spreadsheet under the tab Reunify Child Care.

2.11.11 KINSHIP GUARDIANSHIP (KIN GAP)

Child care will be given for a full 12 months (52) weeks in order to support the family when there is a child who is transitioning out of foster care into a Subsidized Legal Guardianship arrangement with a kin or fictive kin caregiver, also known as Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (KinGAP) arrangement. This applies only to children who were in the custody of SC Department of Social Services. This funding is limited to one year.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Child has been placed with a licensed kinship guardian for a period of no less than six months and a court has granted that kinship caregiver subsidized legal guardianship, and there is no longer an open/active foster care case.
- The kinship guardian must provide proof of court order granting legal guardianship.
- The child care application should be in the name of the legal kinship guardian.
- The guardian does not have to be working, in school, or in training.
- The guardian does not have to be income eligible.
- The child needing care must be under the age of 13 or have a verified special need which may allow for services from the ages of 13-19.
- There is no copay for this category.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- One time - 12 months of care (52 weeks) of age-appropriate care will be given following approval.
- The family must choose an enrolled ABC Quality provider.
- There is no copayment for this category, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.

Process:

- Qualifying kinship guardians may request a child care application by emailing FosterChildCare@dss.sc.gov.
- Kinship legal guardian must provide a copy of the court order granting legal guardianship.
- The child will receive 12 months of child care if otherwise eligible. Upon receipt of the child care application and court order, eligibility staff will check CAPSS to verify closure.
- Eligibility staff will determine eligibility and key, fund and connect the children to enrolled ABC Quality providers for 12 months of child care.
- The internal categorizing funding source used by child care scholarship eligibility staff will be KIN GAP.
- All applications will be tracked on the Foster Care spreadsheet under the tab Kin Gap Child Care.

2.12 NON-WELFARE LOW INCOME FAMILIES

These eligibility categories are used for an eligible client when they do not meet the criteria for:

- TANF or TANF CARES, [TANF Two-Parent Child Care](#) or [TANF - Child Only](#)
- [TCC1](#), [TCC2](#), [TCC24](#) or [TCC/FS](#)
- [Child Welfare Child Care](#).

If funding is available, an individual who is not eligible for the categories listed above may be determined eligible under other funding sources, as long as the following criteria are met:

- The applicant must need child care services in order to work or attend school or training. An exception may be made for a family where one parent is working, in school or training and the other parent is disabled, or both parents are disabled, either permanently or temporarily.
- The applicant needs a minimum of 15 hours of child care per week.
- The family's total gross income at the time of eligibility shall not exceed 55% of state median income based on family size.
- The applicant has a need for child care for a child(ren) under the age of 13 (or child aged 13 -19 with Special Needs).

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

2.13 CRIMINAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This eligibility category provides Child Care Scholarship for an individual living in a shelter to escape a domestic violence or sexual assault situation or who is receiving services from a state-funded domestic violence/sexual assault program. Parents must meet the basic Child Care Scholarship Program criteria and verification of participation with a State-funded domestic violence program as required.

Eligibility criteria for this category is as follows:

- Must be currently living in a criminal domestic violence shelter or participating in a shelter approved activity, such as counselling.
- Applicant must be working, in school, in training or seeking employment opportunities (counselling through the shelters count as training hours) a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must need child care a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must be 18 years old or an emancipated minor.
- Must be at or below 55% of State Median Income (SMI)
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

2.14 HEAD START WRAP AROUND CHILD CARE SERVICES

Head Start provides child care wrap-around services to a parent whose child is enrolled in a Head Start program. Parents applying for Head Start child care will be approved for child care without regard to income and there are no work, school, or training requirements. The application is completed through the local participating Head Start program or Early Head Start program and child care eligibility is processed by the Child Care Scholarship Program staff. Applications submitted by Head Start are presumed to meet criteria for participation in Head Start and will be considered categorically eligible for a child care scholarship as a result.

If approved for services, the child must attend the Head Start approved child care site for a minimum of two weeks before transferring to another provider. Head Start clients are funded for a full 12 months and are given age-appropriate care based on the age of the child. However, when enrolled in the Head Start program, the Child Care Scholarship Program pays only half time in order to extend the Head Start day. Full time may be given when the Head Start programs are closed and child care is needed for full time during school closings and summer care.

Eligibility criteria for this category is as follows:

- Applicant must be eligible and enrolled in a Head Start program.
- There are no work, school, or training requirements on this category of funding.
- Families approved under this category will receive 12 months of child care services for the Head Start child.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- Must have a child of early Head Start age (0-3 years old) and/or Head Start age (3- 5 years old) in need of child care services.
 - This category does not have a co-pay.

2.15 FIRST STEPS

This partnership offers child care services for any child ages 0-5 of families that are participating in an evidence-based program as determined and verified by the individual SC First Steps Partnerships. The qualifying factors are:

- The family must in an evidence-based program.
- There are no work, school, or training requirements on this category of funding. Families approved under this category will receive 12 months of child care services. Clients approved under this funding will be approved for full time care unless otherwise requested.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

2.16 SPECIAL NEEDS

Special Needs provides child care assistance to a parent who has a child with a documented disability or special need and is available to children from birth to age 19.

NOTE: A child who turns age 19 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

Intake is handled through one of the following entities:

- County [Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(OIDD\)](#) offices
- [BabyNet](#) offered through the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- [Children's Rehabilitative Services](#) offered through Department of Public Health
- [SC School for the Deaf and Blind](#)
- [Easter Seals](#)
- [Bright Start](#)
- [SC Autism Society](#)
- Other contracted Early Intervention providers throughout the state

The child must have a special need as identified by one of the entities above, or must have a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP), IFSP or 504 Plan through their school, which specifies that they are receiving speech, occupational, or physical therapy. Child care applications for children who have IEPs can be obtained by calling Child Care Scholarship Program Special Needs at 1-803-898-9735. Additionally, children approved for child care under special needs will receive 12 months of child care from the date of approval.

An addendum must be included with the child care application. If there are multiple children in the family receiving services through an early interventionist or other entity listed above, each child must have their own addendum.

NOTE: All children with identified special needs are not automatically eligible for this fund source.

Eligibility is handled at the State Office. An applicant may be determined eligible under this category if the following criteria is met:

- Must be working, in school, in training, or disabled.
- Must have a child with a documented disability or special need and be referred from one of the above entities.
- Eligible children must be under the age of 19 years old.
- Must need child care a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must be 18 years old or an emancipated minor AND
- Must be at or below 55% of the state median income.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

NOTE: The IEP, IFSP and 504 plans must have a current start and end date. The signature page for IEPs, IFPs and 504 is not required. Addendums must

also have current dates and must be signed by the Early Interventionist.

Special Needs child care is authorized only for the child who has special needs. Siblings of children approved for Special Needs child care will be approved only if CCDF funding is available and the child care services will be dual funded and services aligned for all children.

2.17 HOMELESS CHILD CARE

Child care assistance may be available for families experiencing homelessness. Child care slots are provided in coordination with the State Department of Education (SDE) Homeless liaison, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and the four homeless coalition continuum of care organizations throughout the state:

- Eastern Carolina Homeless Organization
- Low Country Homeless Coalition
- Midlands Area Consortium for the Homeless
- United Housing Connections

According to the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness, a family will be considered homeless when they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The lack of a fixed nighttime residence includes loss of housing, economic hardship, living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations or are living in emergency or transitional shelters. Furthermore, living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings.

To qualify for funding for the homeless child care scholarship, a family must:

- Meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless (above)
- Must provide verification of homelessness via a letter on Coalition or Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), if not school aged, or Department of Education letterhead (if the child in care is a school aged child) indicating that the family has been determined to meet the definition of homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act.

NOTE: For any family that have school aged children, verification can only be completed by SDE. All other referrals for non-school aged children must come from the coalitions or CCR&R. Child care staff will no longer be taking direct

referrals from clients.

- Must be at or below 55% of the state median income at the time of application.
- Must be working, in school, in training or actively searching for work. A grace period of 90 days may be given to allow the parent the time to obtain documentation of employment, school or training. During the grace period, the children are allowed to enroll with a child care provider.
- If working, the most recent 30 days of pay stubs is preferred or a letter from the employer indicating the number of hours worked per week and the rate and frequency of pay.
- If in school, a copy of the current school schedule and proof of paid registration.
- If in a job search component, it should be indicated at the time the application is submitted. The applicant will be given 12 full months of eligibility.
 - If in a current drug and/or alcohol or mental health treatment program, it should be indicated at the time the application is submitted. The applicant will be given 12 full months of eligibility. If the family becomes employed after the 12 weeks of presumptive child care, eligibility will be extended, and a full 12 months of eligibility will be given.
- Must have a child under the age of 13 in need of child care services.

NOTE: A child who turns age 13 during their child care eligibility period will continue to receive services through the end of the current eligibility period.

All applications, supporting documentation and homeless verification documentation should be completed and uploaded through the benefits portal.

Clients approved for funding under the homeless initiative will not have a co-pay. However, if the child care provider charges more than the Child Care Scholarship Program can pay, the provider may require the parent to pay the difference.

2.18 FAMILY LITERACY CHILD CARE

The purpose of this funding is to provide child care assistance to current high school students and/or individuals enrolled in an adult education program working on a high school diploma or GED. Participation in college does not count for this funding. Intake is primarily done by school counselors, nurses or

other staff through the Department of Education. However, some referrals are made directly to State Office.

To qualify for the child care funding the parent:

- Must be actively seeking a high school diploma or GED.

NOTE: Applicants that are seeking a college degree or are homebound are not eligible to apply under this funding.

- Children needing care must be between the ages of 0-12.
- The minimum number of hours of participation required in order to receive child care is 15 hours per week.
- Applicants in school 15-24 hours per week will be given only half-time care. However, if the applicant also works, the work time will be included. If working and going to school a combined 25 or more hours per week, the family would be eligible for full-time care.
- Must provide a copy of their current school schedule.
- If working, provide the most recent 30 days of check stubs.
- Must be at or below 55% of the state median income.
- If approved, applicants will receive 12 months of child care.
- There is no co-pay for this category of care.

2.19 WORKING FAMILIES CHILD CARE FUNDING

CCDF/DISC funding may be available to low income working families that meet the income guidelines when funding permits.

Eligibility is handled at the State Office. An applicant may be determined eligible under this category if the following criteria is met:

- Must be working, in school, in training, or disabled.
- Must have a child between the ages of birth through five years old, not in kindergarten.
- Limit of only two children.
- Must need child care a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must be 18 years old or an emancipated minor AND
- Must be at or below 55% SMI entrance income amounts or 85% of the state median income if no break in service.
- Must have a child care provider secured at the time of application.
- The parent must pay a fee based on their income.

2.20 EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP

The Child Care Scholarship Program works with local Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) to provide limited slots to the programs in order to provide child care funding to eligible families. Each eligible EHS-CCP is given a designated number of child care slots.

Eligibility is handled at the State Office. An applicant may be determined eligible under this category if the following criteria is met:

- Must be working, in school, in training, or disabled.
- Must have a child between under the age of zero and 2 years old.
- Must need child care a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must be 18 years old or an emancipated minor AND
- Must be at or below 55% of the state median income.
- There is not a copay for this category.

If eligible, 12 months of child care will be approved.

2.21 CCDF-CR FUNDING

Funding under CCDF for Caretaker Relatives may be available if a caretaker relative has legal, court document supported custody of their nieces, nephews, or grandchildren and are otherwise not eligible for child care under any other category such as CPS or TANF/CO. This category is not for the non-related caretakers.

To qualify for this child care funding the following criteria must be met:

- Caretaker relative must have custody of the child in need of care.
- Caretaker relative is the applicant.
- Applicant can be working, in school, in training, or temporarily or permanently disabled.
- Retirement would be allowed for situations where the caretaker is retired.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- There is no copayment for this category, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.

Requests for approval for this child care category should be sent to the Child Care Scholarship Program Manager for approval. If approved, 12 months of child care will be approved.

NOTE: Child care will be approved only for the nieces, nephews, or grandchildren of the relative caretaker applying for child care. The biological children of the caretaker relative will not be approved under this funding unless the Child Care Scholarship Program is accepting applications from the general public. In those cases, the child care will be dual funded.

2.22 4K PLUS SIBLINGS

In conjunction with SCDSS' partnership with First Steps, child care is offered to siblings ages 0 through 12 when there is an approved 4K child through First Steps. The qualifying factor for child care for siblings is that there must be an eligible child that is approved for the state 4K program.

When the family applies for the 4K program for their child, and the child is enrolled and has been approved for the 4K First Steps program, the client will receive an approval email from SC First Steps. The 4K First Steps application includes the application portion for child care, if needed. The application process is handled through Cognito database at First Steps.

The family must have at least one eligible 4K child approved for the 4K program through SC First Steps.

- There are no work, school, training or income requirements for the family.
- Clients are funded for a full 12 months and are given age-appropriate care based on the age of the child. However, when enrolled in the 4K Plus Siblings program, the Child Care Scholarship Program pays only half time in order to extend the 4K day. Full time may be given when the schools are closed and child care is need for full day.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- Older and younger siblings are approved for child care and given age-appropriate child care for 12 months (52 weeks) from the date they are determined eligible.
- There is no copay for this category, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.

NOTE: Applications for 4K Plus Siblings that are submitted, and the client has services under a different funding source that does not expire until 6 months or more will not be processed until the original funding category has ended.

EXCEPTION: If a 4K Plus client needs to add a child. In those situations, we will allow the existing application to be closed out and all children

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aligned with 12 months of eligibility under the 4K Plus application.

NOTE: If determined that an approved 4K Plus child does not start the First Steps funded 4K program, services will be terminated.

2.23 STARLIGHT (RECOVERY)

The Child Care Scholarship Program works with the Starlight Program, a community for children with their mothers who have dealt with substance abuse. The purpose of the partnership between the Child Care Scholarship Program and Starlight is to provide child care assistance for families enrolled in this program so they may focus on their treatment. Referrals are made directly from the Starlight Program to designated child care staff. The families, when approved, are given 12 months eligibility. The criteria for this program are listed below:

- Parent must be enrolled in the Starlight program.
- Parents are not required to be working, in school, or in training.
- The Starlight Program will submit the child care application along with a verification letter indicating that the parent is participating in the program.
- There is no co-pay for the families, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- Funding category is RECOVERY.

2.24 SNAP EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (SNAP E&T)

The purpose of the SNAP E&T child care scholarship is to allow families participating in the SNAP E&T program to have access to quality child care assistance. Referrals are made directly from the SNAP E&T staff to the designated child care worker. For clients that call in and want to directly apply for the SNAP E&T program, the client should be directed to email their contact information to SNAP2WORK@dss.sc.gov. Child care staff do not make referrals to this program.

In order to qualify for a child care scholarship through the SNAP E&T, the E&T workers will identify families that are in need of child care services in order to complete their employment and training requirements at DSS and forward all

supporting documents to the child care eligibility worker. Applicants must meet one of the following criteria in addition to participating with the program:

- Must be working, in school, in training or actively searching for work.
- Must be at or below 55% of SMI at the time of application.
- Must have a child under the age of 13 in need of child care services.

Clients approved for funding under the SNAP E&T scholarship will not have a co-pay. However, if the child care provider charges more than what the Child Care Scholarship Program can pay, the provider may require the parent to pay the difference.

The supporting documentation required for this category are:

- Completed DSS 3791 Child Care Scholarship Application
- DSS Form 1269 – Request for Support Services
- DSS Form 1234 – Client Referral/Communication Form
- Employment Plan
- If working:
 - The most recent 30 days of pay stubs is preferred or a letter from the employer indicating the number of hours worked per week and the rate and frequency of pay.
- If in school or training:
 - A copy of the current school schedule and proof of paid registration.
- DSS Form 3754 – Support Service Communication Form - To be sent **ONLY** when there are changes to be made.
- There is no copay for this category.

Clients approved under SNAP E&T will be given 12 months of eligibility.

2.25 STRONG START – 85% (Pause on application intake 12/1/2025)

Strong Start-85% funding may be available for families that meet the income guidelines and eligibility criteria when funding permits. Parents apply for Strong-Start-85% through the Child Care Scholarship Program Benefits Portal.

An applicant may be determined eligible under this category if the following criteria is met:

- Must be working, in school, in training, or temporarily or permanently disabled.
- Must have a child between the ages of birth through 12 years old.
- Must need child care a minimum of 15 hours per week.
- Must be 18 years old or an emancipated minor AND
- Must be at or below 85% of the state median income.

- A fee is assessed for this category.

NOTE: Applicants with income at or below 150% of poverty are not assessed a copay for this category.

2.26 The Dream Center (RESTORE)

The Child Care Scholarship Program works with The Dream Center, a nonprofit that empowers women in crisis by providing free resources, classes, and transitional housing to help them move toward long-term stability. The purpose of the partnership between the Child Care Scholarship Program and The Dream Center is to provide the supportive service of child care to families enrolled in this program so the mothers may focus on the extensive program requirements. Eligible applicants may receive up to two years of consecutive services. However, a new application will be required every 12 months for redetermination of eligibility.

Referrals are made directly from the Dream Center Program to designated child care staff. The families, when approved, are given 12 months eligibility. The criteria for this program are listed below:

- Parent must be enrolled and participating with The Dream Center.
- Parents are not required to be working, in school, or in training.
- The Dream Center will submit the child care application along with a verification letter indicating that the parent is participating in the program.
- There is no co-pay for the families, but parents are responsible for paying the difference in what the Child Care Scholarship Program pays and what the child provider charges.
- If the family has countable unearned income such as child support, SSA, disability, pension, etc that information is notated for federal reporting purposes. However, if no unearned income, the income should be entered as zero.
- Funding category is RESTORE.

Chapter 3

Application Process

3.1 INTAKE AND APPLICATION

Since the passage of the South Carolina Family Independence (FI) Act, the majority of child care applications come through the county offices of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) which is the focal point for TANF/Welfare Reform. However, when funds are available for other non-welfare low-income clients, an individual may apply for services through the Child Care Scholarship Benefit's portal, through specific categories of care or other entities that may be identified by SCDSS.

3.2 CHILD CARE APPLICATION

The Child Care Scholarship Program Application, [DSS Form 3791](#) and/or Child Care Scholarship Program Benefit's portal is the primary document used for determining eligibility. Other information such as pay stubs, tax forms, agency databases (including the CHIP database, CAPSS, documentation in SCOSA, On-base etc.) may be used to determine eligibility but must be used in conjunction with the application. Every effort must be made to ensure that child care eligibility is processed into the Child Care Scholarship Program database as soon as verification is received. Processing time should be within 3-5 working days of the completed information being received. Processing times may be longer depending on the volume of work.

If the applicant meets eligibility criteria for funding under which they are applying, a determination is made that the family is eligible. When the family is eligible, all children under age 13 within the family are eligible. However, all children may not need child care services, or they may not meet the age requirements for funding sources. Additionally, a family may meet all eligibility requirements, but it does not ensure a family will receive child care under the Child Care Scholarship Program as there may be limited funding.

3.2.1 CLIENT AND RECIPIENT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

The Child Care Scholarship Program currently collects (but cannot require) the client's/child's SSN on the child care application and uses the SSN as the primary client identifier in the database. Only the last four digits of the SSN are printed on any documentation that is sent out from the Child Care Scholarship Program. However, services will not be denied for an applicant or child who refuses to provide an SSN. In those instances, a [pseudo SSN](#) will be created.

3.2.2 PSEUDO/TEMPORARY SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

If the parent/caretaker or the child does not have an SSN, the child care worker may create a pseudo SSN using the following process:

- The first three positions of the temporary SSN should be zeros.
- The next two positions should be the child's month of birth.
- The last four positions should be the child's day and year of birth.

EXAMPLE: If the birth date is 3/4/06, the temporary SSN will be 000-03-0406. In the instance of multiple births, such as twins or if another child has the same birthday, the first child is 000, the second is 001, and so forth. **The same applies to situations where there is already an existing social security number in the system with the same pseudo.**

Child care staff must monitor these temporary numbers and obtain the actual SSN as soon as possible. Upon receipt of the correct SSN, staff should coordinate with the designated staff to update the pseudo social security number to the actual number in order to align the changes with the SVL. Once the change is made, the designates staff will document the memo field indicating the change has been made.

NOTE: Changes to names and social security numbers must be coordinated with designated staff to ensure that the changes do not affect a child care providers current payment.

3.2.3 TEMPORARY ABSENCE DURING CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY PERIOD (IN LOCO PARENTIS)

Temporary absence of the primary parent/caretaker from the home may be due to reasons related to one of the following which requires the caretaker/guardian to act [in loco parentis](#) for the child:

- Work
- Military
 - Must provide military orders for soldier as well as end dates.
- Educational and vocational training
- Institutionalization
- Joint custody arrangement
- Other circumstance.

NOTE: There must be an end date provided for these in loco parentis cases. Power of Attorney documents may also be provided.

The child remains eligible for child care as long as the primary parent/caretaker's permanent residence remains in South Carolina and the guardian responsible for the child has a need for child care in order to work, attend school/training. The Caretaker/Guardian must complete [DSS Form 37117](#), Guardianship/In Loco Parentis Verification.

NOTE: DSS Form 37117 or other verification of guardianship/in loco parentis status must be notarized.

Work Related Temporary Absence

If a family household member is temporarily absent from the home due to a work-related assignment, including military, they are considered part of the family household unit unless a separate legal residence is established.

Applications for in loco parentis cases should be done in the name of the biological parent and their information used for eligibility determination.

Temporary Absence Due to Educational/Vocational Training

An individual temporarily absent due to participation in an educational or vocational program remains eligible for child care as long as their permanent residence remains that of the child. Examples of educational/vocational training include colleges, technical schools, and training centers

Applications for this category should be done in the name of the biological parent and their information used for eligibility determination.

3.2.4 CUSTODY VERIFICATION

When custody is in question, verification may be required. Acceptable methods of verification include, but are not limited to:

- Legal court documentation showing custody or guardianship OR
- Verification of custody/guardianship via CAPSS.
- If in the TANF budget, custody has already been verified, CHIP may be used as verification.

NOTE: Signed, notarized statement from one or both parents will no longer be accepted as proof of temporary or permanent guardianship/custody.

When custody is split between the mother and the father, only one parent may apply for child care. Whichever parent has 51% of physical custody should apply. In instances where the mother and father were never married and thus does not have custody documents, the custody will default to the mother. Regardless if custody is split 50/50, only one parent may apply for child care See [MISUSE OF SERVICES](#)

The applicant that is applying for child care must have physical and legal custody of the child in need of care. If the child in need of child care is in an open SNAP case under another parent or guardian, that person must apply for child care for that child or the child must be removed from that open SNAP case before the child care application can be processed.

3.2.5 SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS

It is encouraged that the child care application be signed and dated by the applicant before the application is processed and before services are rendered. However, this is not required if all other eligibility criteria is met. If there is not a signed date on the application, the date the application was received may be used as the signed date.

NOTE: When applying through the benefits portal, the system records a submission

date along with the printed name of the client. This satisfies the signature requirements.

3.3 APPLICANT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being approved for child care, the parent/caretaker receives a copy of their rights and responsibilities in an eligibility packet mailed to them. Additionally, the rights and responsibilities are available to the applicant on the last page of the application.

3.3.1 APPLICANT RIGHTS

The applicant has the right to:

Choose one of the following types of providers:

- Child care center
- Family child care home
- Group child care home
- Church facility
- Neighbor, friend or relative.

NOTE: A client receiving services under Child Protective Services or Foster Care may choose only a licensed facility or program (unless otherwise approved for a waiver to policy). See [Exception Criteria for CPS and FC Child Care Cases](#).

Receive a fair hearing, regarding any decision which results in the denial or termination of services, provided that decision is not due to lack of funding as lack of funding is not an appealable issue. The Notice of Appeal shall be in writing to:

Individual and Provider Rights, SCDSS

P.O. Box 1520

Columbia, SC 29202-1520

NOTE: Please include your contact information: First and last name, telephone number, and email address.

Make complaints or discuss areas of concern or suggestions regarding the Child Care Scholarship Program or their child care provider by calling 1-800-763-2223.

Visit their child anytime that they are in the provider's care.

3.3.2 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the applicant to keep their contact information and address current with the Child Care Scholarship Program and to report if they lose employment, if they disenroll or stop attending an education or training program or if their family income exceeds 85% of state median. Current state median income amounts may be found at www.scchildcare.org.

Any change reporting in the above information should be reported to the Child Care Scholarship Control Center at 1-800-476-0199 or via email to scchildcare@dss.sc.gov.

3.3.3 VERBAL ABUSE BY A CLIENT

If a client curses or yells at any SCDSS staff, the client will be sent an official email by the Program Manager after the first offense. The email will describe the incident and inform the client that another such incident may result in the denial of their services. The information will also be documented in the Child Care Scholarship database. If the second offense occurs, the denial of their services will be initiated. The AWS phone system recordings will be used as proof of the incidents, when applicable.

3.4 CHILD CARE INCOME STANDARDS

When determining if an applicant meets the income requirements for initial approval for child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program, the total family size, see [Family Definition](#) and the total gross income for the family must be at or below 55% SMI at the initial application and may not exceed the 85% SMI at redetermination as long as there is not a break in service, see Child Care Income Standards ([Appendix 1](#)).

3.4.1 ASSESSMENT OF FEES

Within the Child Care Scholarship Program, there are co-payments and registration fees. The co-pay is the parents share of the weekly child care costs and the registration fee is used to pay a portion of the enrollment costs to the child care provider. The Child Care Scholarship Program does not pay for activity, transportation, or other fees outside of the weekly child care or registration fees.

Once it is determined that the client meets the income guidelines, the Child Development Fee Scale ([Appendix 2](#)) is used to determine the weekly co-pay for the client, if applicable. The copay is the fee that is to be paid by the client directly to the child care provider. The fee is per week, per child.

Copayment amounts can be found on the sliding fee scale at: <https://www.scchildcare.org/media/gtvb1pgk/fee-scale-2024-2025.pdf>

NOTE: Clients that are under the protective service definition per the CCDF State Plan do not have co-pays.

If a copayment is assessed for a family, the copayment amount will not be increased at any time during the 12-month eligibility regardless of the changes in the household. If the change in the household would decrease the copay, the fee may be reassessed, when applicable, since a lower copayment would benefit the family.

NOTE: Effective 10/01/2024, clients that have income at or below 150% of federal poverty level, regardless of funding source, will not be assessed a copay.

3.4.2 CLIENT COPAYMENTS

Co-payments are based on family size and gross monthly income and are assessed according to the Child Care Fee Scale. This is a weekly fee, when applicable, and applies to all children receiving care. Each provider is responsible for collecting this fee, from the parent, in advance of service delivery. The Child Care Scholarship Program assumes no responsibility for collection or payment of copays.

Families that meet the agency definition of “protective services” do not have a co-payment.

If a copayment is assessed for a family, the copayment amount will not be increased at any time during the 12-month eligibility regardless of the changes in the household. If the change in the household would decrease the copay, the fee may be reassessed, when applicable, since a lower copayment would benefit the family.

NOTE: Effective 10/01/2024, clients that have income at or below 150% of federal poverty level, regardless of funding source, will not be assessed a copay.

NOTE: Although many funding sources do not have a client fee, if the providers’ rate exceeds the maximum rate allowed by the Child Care Scholarship Program, the client is responsible for paying the difference to the provider.

3.4.3 REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees are set amounts established by the provider to cover costs not included in the weekly rate. The Child Care Scholarship Program will pay registration fees to providers up to an established program maximum per child per calendar year. Regardless of the number of different providers who may provide services to the child during the eligibility period, total registration fees paid for a child will not exceed the established program maximum for a one-year calendar period.

EXCEPTION: If a provider closes their facility and a client is forced to find another provider, the Child Care Scholarship Program may pay a registration fee to the new provider regardless of whether the client has already used their allocation of the registration fees. These are rare incidences and must be approved by the Program Manager. The provider may require the client to pay a registration fee due even if the client has already used their registration fee allocation for the eligibility period. Registration fees are automated and paid on a provider's SVL after a child has had three consecutive paid weeks of services.

3.5 ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET

Eligibility staff use the Child Care Scholarship Program Client Eligibility Worksheet, [DSS Form 37110](#), when determining eligibility for all applicants. The eligibility worksheet is a tool used to provide consistent eligibility determination.

CHIP should be checked on all applications regardless of funding source. On the eligibility worksheet, it should be documented that CHIP was checked. CHIP screens are required to be printed **only** for seamless transitional cases.

NOTE: Seamless eligibility of TANF to TCC1 does not require a new application; however, the eligibility worksheet and supporting documentation (such as the TANF/SNAP print screens) must be included in the child care case.

3.6 NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

When a client is entered into the Child Care Scholarship Program database, an Eligibility Letter is sent to the client via email or mail informing them of their eligibility. In addition to the letter of eligibility, the parent receives an eligibility packet that includes the following:

- a. Parent handbook,
- b. Options sheet for choosing a child care provider
- c. Holiday schedule
- d. Copy of the client rights and responsibilities

- e. Connection form
- f. Earned income tax credit information.
- g. Help Me Grow Health Screening brochure.

Chapter 4

Provider Authorization

4.1 PROVIDER AUTHORIZATION/CONNECTION

Prior to taking a child to an enrolled Child Care Scholarship Program provider, the parent must complete a connection form; a pre-printed form. The connection form must be signed and dated by both the client and the child care provider. Once completed, the connection form must be sent to the Control Center in order for the child to be connected with the selected child care provider. Connection forms may be sent in one of the following ways:

By Email (Preferred):

Connectionforms@dss.sc.gov

Via fax:

1-800-310-5417

By Mail:

Child Care Scholarships Program

P.O. Box 100160

Columbia, South Carolina 29202-3160

The provider should not begin serving the child until they receive written or verbal authorization from the Child Care Scholarship Program that the connection has been approved. Email confirmation from The Child Care Scholarship Program should be accepted as verification. If a provider serves a client outside the authorized period (start and stop dates), the client is responsible for the full cost of the service.

Connections are made for the Monday of the week the connection form is received or for a future date of service if specified or for other dates indicated in the memo field by eligibility staff. Connections will not be backdated prior to the week of receipt unless otherwise authorized by the Control Center Supervisor

or other designee. Cases where there is not a discrepancy between providers on who served the child and there is a need to backdate to prevent a gap in services may be approved if the date is within a three-month time frame. Dates outside of the three months must be approved by a manager.

NOTE: Control Center staff may make connections over the phone when they receive a telephone call or email from the client or child care provider and they can confirm with both that the child will be starting and on what date.

4.1.1 PARENTAL CHOICE

A parent is legally and morally responsible for their child and has the right to select the child care provider of their choice. Finding suitable child care is one of the most important decisions that a parent can make. The goal of any interaction between a parent and staff is to ensure that the applicant receives adequate information to make choices that provide stable and reliable child care. A parent receiving Child Care Scholarship Program assistance is offered a broad range of options in addressing their child care needs. A client eligible for child care may visit, abcqualitycare.org or scchildcare.org to search for available enrolled child care providers. For clients that do not have access to the internet, they may request a list of providers by calling the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center. A parent has the option of choosing the provider who will care for their child, whether the provider is a:

- Child care center
- Family or group day home
- Church or synagogue
- School
- Employer
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor

NOTE: For family preservation (CPS and FC cases), client may choose only licensed child care programs unless a waiver has otherwise been approved.

4.1.2 PROVIDER SELECTION

As with all child care categories, if the provider chosen is not currently enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program, the child care worker should:

- A. Send an email to designated Control Center staff with the following information:
- a. client name and SSN,
 - b. if known, provider's name and
 - c. complete address (street, city, state, zip),
 - d. contact telephone number, including area code,
 - e. provider's FEIN/SSN, if known.
- B. Ensure, prior to sending the email, if a new Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) provider is chosen, that basic FFN criteria is met. See Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Providers. If a Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care (In the Child's Home) (FNI) arrangement is needed, ensure that FNI provider criteria is met. See Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care (In the Child's Home) (FNI), i.e., to ensure that there are at least five children from that family requiring care.

4.1.3 CLIENT PASSWORDS

A client is encouraged to establish a password to be assigned to their client file. This ensures a level of security that will prevent an individual, other than the actual client, to call and obtain information about the client's child care case.

In order to create a password, the following actions are taken:

- Verify client's SSN in order to access the file.
- Verify client's mailing address.
- Verify at least one child's birth date.
- Have the client establish a six-character password upon verification of the above information. The password can be either letters or numbers, or a combination of the two. The client should refrain from using symbols or punctuation marks.

NOTE: The password is NOT case sensitive.

Advise the client that if they lose or forget the password or wish to change the password at any time, they will have to supply a copy of their driver's license along with a request to change their password via mail or fax before the password can be changed and before further information can be given.

NOTE: Advise the client NOT to share their password with anyone. Proceed with the call.

For a file with an existing password:

- Verify client's SSN in order to access the file.
- Verify client's mailing address.
- Ask the client to verify their password.
- **If the password is correct:** Have the client verify at least one of their child's birth dates. If the client can provide the correct date, proceed with the call.
- **If the password is not correct:** Advise the client that they will have to supply a copy of their driver's license along with a request to change their password via mail or fax before the password can be changed and before further information can be given.

4.1.4 MAXIMUM CARE ALLOWED

An eligibility period is defined as a period of 12 months (52 weeks) for which a client is determined eligible. When eligible, a full 12 months of care is given. This may be full-time care, half-time care, [less-than-half-time care \(LHT\)](#) or any combination of the three. Additionally, an applicant may have an older child who needs care only when school is out, such as during summer, spring break or a holiday. It is permissible to fund and connect only the services needed in this situation however, the client will be given a full 12 months of eligibility.

NOTE: LHT care is used only for the Welfare Reform (FI, TCC1, TCC2, TCC/24 and TCC/FS) child care eligibility categories. LHT care may be used in conjunction with a full-time or half-time care arrangement or it may be used alone. It cannot be used to pay the same child care provider.

4.1.5 MEMO FIELD DOCUMENTATION

The memo field is the official documentation within the Child Care Scholarship Program database. All conversations, information, and actions regarding the specific client or child care provider should be documented with each instance and as the actions occur. The memo field is used for appeals, Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests, and to maintain historical information. The memo field is not to be used as an editorial and the information documented should be specific to each action taken on the case. Clear information on what actions have been taken on a case should be notated as well as the following information:

- Date
- What actions taken. (funding, connections, information provided, who you spoke with if during a conversation, etc)

NOTE: If connecting a child to a provider, the name of the child should be listed, the dates of the connections (straight date range if all full time or all half time and a breakdown of the connection weeks if the child receives a combination of full and half time care)

- Child Care worker name should always be notated at the end of each memo field entry.

4.1.6 FUNDING/CONNECTING A CHILD UNDER THE APPROPRIATE AGE GROUP

When a child is being funded and connected to a particular child care facility, the facility may not be enrolled for the age group of the child. The Child Care Scholarship Program has the age groups 0-1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5-12 not in kindergarten, 5-12 in school, and 13-19 for special needs and foster children that need care after 13 years of age. If during the connection process, the provider of choice is not authorized for the care type that the child is in, but the child is within six months of going into the next age group, the funding and connections can be made under the next age level.

NOTE: The child remains under the original funded age group for the entire eligibility period unless the child is within six months of being in another age group and the provider is not authorized for the original age group they were funded under.

EXAMPLE: If a child is two years old and will be three within six months and the provider of choice is not authorized for the 2-year-old rates, the child can be funded and connected under the 3 year old rates.

The child will remain under the originally approved age group for the duration of the 12-month eligibility.

4.1.7 DUAL FUNDING

Dual funding is the process by which multiple children in a family are eligible under different fund sources during the same child care eligibility period. Dual funding situations are rare but are generally used when one child in a family is eligible for special needs child care and one or more other children are eligible under another funding source. Dual funding applies to a family with multiple children only and cannot be used to add more than one fund source for the same child.

It is the responsibility of the person determining the most recent eligibility to process the case as dual funded.

EXAMPLE: Child 01 may be eligible under Special Needs and child 02 may be eligible under Head Start.

4.1.8 NOTICE OF CONNECTION TO A CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDER

Once the client has been connected to a particular child care provider, an Authorization/Connection Letter is mailed or emailed if an email address is available, to the client and the selected child care provider. The letter includes the following:

- Client name and last four digits of the SSN
- Authorization period (start and stop dates)
- Name of child to receive the service
- Assessed fee, if applicable
- Type of care
- Number of weeks authorized.

A client may receive more than one authorization letter/email if they:

- Change from one provider to another
- Receive full-time service part of the year and half-time service the remainder of the year
- Receive a combination of full-time, half-time or less than half-time services.

4.2 IMMUNIZATIONS

All children receiving services through the Child Care Scholarship Program must be age-appropriately immunized as outlined in the U.S. recommended immunization schedule; see the following links:

[Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 0 Through 6 Years](#)

[Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 7 - 18 Years](#)

[Catch-up Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 4 Months Through 18 Years](#)

An applicant for the Child Care Scholarship Program self-certifies that the child for whom they are requesting child care services has received all required immunizations. A child whose parent objects to immunizations on religious grounds or a child whose medical condition contraindicates immunization are exempt from the immunization requirement.

EXCEPTION: Families that are experiencing homelessness or children in foster care are given a 90-day grace period to provide proof of immunization. During this grace period, children are allowed to enroll with a child care provider.

Chapter 5

Provider Authorization

5.1 CHILD CARE PROVIDER DEFINITIONS

All program specific eligibility criteria, processes and policies for child care providers for approval and participation in the ABC Quality Program may be found by visiting www.abcquality.org.

5.1.1 CHILD CARE CENTER (CCC)

A child care center (CCC) is a facility operating with a capacity of 13 or more children. A CCC must be licensed or approved if the program operates more than four hours per day and more than two days a week. A program that operates less than four hours per day may keep children during the week and during school vacations and holidays and be exempt from licensing.

5.1.2 GROUP CHILD CARE HOME (GCCH)

A group child care home (GCCH) is a facility operating with a capacity from seven to 12 children. A GCCH may care for eight children without an additional caregiver. When the attendance reaches nine, or there are more than three children under the age of 24 months, an additional caregiver must be present at all times. In addition, there must be an emergency backup person available who is not included in the staff-to-child ratio. Since August 25, 2000, a GCCH may not be operated in a separate building; it must be in the residence of the operator. As of September 1, 2009, all GCCH's must meet the same fire codes as a CCC, and some county zoning offices no longer allow GCCH's. A provider who resides in a mobile home should contact the State Fire Marshall's Office at 803-896-9800 to determine if the structure meets fire codes.

5.1.3 FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME (FCCH)

A family child care home (FCCH) is a provider that may provide care for up to six children at any given time. Registration or licensure is required if a person provides care to more than one unrelated family or child on a regular basis (more than two days a week and more than four hours a day).

5.1.4 FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE (FFN)

A family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) is a provider who is unregulated and is not required to meet licensing/regulatory requirements.

5.2 REQUIRED REGULATORY STATUS

In order to enroll in the Child Care Scholarship Program, a provider must be appropriately regulated as required by [SC Child Care Licensing Law](#) as follows:

5.2.1 CHILD CARE CENTER (CCC)

A CCC serving 13 or more children and operating for more than four hours per day is required to be licensed, whether the center is for-profit, non-profit or private. This requirement does not apply to the following:

- Educational facility, whether private or public, which operates solely for educational purposes in grade one or above.
- Five-year old kindergarten program.
- Kindergarten or nursery school or other daytime program operating no more than four hours per day and receiving children younger than lawful school age.
- Facility operating for more than four hours a day in connection with a shopping center or service or other similar facility where the same children are cared for less than four hours a day and not on a regular basis while a parent or custodian is occupied on the premises or is in the immediate vicinity.

- School vacation or school holiday day camp for children operating in district sessions running less than three weeks per session.
- Summer resident camp for children.
- Bible school normally conducted during a vacation period.
- Facility for the intellectually disabled.
- CCC owned and operated by a local church congregation or an established religious denomination or a religious college or university which does not receive State or federal financial assistance for child care services.

5.2.2 GROUP CHILD CARE HOME (GCCH)

A GCCH operating in a residence where the provider cares for at least seven but not more than 12 children, including children living in the home and children received for child care who are related to the operator, is required to be licensed.

5.2.3 FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME (FCCH)

A FCCH operating in a residence where the provider cares for up to six children may be registered or licensed. Registration is required if a provider cares for more than one unrelated child on a regular basis (more than two days a week and more than four hours a day). An FCCH which chooses to become licensed will have to meet additional requirements.

NOTE: A child care facility which is not required to be regulated by SCDSS must have approval by SCDSS in order to participate in the Child Care Scholarship Program.

5.2.4 PROVISIONAL LICENSES

In order to enroll in the Child Care Scholarship Program as an ABC Quality provider a Level A, Level B, Level C or Level P provider, the provider must have a regular license. A Level A or Level B provider may remain in the Child Care Scholarship Program if they receive a provisional license at subsequent license renewals. However, must obtain a regular license within a reasonable amount of time as determined by ABC Quality.

5.2.5 PROVIDERS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT OR RE-ENROLLMENT IN ABC QUALITY

All program specific eligibility criteria, processes and policies for child care providers for approval and participation in the ABC Quality Program may be found by visiting www.abcquality.org.

5.2.6 DUAL EMPLOYMENT OF A CHILD CARE PROVIDER

If a family, friend and neighbor or family child care provider is chosen by the parent is a State employee, verification must be obtained to ensure that the State employment hours of the provider do not coincide with the hours they are providing child care. The ABC Quality – Provider Enrollment, DSS Form 37108, must include this information.

5.2.7 WHEN NEW/UPDATED PROVIDER PAPERWORK IS REQUIRED

New provider paperwork for the Child Care Scholarship Program is required at the following periods for all provider types:

- Initial enrollment
- Re-enrollment

EXAMPLE: When a Level A, B, C or P provider has been terminated and has waited the mandatory one year to re-enroll.

- When a provider changes FEIN/SSN information
- When there is a change in ownership
- When an FFN provider begins caring for an additional family or has been inactive and begins serving a new family
- When a provider moves
- When a facility changes its name (additionally, a letter from the provider explaining the reason for the change is required)

5.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

In 2014, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act was signed into law reauthorizing the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program. All child care providers in the ABC Quality program as well as Family, Friend and Neighbor Providers must complete the certificate. As part of the new law, all newly hired employees of ABC Quality providers are required to complete the SC Health & Safety Pre-Service Certificate and certification of Pediatric First Aid & Infant/Child CPR within 90 days of hire.

The SC Health & Safety Pre-Service Certificate:

- Is a free on-line course offered through Pro-Solutions.
- Links to the courses can be found at www.sc-cccd.net or www.scchildcare.org.
- The Certificate must be completed for all caregiving staff prior to enrollment and after enrollment, new staff must complete within 90 days of hire.
- All courses will be counted as DSS training hours in the designated topic areas for the calendar year in which they were taken
- Individuals must complete all required courses to receive the SC Health & Safety Pre-Service Certificate.
- Pediatric First Aid and Infant/Child CPR certification:
 - Is offered at no cost, as long as funding remains available, to ABC Quality providers through the National Safety Council. Please contact them at 803- 732-6778 for information.
 - Must be completed by all caregiving staff prior to enrollment and after enrolment, new staff must complete within 90 days of hire.
- Other CPR/First Aid trainings are acceptable if they meet ABC Quality criteria, but will be at the caregivers expense.

NOTE: On-line CPR/First Aid training is not accepted.

The 15-hour Pre-Service Training course content includes:

- Child Development: Milestones from Birth to Age 12 (1 Hour)
- Keeping Children Safe: Building and Classroom Safety (1 Hour)
- Essentials of Outdoor Safety in South Carolina (2 Hours)
- Emergency Preparedness: Better Safe Than Sorry! (1 Hour)
- Responding to Medical Emergencies (1 Hour)
- Recognizing and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse in South Carolina (2 Hours)
- Transportation Safety Basics in South Carolina (1 Hour)
- My Plate: Helping Children Make Healthy Food Choices (1 Hour)
- Infectious Disease Control, Immunizations, Bloodborne Pathogens and Bio Contaminants: Kick Those Germs to the Curb! (1 Hour)
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) (1 Hour)
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma and Child Maltreatment (1 Hour)
- Administering Medication in Child Care Settings (1 Hour)
- Prevention of and Response to Different Types of Allergies (1 Hour)

In addition to the required 15 hours of pre-services training being done within 90 days of enrollment, the provider is also required to complete 10 hours of annual training.

5.4 Grants

5.4.1 PROVIDER GRANTS

As funding permits, grants may be offered to providers. Providers who receive a grant are required to comply with the grant agreement and comply with all terms and conditions of the grant. If the provider does not comply by staying in the program for the required amount of time or does not purchase the approved items in the grant, recoupment of grant funds will be initiated for all or part of the grant as applicable. This will be done, when possible, by withholding the provider's last payment. Recoupment of grants is not appealable; therefore, providers should evaluate their personal situations before committing to the requirements of the grant.

If a previous recoupment has been initiated against the provider perhaps because of an audit, overpayment, or if the provider owes money to the Government due to an IRS lien, and funds are being recouped from the provider through their payments, then the provider will not be eligible for any grants offered at that time due to the fact that Child Care Scholarship will automatically take the grant money in payment towards the recoupment or lien. If at the time a grant is offered and the provider is under a repayment for an IRS Lien, the provider should not enter into the grant as the IRS will intercept this money for repayment.

5.4.2 NON-COMPLIANCE WITH GRANT TERMS

If the provider does not comply by staying in the Child Care Scholarship Program for the required amount of time, if applicable, either voluntarily or involuntarily, or does not spend the grant funds as requested and approved, recoupment of grant funds will be initiated.

SCDSS reserves the right to disqualify the provider for any future grants. This is not appealable.

NOTE: Failure to use grants funds properly may result in the initiation of an audit by the Program.

5.4.3 RECOUPMENT OF GRANT FUNDING

If a recoupment has been initiated against the provider perhaps because of an audit, overpayment, or if the provider owes money to the Government due to an IRS lien, and funds are being recouped from the provider through their payments, then the provider will not be eligible for any grants offered at that time due to the fact that the Child Care Scholarship Program will automatically take the grant money in payment towards the recoupment or lien.

NOTE: Recoupment of grant funds is not appealable.

5.5 CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM PARENT, CARETAKER, OR GUARDIAN WHO OWNS A CHILD CARE PROGRAM

A Child Care Scholarship Program parent, caretaker or guardian, to include a foster parent, who owns a licensed or registered FCCH, licensed GCCH, or center, will not receive child care assistance to provide child care for their own child, a child in their custody, or a foster child.

5.6 LICENSING/REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

State regulatory requirements mandate that CCCs and GCCHs be licensed and that FCCHs be licensed or registered. A CCC or GCCH owned and operated by a local church congregation or established religious denomination or religious college/university must be licensed in order to receive federal or State funds if the program operates more than four hours per day.

The SCDSS Child Care Licensing (CCL) should be contacted to report a possible violation of the law any time staff believe a provider is exceeding their licensed capacity and serving more children than allowed under State regulatory law.

5.6.1 INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

The Child Care Scholarship Program complies with Internal Revenue Services (IRS) regulations and sends an IRS Form 1099, for payments made to a provider who participates in the Child Care Scholarship Program. Form 1099 will be mailed by January 31st of each year. A Form 1099 is sent to all child care providers, except corporations, who are paid \$600 or more by the State during the tax year. A provider should contact the IRS for more information.

All providers, including FFN providers, are considered independent business owners and are not considered an employee of the State of South Carolina. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the provider to pay applicable taxes on all money earned.

5.6.2 PROVIDER PASSWORDS

A provider is encouraged to establish a password to be assigned to their provider file. This ensures a level of security that will prevent an individual, other than the actual provider, to call and obtain information about the provider's information. In order to create a password, the following actions are taken:

- Verify provider's FEIN or SSN in order to access the file.
- Verify the provider's mailing address.
- Have the provider establish a six-character password upon verification of the above information. The password can be either letters or numbers, or a combination of the two. The provider should refrain from using symbols or punctuation marks.

NOTE: The password is NOT case sensitive.

Advise the provider that if they lose or forget the password or wish to change the password at any time, they will have to supply a copy of their driver's license and along with a request to change their password via mail or fax before the password can be changed and before further information can be given.

NOTE: Advise the provider NOT to share the password with anyone. Proceed with the call.

For a file with an existing password:

- Verify provider's FEIN or SSN in order to access the file.
- Verify the provider's mailing address.

Ask the provider to verify their password.

- **If the password is correct**, proceed with the call.
- **If the password is not correct**: Advise the provider that they will have to supply a copy of their driver's license along with a request to change the password via mail or fax before the password can be changed and before further information can be given.

NOTE: Child care providers that want to receive their SVL online must have an established password in order to set up the online account.

5.7 PROVIDER SELECTIONS AND TYPES

A provider is selected by an individual client after the client is determined eligible, funded, and notified that they may choose a provider. A client is given a wide range of child care options, including:

- Center-based care
- Family child care home (FCCH)
- Group child care home (GCCH)
- Church or synagogue
- School
- Employer
- Care by a Family, Friend, or Neighbor.

The client may request to receive a list of enrolled ABC Quality providers to assist them with choosing a provider, or may visit www.scchildcare.org or www.abcquality.org. The client may choose a provider from the list or any provider willing to participate and enroll in the Child Care Scholarship Program. The provider must complete certain documents which are required before they can be authorized to serve a child and receive reimbursement. The types of providers are:

- Level A, B and C or P
- Non-related Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Out of child's home (FNO)
- Non-related Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care In the child's home (FNI).

- Related Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Out of the child's home (FRO).
- Related Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care in the child's home (FRI).

NOTE: The Child Care Scholarship Program may enroll and reimburse regulated center-based, group or family child care providers that operate outside the state of South Carolina, that are also border states (Georgia and North Carolina only) unless the case is a family preservation case. For family preservation cases, child care arrangements may be approved for any state that takes the children from the case. Out of state Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) providers will be approved only for child protective service and foster care cases and only with prior approval of the arrangement by the designated program staff and human service worker.

5.7.1 REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

State law requires a provider to immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to SCDSS, Department of Child Protective and Preventive Services or local law enforcement. A provider must also notify other SCDSS staff as follows when they have been reported for suspected child abuse or neglect:

- Regulated facilities – Report to Child Care Licensing
- Exempt Providers – Report to ABC Quality
- FFN provider – report to Child Care Scholarship Control Center staff.

A client who suspects child abuse or neglect will be directed to contact the SCDSS Department of Child Protective and Preventive Services in the county in which they reside.

5.7.2 PROCESS FOR ENROLLMENT

All program specific eligibility criteria, processes and policies for child care providers for approval and participation in the ABC Quality Program may be found by visiting www.abcquality.org.

Upon determination by ABC Quality that the provider meets the qualifications to enroll, ABC Quality forwards the following completed forms to the Control Center:

- Enrollment Form, DSS Form 37108
- Provider Agreement, DSS Form 37101
- Provider Rate Form, DSS Form 37107

- Copy of provider's published child care rates (unless a Federal Head Start Program)
- IRS Form W-9
- Copy of IRS Form SS-4 or IRS Letter 147-C – if operating under a federal identification number (FEIN) OR
- Copy of the social security card if operating under an SSN. Print outs from the Social Security Administration will no longer be accepted. Other documents with the SSN will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for acceptance.
- Copy of driver's license or State ID, if operating under an SSN.

Upon receipt of the completed enrollment packet, the Child Care Scholarship Control Center staff take the following actions:

- The information from the IRS Form W-9, IRS [Letter 147-C](#), and/or IRS Form SS-4 is sent to Finance to be entered into the SCEIS (South Carolina Enterprise Information System) in order to obtain a vendor number. A confirmation of the SCEIS vendor number is sent via email to the Control Center staff. SCEIS uploads the vendor information to the Comptroller General's (CG's) Office.

NOTE: The provider name, I.D, and SSN/FEIN must be identical in both the CG files and the Child Care Scholarship System in order for payments to be made to the provider.

Once the provider information has been loaded and accepted in the CG's files, the Control Center enters the provider information into the Child Care Scholarship Program database. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.

After an established period of time (usually within 30 days) the provider paperwork is prepped and sent for imaging.

5.7.3 FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE PROVIDERS (FFN)

The use of FFN is mandated by the Amendments to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1996. The federal regulations state that a parent eligible for child care assistance may choose an FFN child care provider. See the policy manual for the family friend and neighbor providers at <https://www.scchildcare.org/media/0ijtj0nv/ffn-policy-manual-4-18-2023-v15-002.pdf>

In order to be enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program as a Family, Friend, or Neighbor child care provider, the following steps are taken:

FOR RELATED FFN ARRANGEMENTS

The provider must be related to the child in one of the following ways: An aunt or uncle, first generation only, sibling, grandparent or great-grandparent, all of whom do not reside in the same household as the child. An interested client or provider contacts the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center and indicates that they are interested in becoming enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program. A packet of information is sent to the provider.

Upon receipt of the paperwork, the provider completes the following forms:

- Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care Enrollment and Agreement, [DSS Form 3774](#)
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care Certification, [DSS Form 3776](#)
- IRS Form W-9
- Copy of social security card for proof of social security number (SSN). Other documents with the SSN will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for acceptance.
- Copy of driver's license or State ID
- Print outs from the Social Security Administration will no longer be accepted.

NOTE: No out-of-state identification will be accepted, unless an out of state arrangement is approved.

- Copy of a completed [DSS Form 37124](#), Family, Friend, and Neighbor Central Registry Release of Information and Consent Form, on all household member 18 years or older.

NOTE: Central Registry checks are required yearly.

Upon receipt of the completed paperwork, the Child Care Scholarship Program staff takes the following actions:

- The completed [DSS Form 37124](#) will be scanned by Control Center staff and forwarded via email to the designated Child Care Licensing staff.
- The information from the IRS Form W-9 and social security card is sent to Finance to be entered into the SCEIS (South Carolina Enterprise Information System) in order to obtain a vendor number. A confirmation of the SCEIS vendor number is sent via email to the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff.

NOTE: The provider name, I.D, and SSN must be identical in both the CG files and the Child Care Scholarship Program database in order for payments to be made to the provider.

- Once the provider information has been loaded and accepted in the CG's files, the Control Center enters the provider information into the Child Care Scholarship Program database. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.

NOTE: Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff may conditionally enroll the FFN child care provider into the Child Care Scholarship Program database if the Central Registry and Sex Offender results are not received when the provider has been loaded into SCEIS.

A copy of the Policy manual for Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care is mailed to the provider upon enrollment by Child Care Licensing.

After an established period of time (usually within 30 days) the provider paperwork is prepped and sent for imaging.

It is the responsibility of SCDSS to advise clients on what to look for in choosing FFN providers. It is the client's responsibility to monitor their FFN arrangement. SCDSS explains the necessary forms and the payment procedures. Additionally, SCDSS requires FFN providers to self-certify the existence of a smoke detector and fire extinguisher in the home where the child will be served. When these basic health and safety requirements are not available, the FFN provider must purchase these items and may request reimbursement up to \$45.00. The Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center Staff must use the Family, Friend, and Neighbor Provider Health and Safety Grant Reimbursement Request, [DSS Form 3778](#), to request the reimbursement.

Enrolled related FFN providers have 90 days to complete Health and Safety Training. Failure to complete the training will result in termination.

FOR NON-RELATED FFN ARRANGEMENTS

An interested client or provider contacts the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center and indicates that they are interested in having a non-related FFN provider enroll in the Child Care Scholarship Program. Non-related Out of state FFN providers will not be approved based on the providers having to be monitored within the first 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter.

- A Non-Related FFN Application for Consideration of Enrollment form (DSS Form 3775) is sent to the potential provider along with the FFN Enrollment and Agreement (DSS Form 3774), FFN Child Care Certification (DSS Form 3776), and W-9 are mailed.
- Upon receipt of the paperwork, the provider completes the following forms: DSS Form 3775 – Application for Consideration of Enrollment.
- Upon receipt of the completed DSS Form 3775, Child Care Scholarship Program staff will review the information and send the DSS Form 1706 – Criminal Background Check Questionnaire to the child care provider for all family members 15 years and older along with the Form 37124 – Central Registry Form for all household members 18 years and older.
 - Copy of social security card for proof of social security number (SSN). Other documents with the SSN will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for acceptance.
 - Copy of driver's license or State ID
 - Print outs from the Social Security Administration will no longer be accepted.

NOTE: No out-of-state identification will be accepted, unless an out of state arrangement is approved.

Upon receipt of the completed paperwork, the Child Care Scholarship Program staff take the following actions:

- The completed [DSS Form 37124](#) will be scanned by Control Center staff and forwarded via email to the designated Child Care Licensing staff.
- The information from the IRS Form W-9 and social security card is sent to Finance to be entered into the SCEIS (South Carolina Enterprise Information System) in order to obtain a vendor number. A confirmation of the SCEIS vendor number is sent via email to the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff.

NOTE: The provider name, I.D, and SSN/ must be identical in both the CG files and the Child Care Scholarship Program database in order for payments to be made to the provider.

Once the provider information has been loaded and accepted in the CG's files, the Control Center enters the provider information into the Child Care Scholarship Program database. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.

NOTE: Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff may conditionally enroll the FFN child care provider into the Child Care Scholarship Program database if the Central Registry and Sex Offender results are not received when the provider has been loaded into SCEIS.

A copy of the Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care Provider Business Procedures is mailed to the provider upon enrollment.

NOTE: The enrolled non-related FFN providers have 90 days to complete the pre-service online training. Providers that fail to complete the online pre-service training will be terminated.

After an established period of time (usually within 30 days) the provider paperwork is prepped and sent for imaging.

NOTE: SLED fingerprint checks are required every 5 years and Central Registry checks must be renewed annually.

It is the responsibility of SCDSS to advise clients on what to look for in choosing FFN providers. It is the client's responsibility to monitor their FFN arrangement. SCDSS explains the necessary forms and the payment procedures. Additionally, SCDSS requires FFN providers to self-certify the existence of a smoke detector and fire extinguisher in the home where the child will be served. When these basic health and safety requirements are not available, the FFN provider must purchase these items and may request reimbursement up to \$45.00. The Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center Staff must use the Family, Friend, and Neighbor Provider Health and Safety Grant Reimbursement Request, [DSS Form 3778](#), to request the reimbursement.

INSPECTIONS FOR LICENSE-EXEMPT IN-HOME CARE

Non-related FFNs (care in both in/out of the child's home) are monitored by Child Care Licensing for compliance with background checks, CPR/First Aid certification and Health and Safety Pre-service training. These providers receive an annual unannounced visit.

5.7.4 DENIAL OF FFN ARRANGEMENTS

Denial of FFN arrangements include, but are not limited to:

- Potential FFN provider who resides in the same household as the child approved for child care services.
- Any asterisked items on the FFN forms that are answered in the negative.
- A founded or open Child Protective Services investigation and support allegation against a provider who is known to the public (e.g., a provider is involved in an active CPS case).
- SCDSS has public knowledge of a criminal allegation that may jeopardize the health and safety of children, at State Office discretion.
- The child care worker suspects that the provider is under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of application or subsequently thereafter.
- An individual receiving Child Care Scholarship Program services for their own child, grandchild, foster child or other child in their custody cannot become an FFN provider for someone else.
- The FFN provider requested is the child's absent parent or the parent's significant other (spouse, girlfriend, boyfriend, life partner, etc.) that resides either in or out of the home.

NOTE: If it is known that the potential FFN provider plans to have another person care for the child while they are en route from their primary employment, or other activity, the arrangement must be denied.

- FFN arrangement cannot be approved for a provider who is a member of the same TANF/FS family household unit as the parent applying for child care services, even if a member of the TANF/FS household unit has been disqualified and is not in the TANF/FS budget.
- A person who becomes an FFN provider (or potential provider) is found to have been terminated from the Child Care Scholarship Program for misrepresentation as a Child Care Scholarship Program client will not be approved as an FFN provider. The child care worker will notify the provider in writing, if the arrangement is terminated or denied. If a provider is terminated or denied, payment may not be made for services rendered.
- Non-related Out of state FFN providers will not be approved based on the providers having to be monitored within the first 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter.
- Other reasons as determined appropriate based on the individual situations.
- Any provider or family member 18 years or older with an unsatisfactory Central Registry finding or sex offender search.
- Any provider who is employed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services within the State, Regional or County offices.
- Failure to return the FFN provider packet within 15 calendar days may result in the denial of the enrollment request.

5.7.5 FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE (IN THE CHILD'S HOME) (FNI)

An in-home child care arrangement is care that is provided in the child's own home by a relative or non-relative child care provider who is at least 21 years old and who does not live in the same household as the child.

In-home care is affected by interaction with other laws and regulations. For example, in home providers who are NOT related to the child are classified as domestic service workers under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (29-USC Section 206 (A) and are therefore covered under minimum wage. FNI providers are also subject to tax requirements.

Based on these IRS Regulations, the use of an in-home arrangement is limited to:

In-home arrangement in which the provider is not related to the child will be approved only when the client has five or more children in the home that require care or families who need care for children with special needs or medical conditions (CCDF State Plan).

FNI providers related to the child may be approved to provide care; however, the relationship must be verified by a client statement. If relationship status is questionable, the child care worker will require verification through birth certificates, marriage license, or other legal documents. The provider must be related to the child in one of the following ways: An aunt or uncle, first generation only, sibling, grandparent or great-grandparent, all of whom do not reside in the same household as the child. Cousins or other relations not previously listed are not considered related for the purpose of child care.

NOTE: The Child Care Scholarship Program will not pay for child care services to any member of the household in which the child resides.

The same procedures for FFN providers who are providing care in their home (FNO) apply to FNI providers (who provide care in the child's home). See [Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care \(FFN\)](#) for specific criteria.

5.7.6 OUT-OF-STATE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The Child Care Scholarship Program may enroll and reimburse regulated center-based, group or family child care providers that operate outside the state of South Carolina. Primarily, out-of-state providers are enrolled to allow payment of child care costs for children in Child Protective Services (CPS) or Foster Care (FC) who are in the custody of SCDSS, but have been placed with a caretaker or relative who resides outside of South Carolina. However, this option can be used for all child care categories.

Border state providers (Georgia and North Carolina) may request enrollment into the Child Care Scholarship Program and may continue to be enrolled for the agreement period and serve any Child Care Scholarship Program client who chooses them as a provider.

- **NOTE:** Out of state related Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) providers will be approved only for child protective service and foster care cases and only with prior approval of the arrangement by the designated program staff and human service worker. Non-related Out of state FFN providers will not be approved based on the providers having to be

monitored within the first 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter.

Out-of-state center, family or group child care providers must be licensed and agree to:

- Reimbursement via direct deposit
- Enrollment in the on-line SVL system
- Reimbursement at the Level B URBAN rate.

To request an out-of-state provider, the child care eligibility worker will contact the provider team (send email to the designated provider team staff). The request should include the following information:

- Client's name and Social Security Number
- Provider's name and complete address (street, city, state and zip code)
- Contact telephone number for the out-of-state provider, including the area code.

Designated provider team staff will verify through that state's child care website that the child care facility participates in the state's child care subsidy program and has a licensing in good standing. Once verified, staff will make contact with the out-of-state provider and forward the following paperwork to them for completion:

- DSS Form 37126 (Out of State provider Enrollment Form and Agreement)
- IRS Form W-9
- Direct Deposit Form 147C

Once the paperwork is received, provider team staff will:

- Submit a work order to have the out-of-state provider county added to the Child Care Scholarship Program database
- Send the IRS Form 147C and IRS Form W-9 to finance to have the provider loaded into SCEIS.

Once the provider information has been loaded into SCEIS and a vendor number is obtained, the provider will be keyed into the system and any applicable connections made.

NOTE: For foster children or children with an open CPS case, the eligibility worker will be notified by provider team staff once the provider has been approved.

5.8 PROVIDER ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

Enrollment agreements are normally effective for a period of three years from the date signed by the provider. The provider's ABC enrollment expires on the end date of the agreement.

Enrollment Agreements are provider/owner specific and address-specific. This means that another provider/owner cannot take over operation of the facility and that if a provider moves (regardless of whether they have obtained the appropriate regulatory document) that ABC Quality is under no obligation to offer an agreement at the new location. **When the provider moves, the agreement becomes null and void, which is not appealable.**

Although agreements are normally for three years, ABC Quality reserves the right to offer agreements for a shorter period of time. Please see [ABC Quality Center-Based Manual 9.23 \(scchildcare.org\)](https://www.scchildcare.org/abc-quality-center-based-manual/9.23) for more information.

5.9 HISTORY OF COMPLIANCE

The child care facility is required to have and maintain a History of Compliance with regulatory requirements in order for the facility to enroll and maintain enrollment in the Child Care Scholarship Program. Child care licensing conducts inspections bi-annually and the results of these inspections determine health and safety compliance. [ABC Quality Center-Based Manual 9.23 \(scchildcare.org\)](https://www.scchildcare.org/ABC-Quality-Center-Based-Manual-9.23).

5.10 MAXIMUM PAYMENT RATES

The Child Care Scholarship Program establishes the maximum payment rates based on the approved rate setting methodology.

Maximum rates are categorized by provider type, age groups, and by pre-determined rural or urban designations. Although the maximum rates change every two years, a provider must submit rate increases in order to receive the new higher rates.

5.11 SECOND CHILD DISCOUNTS

A second child discount is established by provider at the time of enrollment. The discount is an amount (percentage) of discount applied to a family with multiple children receiving care with the same provider. The second child discount is applied to all children **except** the youngest when the children are at the same facility. Therefore, a family with four children will have the second child discount applied to the oldest three children. All Child Care Scholarship Program providers do not elect to have second child discounts. A second child discount offered to a private paying client must be offered to Child Care Scholarship Program clients. When a second child discount is applied, it will remain in effect until the connection ends, the child transfers to another provider, or eligibility ends.

5.12 PROVIDER RATES

5.12.1 RATE INCREASES

A child care provider may increase the child care rates they charge once per year within the Child Care Scholarship Program. Rate increases effect all children.

NOTE: Requests for rate increases will not be approved for any provider who is under a corrective action Plan or under an appeal.

5.12.2 RATE INCREASES FOR ALL LEVELS

A provider who increases their child care rates may request a rate increase form once per year. The following steps are taken when increasing child care rates:

- The provider must call ABC Quality, Child Care Control Center or email ProviderRateForms@dss.sc.gov to request a Provider Rate Form, [DSS Form 37107](#). (**Exception:** FFN providers will call the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center) Any provider who has not submitted all corrective action will not be allowed to receive a rate increase. Upon satisfactory correction, they may request a rate change.
- The rate increase form is sent to the child care provider.
- The form is completed by the provider and returned to The Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center via email to ProviderRateForms@dss.sc.gov or by fax with the required documentation, which is:
 - A copy of the provider's published/written child care rates, (i.e., written fee policy, parent handbook with rates included)
 - Any correspondence given to parents notifying them of the rate increase.

NOTE: The rate increase will not be processed without this information.

The provider will receive written notification of the outcome of the request for a rate increase. The rate increase form is forwarded to the designated Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff to be updated in the Child Care Scholarship Program database.

5.12.3 RATE INCREASES FOR FAMILY, FRIEND, AND NEIGHBOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

A provider who increases their child care rates may request a rate increase form once per year. The following steps are taken when increasing child care rates:

- The provider must call the Control Center to request an FFN Child Care Enrollment and Agreement Form, [DSS Form 3774](#).
- The rate increase form is sent to the child care provider.
- The form is completed by the provider and returned to the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center. Control Center staff updates the information in the Child Care Scholarship Program database.
- Upon approval, the rate increase will be effective for all children connected.

5.12.4 RATE DECREASES FOR ALL LEVELS

When a provider has a rate decrease, the decrease will immediately apply to all children connected to the provider and all future connections.

NOTE: The same procedures as outlined in Rate Increases will be followed with the exception that all rate decreases will be effective immediately without regard to the client's eligibility period as this will benefit the family by reducing the potential out of pocket costs.

5.13 RECORDS

A provider should establish good record keeping methods and maintain all documentation in an orderly fashion. Records should be kept for a period of five years plus current year or until all applicable audits have been completed. If an audit is in progress, all documents shall be maintained until the audit is complete.

The following records are required to be kept on-site and will be reviewed during regular monitoring visits, audits, or as needed to resolve discrepancies.

5.13.1 ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance records must be maintained for each child served through the Child Care Scholarship Program.

Attendance may be documented in several different ways, which include the following:

- Recording days and actual hours of attendance or absences in a roll book or log sheet, to include the USDA Log Sheet
- Computer attendance logs will be acceptable
- Using sign-in/sign-out sheets OR
- Using computer logs, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the provider uses sign-in/sign-out sheets, and the parent fails to sign-in and also sign-out, the SCDSS Auditors may recoup funds.

The child's name on the attendance must match the name on the SVL. The child's given name, not a nickname, should be recorded.

NOTE: A provider who does not maintain daily attendance or accurate records may be required to repay funds if the provider cannot provide documentation that the child was enrolled in the program.

Daily attendance records may be requested to resolve a discrepancy between two different providers when a child's date of attendance is in question.

5.13.2 SERVICE VOUCHER LOG (SVL)

A provider must maintain copies of the submitted SVL on-site for a period of five years plus current year. Records may be required to be maintained longer if the provider is under a current audit.

NOTE: Providers who participate in the On-line SVL system must keep a paper copy of the submitted SVL.

The provider should review the SVL against the Provider's Remittance Advice and payment validation.

5.13.3 CLIENT/CHILD RECORDS

An individual file should be kept on-site for each child enrolled through the Child Care Scholarship Program. Information should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Parent name and child's complete name SSN of the parent and child.

NOTE: It is helpful to cross-reference each child's file with other children from the same family, especially when the last names are different.

Child Care Scholarship Program Authorization/Connection Letter which describes the following:

- Client's name and name of the child
- Amount of billing
- Start and stop dates
- Copay amount (if applicable)
- Type of care (full time, half time, or less than half time).
- Correspondence from the Child Care Scholarship Program related to the client.

5.14 ADVERSE ACTIONS BY ABC QUALITY

For all detailed processes and action for providers enrolled in ABC Quality, please refer to the **ABC Quality [ABC Quality Center-Based Manual 9.23 \(scchildcare.org\)](https://www.scchildcare.org)**.

5.15 GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

5.15.1 USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Providers enrolled in ABC Quality are prohibited from the use of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes but is not limited to spanking, slapping, biting, and shaking. If the owner/operator of the facility administers corporal punishment, termination of facility enrollment will occur on the first offense.

If staff in a child care center uses corporal punishment, and the corporal

punishment was not condoned by the owner/operator, the provider should be given an opportunity to take appropriate corrective action. If appropriate action is taken, termination of enrollment will not occur.

If further instances of corporal punishment are used at the facility within any 12-month period, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.

5.15.2 FAILURE TO PROVIDE CHILD CARE SERVICES AT ENROLLED ADDRESS AND/OR PROVIDING SERVICES AT A LOCATION THAT IS NOT ENROLLED AND OR WHICH THE CHILD IS NOT CONNECTED.

Providers must notify ABC in advance of days the facility will be temporarily closed or if the facility is moving or permanently closing.

Children must be served at the location for which they have been connected. If the provider has two or more locations enrolled, they may not switch or transport children between locations without notifying Child Care Scholarship Program for authorization. Children will appear on the SVL for the location in which they have been connected. When it is verified that children are being served at a location other than the enrolled address, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.

5.15.3 MISUSE OF CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM GRANT FUNDS

If a provider uses Child Care Scholarship Program grant funds for purchases other than its approved use and the provider does not reimburse the Child Care Scholarship Program within the time frame given for reimbursement (including any extension of time approved), the termination of enrollment process may be initiated. Recoupment of the funds will also be initiated.

5.15.4 FRAUD/MISREPRESENTATION

If a provider intentionally makes a false statement or misrepresents themselves regarding a material fact or fails to disclose a material fact that results in obtaining, attempting to obtain, or continuing to receive Child Care Scholarship Program funds which the provider would not otherwise qualify to receive, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated. Funds will be recouped for the period of time when the provider did not qualify for the funds.

5.15.5 VERBAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE BY A PROVIDER

If a provider curses or yells at any SCDSS staff, the provider will be sent a certified letter after the first offense by ABC Quality. The letter will describe the incident and inform the provider that another such incident will result in termination being initiated. If a second offense occurs, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated. If the provider threatens, or physically assaults any SCDSS staff during the course of conducting SCDSS business, the termination of enrollment process will be initiated.

5.16 PROCESS FOR TERMINATING A PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

The following shall occur when the Child Care Scholarship Program is initiating termination of an Child Care Scholarship Program provider's enrollment:

5.16.1 LIFE-THREATENING OR SUBSTANTIAL THREAT OF HARM

When there are life-threatening issues at an ABC Quality facility, the termination of enrollment process shall be initiated immediately, and CCL shall be notified. Life- threatening issues include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sewer backed up in facility.
- No water in the facility
- Over-heated facility
- Fire alarm disconnected.
- A child seriously injured or death due to lack of supervision or negligence by staff
- Lack of supervision resulting in a child leaving the facility unnoticed
- Lack of supervision resulting in a child being left at another location.
- A child removed due to abuse or neglect by staff.
- Ratios exceeded by 25 percent or more, etc.

If the termination of enrollment process results in termination, the termination of enrollment should be effective immediately after the appeals process ends. The Director of Early Care and Education may make a decision to remove all Child Care Scholarship Program children from the facility during the appeals process.

5.16.2 NON-LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS

If the reason for the termination of enrollment is not determined to be life threatening and does not pose an immediate and substantial threat to the health and/or safety of the child, termination of enrollment shall follow normal procedures.

5.17 COMPLAINTS

If ABC Quality receives a complaint on a License-Exempt facility, the complaint will be documented, and the Quality Assessor will make an unannounced visit, as appropriate, in order to investigate the complaint.

If the complaint is that the License-Exempt facility is operating more than the stated hours, or if ABC Quality discovers the facility is operating more than the stated hours, the complaint will be forwarded to Child Care Licensing as an illegal operation.

Any complaint that involves an injury to a child may be referred to the Office of Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN). All complaints received will be kept on file with ABC Quality and are public record.

5.17.1 NOTIFICATION TO CHILD CARE STAFF

If termination of enrollment results after the appeals process, the ABC Quality Designee will send an e-mail to notify the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center of the final decision to terminate enrollment and the effective enrollment termination date.

5.17.2 APPEALS

The ABC Quality office will track the termination of enrollment of providers to determine if the provider files an appeal within the 30-day time frame allowed for filing an appeal.

Once ABC Quality receives notification that a provider has filed an appeal, the ABC Quality Designee will enter this information into the Child Care Scholarship

Program database, so that no new Child Care Scholarship Program children can be connected during the appeals process.

If a provider does file an appeal (regardless of the Child Care Scholarship Program level), the Provider Appeals and Hearing Process should be followed.

If during the appeals process the violations are life-threatening or pose an immediate and substantial threat to the health and/or safety of the children enrolled, the Director of Early Care and Education may make a decision to remove all Child Care Scholarship Program children from the facility.

5.17.3 FINAL NOTIFICATION TO THE CLIENTS AND THE PROVIDER FROM THE CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

After receiving the final notification from ABC Quality that a facility is being terminated, the Child Care Scholarship Program will send a letter to all Child Care Scholarship Program clients connected to the facility, notifying them that the facility's enrollment is being terminated and that the Child Care Scholarship Program will not pay for services after the termination of enrollment date to that provider.

The Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center will send a final notice to the provider as well as a letter to the clients, notifying the provider of the facility's termination of enrollment from the Child Care Scholarship Program and the last date payment will be made to the facility on behalf of Child Care Scholarship Program clients.

Parents will be given an opportunity to select another ABC Quality Program facility for their child. A listing of all Levels A, B, C and P facilities are available at www.scchildcare.org. Parents may also request a printed list of ABC Quality provider by calling the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center at (800)476-0199.

Parents may choose to remove their child from the facility prior to the official termination of enrollment date but must call the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center to receive prior approval. If any Child Care Scholarship Program parents continue to choose the provider after the official termination of enrollment date, the parents will be responsible for full payment to the provider after the termination of enrollment date.

5.17.4 REFERRAL RESOURCES TO ASSIST CLIENTS

The Child Care Scholarship Program should make every effort to assist clients in finding other child care arrangements. Additionally, parents can be referred to the South Carolina Child Care Resource and Referral Network at 1-888-335-1002 or via email at sccrr@mailbox.sc.edu

5.17.5 FACILITY OWNERSHIP CHANGES

A provider must immediately notify ABC Quality or the Child Care Scholarship Program of any changes in ownership of the facility. A change in ownership invalidates the enrollment agreement as it is not transferable. It also invalidates the DSS License or Registration. Agreements are non-transferable. The provider's file will be placed in a closed status. The new owner may apply by completing the application process and meeting the enrollment requirements.

NOTE: The provider must notify ABC Quality at least 30 days prior to the sale.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: It is extremely crucial to notify ABC Quality of the sale of the facility so that payment under the provider's TAX ID number can be stopped. If the provider fails to do this and the new owner continues to receive the SVLs and submits them, payment will continue to be made under the original provider's TAX ID, and thus the original provider is responsible for payment of taxes due. The Child Care Scholarship Program cannot be held responsible when providers fail to notify the Child Care Scholarship Program of the sale. Providers must call or write ABC Quality directly to inform them of this change.

When a provider notifies ABC Quality or the Child Care Scholarship Program that they are closing, the termination date will be the first Monday following the date of the closure.

5.17.6 CHILD CARE LICENSING CLOSES PROVIDER'S FILE

When it is known that Child Care Licensing has closed a provider's file, meaning the provider no longer has a License or Registration, then ABC Quality will also close the provider's file. Reasons this might occur would be if the provider notified Child Care Licensing but failed to notify ABC Quality or Child Care Scholarship Program.

NOTE: The above terminations are not appealable.

5.18 VOLUNTARY TERMINATION BY THE PROVIDER

Providers may voluntarily request to end their enrollment/agreement at any time as an enrolled ABC Quality provider at any level by notifying the ABC Quality Program in writing or through a documented telephone contact.

NOTE: Voluntary termination of a provider's enrollment agreement is not appealable. If the provider requests to voluntarily end their enrollment agreement, and then later requests to rescind the termination of their agreement, ABC Quality is under no obligation to do so, particularly if the provider's file has been terminated in the Child Care Scholarship Program.

The provider may not reapply for enrollment at any level for a period of one year from the effective date of termination.

Providers who have received a grant must stay in the Child Care Scholarship Program for the period required by the grant, or the grant funds will be recouped.

5.18.1 FRAUD

Any institution or its principals who have been convicted of fraud are ineligible to participate in the Child Care Scholarship Program at any level.

FRAUD AND ABC QUALITY

ABC Quality takes fraud very seriously. In every policy and document given to providers, ABC Quality strives to make known its expectations of providers for participation in the program, along with subsequent action for non-compliance.

ABC Quality maintains a complaint line, 1-800-763-2223, this number can be used by the public to reports complaints and incidents of fraud.

Fraud Definition:

ABC refers to fraud as the following (but not limited to):

- 1) Intentionally making a false statement; misrepresentation regarding a material fact; failure to disclose a material fact/information; or any action that results in obtaining, attempting to obtain, or continuing to receive ABC funds, which the provider would not otherwise qualify to receive, or to circumvent or help others circumvent the requirements of ABC Quality.

Examples of this could include billing clients for services when they are being paid through Child Care Scholarship Program for the service; serving children at unauthorized locations because they have reached their capacity at their current location or have opened a new location which they don't want to enroll; continuing to bill for clients who have left their program, allowing another provider or location that is not enrolled to use your Federal ID or Social Security number to connect children, collecting the payment and distributing it to them; submitting falsified documents such as a high school diploma/degree and CPR/First aid cards, etc.

- 2) Conviction of fraud in a federal/state court with Child Care Scholarship Program or ABC Quality.
- 3) Billing for services and receiving payment for services or goods that were not obtained in accordance with requirements of ABC Quality, the Provider Agreement and ABC Provider Business Procedures.

5.18.2 FALSIFIED DOCUMENTS

Institutions or principals who falsify or misrepresent official, legal documents (i.e., birth certificates, degrees, transcripts, etc.), or other Child Care Scholarship Program documents (SVL, enrollment records) and submit to agency representatives are ineligible to participate in the Child Care Scholarship Program at any level.

5.19 AMENDMENTS TO A PROVIDER'S FILE

A provider's file may be amended at any time. An amendment can be initiated by the provider, ABC Quality, or Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff. The provider must notify the following appropriate program area of any changes or amendments that need to be made to their enrollment:

- Level A, B, C, P or exempt providers – Contact ABC Quality
- FFN providers – Contact Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center staff

NOTE: Changes should not be sent with the SVL.

Amendments may occur for, but are not limited to, the following reasons:

5.19.1 ADDING OR DELETING ADDITIONAL AGE GROUPS

A provider may request to add another age group not previously authorized if they are currently providing child care services for that age group (Level A, B, C, P or exempt) or at any time for an FFN provider. To request an additional age group, the provider must:

- Contact ABC Quality or the Child Care Control Center to request an additional age group be added.
- Meet regulatory requirements for the age groups served. Child Care Scholarship or ABC Quality staff will verify that the program meets the regulatory requirements to enroll the requested age group.
- Currently enrolled ABC Quality programs may request to add half-time or full-time for an age group for which they are already authorized. FFN can add at any time.
- A provider or the Child Care Scholarship Program may delete an age group under the following circumstances:
- A provider should request to delete an age group if they are no longer serving an age group or does not want to be authorized for that age group.
- The Child Care Scholarship Program may delete an age group if it is determined that the provider is no longer serving that age group or is not meeting regulatory requirements for that age group.

5.19.2 CHANGE IN FACILITIES REGULATORY STATUS

The provider must notify the appropriate program area if one of the following occurs:

- Provider changes from Family to Group
- Provider changes from Family or Group to a Center
- Provider changes from a Group to a Family
- Provider changes from Center to a Family or Group

5.19.3 CHANGE IN NAME OF CHILD CARE FACILITY

If the provider changes the name of the child care facility, the provider must:

- Notify ABC Quality.
- Submit new enrollment paperwork provided by ABC Quality reflecting the new name.

5.19.4 CHANGE IN DIRECTOR OF CHILD CARE FACILITY

If there is a change in the director of the child care facility, a provider must notify ABC Quality and Child Care Licensing.

5.19.5 CHANGE IN MAILING/PAYMENT ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBERS

If there is a change in the facility address where services are provided [other than the provider has moved], such as a change because of 911 or payment address, or phone number, the provider must:

- Notify ABC Quality.
- Submit a signed W-9 Tax form which can be requested from the appropriate program area. The W-9 is used for address changes only.

5.19.6 WORKING TELEPHONE

If there is a change in the facility phone number where services are being delivered, the provider must notify ABC Quality.

Center based programs and group child care programs must have an operable telephone with an outside line that is accessible to staff persons in emergencies.

Family child care homes shall have a working, listed telephone in the family child care home and shall make the telephone number available to parent/guardians of children enrolled in the family child care home and to Department staff. The telephone number must be listed in all appropriate directories to ensure emergency identification and response.

Family, friend and neighbor providers are required to only have access to a phone for emergencies.

Chapter 6

Case Management

6.1 STOP AND START DATES

A parent may need to have a break in care in situations where the child is with a non-custodial parent for court ordered visitation, vacation, hospitalization, etc. for a period of a week or more. The parent may ask the provider to hold the child's slot during the time the child is away. The provider may bill for only 3 consecutive weeks of non-enrollment before dropping the child from their center. However, the provider may agree to insert a stop and start date for the child when the client is in need of a break of service when the duration of the non-enrollment is known. By inserting a stop and start date, the child is allowed to start back with the provider at the agreed upon time. Both the parent and the provider must agree to this arrangement prior to the extended absence. This allows for more accurate billing of enrollment.

6.2 BREAKS IN WORK, SCHOOL OR TRAINING

When a client stops working or attending school or training, for whatever reason, they must notify the Control Center within 10 calendar days of the date the change occurred. The client will be allowed to continue receiving child care services for 3 months (90 days) from the date they stopped working/school/training. The Child Care Scholarship Program staff will terminate the child care services effective the first Monday after the 3 months (90 days) from the break, and the termination letter will be sent to the client and the provider.

If the client obtains employment or begins school or training during the 90-day period, they must submit documentation to: SChildCare@dss.sc.gov with the subject of "Termination Reversal" If the client is determined to be eligible, the termination will be overturned and the client will be authorized for the child care services for which they were originally authorized.

Once the new employment, school, or training information is received, staff will:

- Print the application from On-base.
- Complete a new eligibility worksheet to ensure that the client remains under 85% SMI.
- Use the same income from the previous application as to not change the copayments.

If the client remains eligible, the clients original services will be extended through the end of the original eligible period.

If the client does not obtain employment or begin school or training during the 90-day period, or does not contact the Control Center during the 90-day period

to inform staff about new employment/school/training, the termination will stand and child care services will end as of the date of termination.

If, when the client notifies the Control Center, it has been 90 days or more since the client stopped working or attending school or training, then child care services will be terminated for the client effective the first Monday after 10 working days from the date of notification.

NOTE: The exception to this policy occurs if a client has a break in employment/school/training due to a disability or medical leave. See [Verification of Disability](#).

6.3 RETENTION SCHEDULE

All client and provider case file material including, but not limited to the following, shall be maintained in the child care imaging system for a period of five years plus current year or until all applicable audits have been completed:

- Child Care Referral (DSS Form 3004, When applicable)
- Child Care Scholarship Program Child Care Application (DSS Form 3791)
- Work/School/Training Verification
- Eligibility Worksheet (DSS Form 37110)
- Written correspondence from client/provider
- Enrollment forms, agreements and rates forms

If an audit is in progress, all documents shall be maintained until the audit is complete.

Child care applications for applicants who are denied and who are subsequently not funded shall be maintained for 12 months.

6.4 TRANSFERS FROM ONE PROVIDER TO ANOTHER

A client may transfer from one provider to another provided the client contacts the Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center either by phone or in writing and receives approval prior to the transfer. The effective date of transfer is the first Monday following the seventh working day after the day the Control Center receives the phone call or receives the written notice. State holidays and weekends are not considered work days in counting the seven days.

NOTE: Emails are accepted as written notification.

A client may transfer from one provider to another through the following process:

- A client must notify the Control Center either by telephone or in writing and receive approval prior to the transfer.
- The effective date of the transfer will be the first Monday following the seventh working day after the Control Center receives the phone call or written notice from the client requesting the transfer.

To determine the effective date of transfer, the day the Control Center receives the phone call or written notice is considered day one of the notice. See **EXCEPTION** below. The child care worker begins counting seven working days from that date. In counting the seven days, State observed holidays [i.e. 4th of July, Labor Day, etc.] or weekends are not included, as they are not considered working days. Whatever date the seventh working day falls on, the transfer date will be the following Monday.

EXAMPLE: A request is made on Wednesday. Counting seven working days beginning with Wednesday, the working day would fall on Thursday of the next week. The transfer date would be the next Monday following that Thursday.

EXCEPTION: If notification is received on a Thursday, then Friday is counted as day one. If notification is received any other day of the week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday), that same day is always counted as day one.

NOTE: When a client requests a transfer from a FFN provider, the connection will be ended the first Sunday following the request. No notice is required to the FFN provider.

Notice may be waived under unusual circumstances if sought by the client and approved by a supervisor. The Control Center will notify the provider if the waiver is approved. The previous provider will not be paid after the start date is established for the new provider.

Prospective Payments and Transfers:

Due to child care providers being paid in advance of service delivery, when a client requests a transfer, payments may have already been made past the effective transfer date. In those cases, the transfer should be processed, and a receivable adjustment be completed from the effective transfer date to the last paid date. Upon completion of the receivable adjustment, the connections will be inserted to cover the time adjusted to the new child care provider.

NOTE: THE Child Care Scholarship Program WILL NOT PAY TWO PROVIDERS FOR THE SAME WEEK, unless the parent also has a less than half-time arrangement.

The previous provider will be notified in writing via a Transfer Letter of the client's last authorized day of service.

SPECIAL NOTE: A client with unpaid fees at the time of the transfer will still be allowed to transfer. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure copayments are paid timely.

6.5 EARLY RELEASES

A provider may voluntarily choose to release a child from their facility. In doing so, the provider forfeits future payments. When extenuating circumstances exist and a parent needs to be released from a provider prior to a given transfer date, the Control Center Supervisor, or designee, may grant the early release if deemed appropriate. If an early release is not granted and the client removes the child prior to the transfer date, the client will be responsible for payment to the new provider until the transfer/re-connection date.

NOTE: If the provider refuses to allow the child to attend, regardless of the reason, connections will be ended and the children will be given an early release.

If an early release is granted and the child care provider has been paid for future dates, a receivable adjustment will be completed to recoup the funds.

6.6 TRANSFERS OF FOSTER AND CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE CLIENTS

Only a CPS/FC Case Manager may authorize the full transfer of a CPS or Foster Care child. There may be extenuating circumstances which require immediate actions from the CPS/FC Case Manager, which may include an effective transfer date that does not follow the seven-day notice rule. CMs must be aware of the provider's notice policy and is required to give the provider as much notice as possible before moving the CPS/Foster child. A child care payment may be made for a CPS/Foster child requiring an out-of-state placement where the care is provided by a child care center.

Due to child care providers being paid in advance of service delivery, when a client requests a transfer, payments may have already been made past the effective transfer date. In those cases, the transfer should be processed, and a receivable adjustment be completed from the effective transfer date to the last paid date. Upon completion of the receivable adjustment, the connections will be inserted to cover the time adjusted.

Control Center staff may complete the transfer in the Child Care Scholarship database but should follow-up with an email to the appropriate CPS/FC eligibility worker informing them of the transfer request. The CPS/FC eligibility worker will then notify the county case manager of the request for transfer to have a new referral form submitted.

NOTE: Case managers must submit a new DSS Form 3004 to reconnect a CPS or Foster child to a new provider.

6.7 NOTIFYING CLIENTS AND PROVIDERS OF TRANSFERS

When a client is approved to transfer, the previous provider will be notified of the client's last authorized day of service (always a Sunday) via a [Transfer Letter](#). The Transfer Letter will be sent to the client and the provider from whom the client is transferring. The client is instructed at the time they request a transfer that in order for services to be authorized for a new provider, the Control Center must receive a connection form in advance of the client starting services with the new provider. If the new provider begins serving the client before the effective date of transfer, the client is responsible for the full cost of the services prior to authorization.

Due to child care providers being paid in advance of service delivery, when a client requests a transfer, payments may have already been made past the effective transfer date. In those cases, the transfer should be processed, and a receivable adjustment be completed to the previous provider from the effective transfer date to the last paid date. Upon completion of the receivable adjustment, the connections will be inserted to cover the time adjusted.

6.8 TANF CLIENT MOVES TO ANOTHER COUNTY

For TANF cases only, when a client moves to another county, the child care worker in the former county must indicate that the child has moved and notify the eligibility worker. If services are to continue in the new county, the eligibility worker will notate the memo field that the client has moved, update the mailing address and process a transfer between providers. If there is time remaining in the approved 12-month eligibility period the services should continue through the end of the 12 month eligibility period so the client can continue receiving services at the same level as originally approved.

6.9 SITUATIONAL CHANGES WITHIN THE ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

A client may have the need to add additional children or may want to provide documentation to support full time care when they were previously approved for only part half time. The Child Care Scholarship Program will ensure that each child approved receives 12 months of eligibility while not increasing the original client co-pay as a result.

A new application is required and a re-determination is **only** necessary when:

- The change causes the client to change from one eligibility category to another, unless the change can be processed according to seamless eligibility policy.
- The client gets married and wants to add additional children to services.

A new application is **NOT** required; however, edits may be needed when there are situational changes within the 12-month eligibility period as long as those changes do not lessen the 12-months of eligibility and does not increase the original copay.

Clients experiencing situational changes in their household will be processed based on their individual need as defined below. Per federal CCDF guidelines, The Child Care Scholarship Program will ensure that each child approved receives 12 months of eligibility while not increasing the original client co-pay during those changes.

NOTE: Situational change requests during any pause in child care applications due to funding will not be processed unless the client is in a protected category.

NOTE: All TANF recipients must request changes through their workforce consultant, all CPS cases must go through the case manager and all requests for 4K+Siblings must go through the Office of First Steps. However, the process for handling each situational change in the system will be done as indicated below:

Situational Changes Within a 12-Month Eligibility Period	
Situation	Process
Single parent receiving services needs to go from half time care to full time care	○ Client submits a request to change services from half time to full time and provides documentation proving full time work/school/training. ○ If the client applied through the benefits portal, the request to go from half time to full time application must be made through the portal. ○ If the client did not originally apply through the benefits portal, the client may request the change by emailing scchildcare@dss.sc.gov ○ Child Care eligibility staff must calculate the documentation submitted to support the change from half time to full time to ensure it meets the full-time child care criteria. If the client meets the full-time criteria and does not exceed the 85% SMI child care eligibility staff will: ○ Print the previous eligibility worksheet only from On-base or SCOSA that was approved for half time. ○ Complete a new eligibility worksheet. ○ Select the Change box on the worksheet. ○ The same application number previously assigned will be notated and a note added to the eligibility worksheet that the client is going from half time to full time. ○ The same income from the previously approved application will be used to ensure no increase in the client copay. ○ Staff will update the funded units from half time to full time in the Child Care Scholarship database only (to avoid a potential increase in co-pay). ○ Staff document the client's memo field indicating that the client was determined to meet the eligibility criteria for full time care, that funding was changed, and connections made, when there is a child care provider selected.

Situational Changes Within a 12-Month Eligibility Period	
Situation	Process
	○ Send the eligibility worksheet, along with the supporting documentation to be imaged. If the client does not meet the full-time criteria: ○ Services will continue at the level in which they were originally determined eligible. ○ Document that the request made to go from FT to HT was denied and that the services remain at the same level as originally approved. ○ Client will receive notification via the benefits portal, email, or letter that the request for the situational change was denied due to not meeting the criteria. ○ Any documentation provided will be sent to Imaging.
Family receiving services and need to add additional children	○ Client submits the request to add a child. ○ If the client applied through the benefits portal, the request to add a child(ren) to existing application must be made through the portal. ○ If the client did not originally apply through the benefits portal, the client may request the change by emailing scchildcare@dss.sc.gov . A Request to Add Additional Children form will be sent and must be completed by the parent/guardian to capture the date of birth, race, ethnicity, immunization and citizenship on the children to be added. If the client meets the full-time criteria and does not exceed the 85% SMI, child care eligibility staff will: ○ Child Care eligibility staff will print the previous eligibility worksheet from On-Base or SCOSA, notate the change in family size and add the eligible children to the worksheet, initial all changes and notate on the eligibility worksheet that a child(ren) is being added to the application.

Situational Changes Within a 12-Month Eligibility Period	
Situation	Process
	○ Current services would be closed out (not terminated) and a new 12 months of care will be given to align all children with the same service dates. Existing children receiving services will get an additional 12 months. ○ Child care eligibility staff will use the same income from the previous application and update the family size. (This will not increase the copay but may decrease the co-pay which will benefit the family). NOTE: Previously eligible children will receive an additional 12 months of eligibility as well as what they were originally determined eligible for. ○ The new application number will be changed on the worksheet for tracking purposes. All changes should be initialed. ○ All children will be funded and connected for a full 12 months of care without changing the previous co-pay. ○ Child care eligibility staff will document the file indicating that the family is adding an additional child(ren), indicate the date the child(ren) was added; fund and connect the children and indicate what child care provider the child(ren) were connected to, when applicable. ○ The updated worksheet and any supporting documentation will be sent to imaging.
Single Parent Receiving Services Gets Married (no new children to add)	○ These cases will only be documented to indicate the client has recently married. ○ Will not add new spouse and income until redetermination to avoid a change in co-pay, income and services. ○ Any documentation provided will be sent to Imaging.

Situational Changes Within a 12-Month Eligibility Period	
Situation	Process
Single Parent Receiving Services Gets Married (new children to add) **Exception for needing a new application**	○ This will require a new application as it is a non-temporary change. ○ The client will complete a new application via the Child Care Benefits portal to add the spouse and children. If eligible and does not exceed the 85% SMI, child care eligibility staff will: ○ Close out (not terminate) and a new 12 months of care will be given to align all children. Existing children receiving services will get an additional 12 months. ○ Child care eligibility staff will add a new application period in the database to add the spouse and new children and align all children with the same service dates. NOTE: Previously eligible children will receive an additional 12 months of eligibility as well as what they were originally determined eligible for. If not eligible, let existing services run until the original 12 months of care ends for the children originally receiving services. ○ The client memo field will be updated to include all actions taken. ○ All documents. Including the denial letter, if not done through the portal, will be sent to Imaging.
If There is a Divorce or a Child is Removed/Dies	○ We would reassess eligibility <u>ONLY</u> if it would benefit the parent with a lesser co-pay. ○ If the change does not benefit the client, child care eligibility staff will only document the database to indicate that the client has divorced, been widowed, the child has been removed from the home or is deceased. ○ Provided documentation supporting the change will be sent to Imaging.

- Changes in address and telephone numbers will be updated in the Child Care Scholarship Program database and documented in the memo field.

NOTE: If a client reports changes that would make them eligible for only half time care only when they were originally given full time care, no changes are made. The child care services continue at the original level of services approved. Example: If a client was approved for full time services initially but reports a reduction in hours of work, etc that would qualify for half time based on hours, the services will not be reduced to half time. The client will continue to receive the full-time child care service that was originally approved.

6.10 TERMINATION OF SERVICES TO CLIENTS

6.10.1 WHEN A PROVIDER STOPS SERVING A CLIENT

The provider must notify the client and the Control Center by calling the provider line at [1-800-262-4416] before discontinuing services to the client. The following applies when a provider wants to stop serving a client:

- The reason for discontinuing services must be included, i.e. failure to pay fees or parent does not pick child up on time. The connection will end the last day of the service week, (always a Sunday) in which the provider asked the client to leave.
- The client should be notified by the provider a minimum of three working days in advance of the effective date of the discontinuation of services.
- The client should be allowed to finish any week in which the provider has billed for the client.

NOTE: If the provider decides to stop serving a child in the middle of a week and does not allow the child to attend or finish the week, the client will be granted an early release to transfer the child to a new provider. The first provider will not be paid for that week of care.

6.10.2 TERMINATION OF A CLIENT AND WRITTEN NOTIFICATION

If termination of services is initiated by the Child Care Scholarship Program the provider and client will be notified in writing that the services are being terminated and all payments for services rendered after the termination date become the client's responsibility. Proper notice (10 days from the date of determination) will be given to both the parent and the provider of the effective termination date.

Services may be terminated for a client or child only when:

- The client/child does not meet specific eligibility criteria or requirements.
- The child does not live with the client.
- The client intentionally submits false information.
- The client moves out of state.

NOTE: A situation where a client is terminated from a particular provider for not following a facility's policy does not constitute a termination from the Child Care

Scholarship Program.

When the Control Center is notified that a client and/or recipient needs to be terminated, the following procedure is followed:

- On the date that a termination of a client or recipient is determined necessary, the child care worker starts counting 10 working days (excluding weekends and holidays), with day one being the next day. The effective date of termination will be the first Monday following the 10th working day from the date of determination.
- A termination within the Child Care Scholarship Program will not be backdated. If a request is made for termination that has not followed the 10-working day notice rule, Control Center staff will change the effective date to reflect the 10-working day notice.

For a Welfare Reform (WR) client, recommendations for termination or reinstatement of services will be coordinated between the county Case Manager (as appropriate) and the Child Care Scholarship Program child care eligibility worker.

6.10.3 NOTIFYING CLIENT AND PROVIDER OF TERMINATION

When a decision to terminate a client/child is reached by the Control Center, the client and provider will be mailed or emailed if an email is on file, a Termination Letter that reflects the effective date of termination. The termination notice is intended to:

- Give the client time to make other arrangements outside of the Child Care Scholarship Program.
- Give program staff adequate time to process the paperwork.
- Allow timely notification to the client and provider of the termination before the effective date of termination.
- The effective date of termination is the first Monday following the 10th working day from the date of determination. (Holidays and weekends are not considered work days.) The client is also sent a notice regarding his/her right to request a fair hearing.

6.11 CLIENT COMPLAINTS

Clients may make a complaint related to child care provided through the Child Care Scholarship Program by calling 1-800-763-2223. A client is encouraged to report

concerns or complaints about the following:

- A provider whom the client suspects of violating minimum licensing standards.
- A provider whom the client suspects is not providing quality child care, as defined by the Child Care Scholarship Program Standards.

When a call is received, it is logged-in and maintained. A substantiated complaint is:

- Made available to the public upon request.
- Placed in the provider's permanent file maintained by ABC Quality Monitoring.
- Forwarded to the Control Center for necessary action when it results in the provider being terminated from the Child Care Scholarship Program.

ABC Quality staff in Columbia maintains the complaint line and encourages clients to notify SCDSS Child Care Licensing (CCL) when a provider is suspected of violating minimum licensing standards. ABC Quality also follows up with CCL and notifies the Control Center when a provider's license has been suspended or revoked. A provider will be removed from the enhanced provider list and the vendor agreement will be terminated, suspended, or denied if a provider is not in good standing with CCL.

ABC Quality determines appropriate action after a complaint is investigated. Investigations may include unannounced on-site visits.

6.12 END OF SERVICE NOTIFICATION

Sixty (60) days prior to a client's services ending, the client and provider receive an end-of- service notice that indicates the last day of Child Care Scholarship Program child care services. Additionally, the last day of Child Care Scholarship Program service for a child also appears on the remittance advice which the provider receives when they are paid.

NOTE: Applications submitted more than sixty (60) days prior to services ending will be denied for applying too early.

EXCEPTION 1: A child must be connected for more than 60 days of services in order for an end-of-service notice to be generated.

EXCEPTION 2: If services are backdated and the last day of service has already passed, no end of service notice will be generated.

6.13 CLOSE OUTS

A close out is requested only when a client is moving from one eligibility category to another. A close out shortens the existing eligibility period so a new application may be entered. A letter is not generated when a close out is done.

6.14 SYSTEM GENERATED LETTERS

The Child Care Scholarship Program generates letters to inform applicants of action taken regarding their Child Care Scholarship Program child care services; they are the official documentation for clients and providers. These letters include:

ELIGIBILITY LETTER – This letter is produced when an applicant's child care application has been entered into the Child Care Scholarship Program database. The letter informs the applicant that the application has been approved, and the child for whom child care services has been requested has been approved.

AUTHORIZATION/CONNECTION LETTER – This letter is generated after the Control Center has connected a client's child to a specific provider. The letter includes:

- Name of provider to whom the child has been connected.
- Start and stop dates of the connection to that provider.
- Copay amount to be paid for each child connected.
- Rate to be paid the provider for each child.
- Total number of weeks each child is connected.

SERVICES END LETTER – This letter is produced 60 days before the end of a child's last connection, or the end of the child's eligibility period, whichever comes last. The letter informs the client and the provider of record that the child's services are scheduled to end on the date listed, and that the Child Care Scholarship Program is not responsible for any payments for the child after the date indicated.

CLIENT TERMINATION LETTER – This letter is generated the day after a client or a child is terminated in the Child Care Scholarship Program. The letter includes:

- Name of child to be terminated.
- Reason for the termination.
- Effective date of the termination.

A copy of the letter is sent to the client and to the provider of record.

PROVIDER TERMINATION LETTER - This letter is generated the day after a provider is terminated in the Child Care Scholarship Program. It includes the effective date of the termination and the reason for the termination.

CLIENT NOTICE OF PROVIDER TERMINATION – This letter is generated for the client who was connected to a provider who has been terminated in the Child Care Scholarship Program. The letter informs the client of the effective termination date and notifies them of the need to select a new provider.

TRANSFER LETTER – This letter is manually generated by staff when a client is transferring their child from one provider to a new provider. It gives the effective date of the transfer and the name of the child being transferred. A copy of the letter is sent to the client and to the provider of record.

DENIAL LETTER – This letter is either sent manually or via the benefits portal to clients when it is determined that a client is not eligible for child care services. The letter informs the client why they did not meet the eligibility criteria.

Chapter 7

Provider Information

7.1.1 PAYMENT INFORMATION

The Child Care Scholarship Program pays the child care provider directly for services rendered to an eligible client. No payments are remitted directly to the client.

Prior to serving the first Child Care Scholarship Program child, the provider must be enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program. The provider must also submit a connection form or fax to the Control Center or the eligibility worker must indicate the start/stop dates for a child so the connection can be made. Once the initial connections have been made, the Service Voucher Log (SVL) will be generated and sent to the provider. The SVL is the official billing document for the Child Care Scholarship Program. It should be reviewed, completed, and signed by the provider and returned promptly after receipt to ensure timely payment. After the first SVL is generated, the provider receives another each time a payment is due. SVL's will continue to generate as long as the provider has active connections which have not been paid.

Effective 01/06/2025 the Child Care Scholarship Program began paying child care providers prospectively (in advance) of service delivery as well as paying based on enrollment vs attendance. At the time of generation, the SVL will pull up to 4 future weeks (28 days) of care. The child care providers will indicate a yes or no for anticipated enrollment for the weeks listed on the SVL. Once the SVL pays, the provider will complete a remittance validation of payment to ensure they were due the monies paid for the children on the previous SVL. The provider must complete the remittance validation within two payment cycles. The provider may submit their SVL at any time after the remittance validation has been completed. Providers no longer have to hold their SVL until the last date on the SVL since we are now paying in advance.

7.1.2 PAYMENT METHODS

All providers must submit the SVL before payment can be remitted. There are three different payment methods:

Direct Deposit: Direct deposit is offered to all providers. However, the provider must elect to enroll in the direct deposit method. The provider must submit a direct deposit form, [DSS Form 1105](#), along with a voided check to enroll. Once approved to receive their payments via direct deposit, the provider will no longer receive a paper check. However, the SVL and remittance advice forms will continue to be mailed to the provider with every payment cycle.

If a provider is receiving direct deposit payments from another State agency, the child care payments will be made into that same account and may not be changed unless the account is changed with the originating State agency.

If at any time during their enrollment a provider needs to change their account information, they must call the Control Center and must submit a written request along with a new direct deposit form, [DSS Form 1105](#), and a voided check to do so. The pre-note process will take place again and the provider may receive a paper check.

Check: A provider may choose to receive a paper check. In order to do this, the provider must submit a written request to Child Care Payables requesting to be paid by paper check and must indicate the reason why they do not want direct deposit.

Unless the provider is receiving a CAPSS payment or TANF benefit via the debit card, the provider may choose to receive a paper check. In order to do this, the provider must submit a written request to Child Care Payables requesting to be paid by paper check and must indicate the reason why they do not want their child care payments via the debit card.

7.1.3 REQUESTS FOR PAYMENT

A request for payment will be honored only if the provider has been authorized by the Child Care Scholarship Program to serve the child. The authorization for each Child Care Scholarship Program child gives the dates of approved child care services for a child. It is the provider's responsibility to maintain this information and bill only for eligible weeks.

A provider will not be paid for a child who is not enrolled for 3 consecutive weeks. Child care providers are still responsible for notifying the Child Care Scholarship Program when a child is no longer enrolled with their program. The provider may call the Child Care Scholarship Control center to drop children, may email ProviderQuestions@dss.sc.gov or may drop the children on their SVL.

Completing an SVL correctly the first time will ensure payment within 10-14 working days after receipt of the information.

NOTE: Payments for services over one year old will not be honored.

7.1.4 HAND-DELIVERED SVL'S

A provider that receives a paper SVL may hand-deliver their completed, signed, original SVL to the drop box located at State Office SCDSS. Child Care Payables staff pick up from the drop box daily. A hand delivered SVL is processed with all other payments. Delivering the SVL to the drop box does not guarantee a quicker payment. Payment should still be expected to be made within 10-14 working days from the date of receipt.

7.1.5 PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Payment is expected to take from 10 to 14 working days from receipt of the completed, signed, original SVL. A provider is asked and expected to wait until the 14th working day before calling about payment. The provider is reimbursed by a paper check or direct deposit, for services delivered. See [Payment Methods](#) along with the applicable Remittance Advices and payment remittance validation, and the next SVL, if appropriate.

A provider receives a Provider Remittance Advice and payment remittance validation with each reimbursement received.

The Provider Remittance Advice identifies the client, child, and payment amount for each week of enrollment making up the payment total. A provider is expected to match the Provider Remittance Advice against the provider's copy of the SVL to ensure proper payment for each transaction.

There are four types of remittance advice forms:

- 1) **Paid Remittance Advice:** This form indicates which clients and weeks were paid.
- 2) **Rejected Remittance Advice:** This form indicates which clients and weeks were not paid and the reason.
- 3) **Adjusted Remittance Advice:** This form indicates if funds were deducted from the provider's check, the amount, and the reason. An adjusted remittance advice is sent only when there have been adjustments to the provider's payment due to overpayments.
- 4) **Grant Remittance Advice:** This form indicates the amount of the grant paid.

The provider may call the Control Center (1-800-262-4416) or email ProviderQuestions@dss.sc.gov with any questions regarding payment problems, and/or questions about transactions that did not process.

7.1.6 PROVIDER CHECK PICKUP

A provider is not allowed to pick up a paper check reimbursement unless extenuating circumstances are present, as determined by Child Care Scholarship Program Manager and/or Child Care Payables.

7.1.7 PROVIDER ADJUSTMENTS

Provider payments will be adjusted when necessary to correct errors made by the payment agency or the service agency. The types of provider adjustments are:

- 1) Receivable Adjustment:** The process of collecting over-payment made to a provider. In this case, funds will be taken back for the specific period requested. The connection will be deleted or shortened once the adjustment is complete.
- 2) Partial Receivable Adjustment:** The process of collecting a portion of the over-payment made to a provider. In this case, one would process the adjustment for the difference between full-time and half-time care. The connection will not change; it will still reflect a full-time connection, but the difference between the full-time and half-time rate will be taken from the provider's payment.
- 3) Partial Payable Adjustment:** The process of paying a provider for an under-payment. In this case, one would process the adjustment for difference between half-time and full-time care. The connection will not change; it will still reflect a half-time connection, but the provider would receive the difference between the half-time and full-time rate.
- 4) Payable Adjustment:** The process of paying a provider for services due that cannot be paid under the normal SVL payment process.

The payment to a provider who owes money and has active connections will be deducted from future reimbursements until the debt has been satisfied.

7.1.8 TAX LIENS AND LEVIES

If a Child Care Scholarship Program provider does not pay their applicable state or federal taxes, a lien or levy may be imposed on their Child Care Scholarship Program reimbursements by the Internal Revenue Service and/or the State Revenue Department through the Comptroller General's Office. The provider's reimbursement will continue to be garnished until the unpaid amount of taxes has been recouped.

Chapter 8

Appeals and Fair Hearings

8.1 The Client Appeal

The applicant/client is given an opportunity to request a fair hearing in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They may appeal any decision that results in the denial or termination of services, provided that decision is not based solely on lack of available funds or on the natural ending of services at the end of an eligibility period. Lack of funding or the natural ending of services at the end of an eligibility period are not negative actions taken by the Child Care Scholarship Program and will not be a legitimate allowable reason a client requests an appeal. In instances where a client requests an appeal based on lack of funding or ending of services, the appeal will be dismissed. **Client appeal hearings are held by the agency that makes the decision that the client is appealing.**

A fair hearing must be requested in writing and must be made within 30 days from the date of the negative action. The request may be made by the client/applicant or a person acting on their behalf, such as a legal representative, relative, or friend. Staff must not impede, limit, or interfere in any way with the client's right to request a fair hearing.

During an appeal process, the client is responsible for paying for their own child care arrangements. Child Care Scholarship Program child care services will resume if the decision is in favor of the client.

8.1.1 APPEALS/FAIR HEARINGS

If a client or provider disagrees with any decision that results in the denial or termination of their Child Care Scholarship Program services/enrollment, they may request a fair hearing before SCDSS. If the client or provider wishes to appeal the decision, they must notify SCDSS in writing, postmarked within 30 days of receiving a service denial notice or termination letter. The notice of intent to appeal should be directed to:

**South Carolina Department of Social Services
Individual and Provider Rights
P.O. Box 1520
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-1520**

NOTE: Please include your contact information: first and last name, telephone number and email address.

If notice of intent to appeal is not submitted to SCDSS within the 30-day period, the right to challenge the denial or termination will be lost and the decision will become final.

8.1.2 PROVIDER APPEALS

A provider has the right to request a fair hearing regarding any negative action taken by the Child Care Scholarship Program. Negative actions include but are not limited to termination from the ABC Program and de-enrollment of a specific care type. The provider must request the fair hearing within 30 days of the negative action by submitting the request in writing to the Division of Individual and Provider Rights (DIPR). Upon receipt of the request, DIPR will schedule the fair hearing and coordinate with SCDSS legal staff as well as the provider and the provider's legal representative as appropriate. ABC Quality staff are responsible for representing the Child Care Scholarship Program at fair hearings for:

- Level A, B and C and P Providers
- State Office Child Care Services staff are responsible for representing the Child Care Scholarship Program at fair hearings for:
- All FFN/FNI/FRO/FRI Providers

8.1.3 CONNECTING CLIENTS DURING AN APPEAL

No new Child Care Scholarship Program clients will be allowed to connect to an Child Care Scholarship Program facility during an appeal with SCDSS, the Child Care Scholarship Program, ABC Quality or Child Care Licensing. A provider may continue serving a child who is currently connected unless the health and/or safety of the child is jeopardized. However, if a provider is currently caring for a child and the services come up for renewal, or the family is determined to be eligible for extended weeks of care and the provider is under an appeal, the family will have to find alternative child care arrangements.

EXCEPTION: If a child needs to be backdated to a start date prior to the appeal date, the Program Manager or designee may connect the child.

8.1.4 STAFF ROLES IN APPEALS/FAIR HEARINGS

When a client requests a fair hearing as a result of a negative action, the Department of Individual and Provider Rights (DIPR) will notify the Child Care Scholarship Program. Child Care Scholarship Program staff are responsible for sending a copy of the denial or termination letter to DIPR.

When DIPR schedules the fair hearing for the client, a copy of the letter will be sent to either the State Office or the county SCDSS office, depending on which office initiated the negative action. The appropriate staff is responsible for:

- Completing a summary of the situation that led to the negative action AND
- Submitting a copy of the summary, application and supporting documentation to DIPR and the client prior to the scheduled date of the fair hearing.

This information must be completed and sent timely so that DIPR and the client receive it in advance of the scheduled fair hearing date.

A fair hearing will be scheduled via the telephone unless the client requests a face-to-face hearing. On the date of the fair hearing, the appropriate county or State Office staff is responsible for attending the face-to-face hearing or for calling DIPR at (803) 898-8080 before the scheduled telephone hearing. The appropriate staff will represent SCDSS at the hearing and will be responsible for presenting the facts and situation which led to the negative action which resulted in the denial or termination of the client's child care services.

After the fair hearing, DIPR will send a letter containing the decision of the hearing officer to the client and to the appropriate SCDSS staff person. If the negative action is upheld, no further action is necessary. However, if the negative action is reversed, the staff person is responsible for reinstating child care services for the affected client/child through the end of the existing eligibility period.

Chapter 9

Program Integrity

9.0 PROGRAM INTEGRITY

In order to operate and maintain a strong CCDF program, regular evaluations of the program's internal controls as well as comprehensive training for all entities involved in the administration of the program are imperative. The Child Care Scholarship Program implements internal controls that promote and support program integrity. No one person's role allows them to work from the beginning of the child care eligibility to payment of child care services. The desk review process and Improper Payment Review process are completed by staff that are not responsible for eligibility determination or payment information nor are they under the supervision of the Program Manager that is responsible for the oversight of the eligibility, enrollment and payment process staff. As risks are identified, resolutions are sought, including revision of policies, procedures and /or practices to minimize the risks.

9.1 DESK REVIEW PROCESS

A desk review process is in place to review a percentage of all child care eligibility workers' cases approved every two weeks. This process is used to ensure that eligibility has been determined correctly. Available agency data systems, such as CHIP CAPSS, SCOSA and Onbase are accessed, as appropriate, to ensure child care is in the correct child care category. The reviewer determines that all paperwork and documentation are in the case record. A review of the Child Care Scholarship Program database is also conducted to ensure that information from the application has been properly entered. Any errors or improper payments are communicated to the supervisor of the area responsible for the area and the error will be addressed and corrected by eligibility staff within 5 days of notification of the error/improper payment.

These desk reviews are considered to be a preventative measure that will assist SCDSS in conducting the improper payments reporting process. The reviews are also used to identify training needs for staff and to strengthen policy and procedures.

9.2 IMPROPER PAYMENTS

In November 2002, the Congress passed the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (IPIA). The major objective of the legislation was to enhance the accuracy and integrity of federal payments. This legislation, in conjunction with implementing guidance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), requires executive branch agency heads to review their programs and activities annually, identify those that may be susceptible to significant improper payments, estimate amounts improperly paid, and report on the amounts of improper payments and actions to reduce them.

9.3 REPORTING/INVESTIGATING MISUSE

When circumstances exist that cause a provider or another individual to suspect a client or provider is inappropriately receiving Child Care Scholarship Program child care services, it should be reported to the Control Center at 1-800-262-4416.

9.4 MISUSE OF SERVICES

Clients are responsible for keeping their contact information and address current with the Child Care Scholarship Program and to report if they lose their employment, if they disenroll or stop attending an educational or training program or if their income exceeds 85% of state median income. Current state median income amounts may be found on our website at www.scchildcare.org

Any individual who provides incorrect information or misrepresents facts for the purpose of obtaining or attempting to obtain child care services from the Child Care Scholarship Program will be subject to sanctions administered by SCDSS. Some common situations include, but are not limited to:

Example 1: An applicant intentionally leaving off a spouse, partner or other parent of the child residing in the same home due to the other parent not working, being in school, or in training or knowingly leaving off the other parent for the purpose of remaining under 85% SMI. Intentionally applying under this situation will result in denial or termination of services and will be referred to the Office of the Inspector General.

Example 2: Parents who are applying for child care who are residing in the same home must apply for child care assistance as one household. Parents who reside in the same home and attempt to apply for child care as a separate household unit for the same children may be considered to be misrepresenting themselves for the purpose of obtaining child care and may be terminated as such as determined by the Program Manager, their designee and reported to the Office of Inspector General.

Example 3: Applicant applies when the parents are not in the same household and the primary parent applies for child care in their name alone and exceeds income or is otherwise determined not eligible, the absent parent that does not have primary custody will not be allowed to apply for child care and may be considered to be misrepresenting themselves for the purpose of obtaining child care and may be denied or terminated as such as determined by the Program Manager, their designee or the Office of Inspector General.

Example 4: Parents of the same child(ren) that are divorced or otherwise no longer together, that apply for child care for the same children in two separate households for the purpose of obtaining child care by:

- increasing their family size in order to increase their chance for income eligibility
- both parents apply because they have joint custody
- both parents apply in order to include more children in their family size to increase chances of eligibility

Regardless of joint custody (50/50) situations, only one parent may apply for scholarships. If custody changes from one parent to another legal custody paperwork must be submitted. Services would then be stopped under the original parent that applied and moved to the parent that has assumed primary custody. Intentionally applying under this situation will result in denial or termination of services and will be referred to the Office of the Inspector General.

9.5 DETERMINATION OF MISUSE

During the application process, the client is informed that it is their responsibility to provide correct information when the application is completed. Additionally, the client is given a copy of the Applicant Rights and Responsibilities that emphasizes the need for accurate information. Further, the service application includes a statement which must be signed by the client. In signing this statement, the client declares that the information contained within the application is true to the best of their knowledge. The information provided by the client is the basis for determining client intent of misuse of services.

If it is determined that a client intentionally misrepresented themselves, the client will be terminated for life and will not be allowed to apply or receive child care services through the Child Care Scholarship Program under any funding category.

9.6 FRAUD

The Child Care Scholarship Program receives reports of potential fraud through our 1-800 phones lines and the agency Fraud Hotline. Reports are researched and actions taken as appropriate to terminate child care services.

The Child Care Scholarship Program is required by federal regulations to recover child care payments that are the result of fraud. These payments shall be recovered from the party responsible for committing the fraud. The current system adjustment process addresses recoupment of payments to a provider.

Suspected fraud or misuse will be referred to the Office of Inspector General for appropriate guidance on how to proceed.

9.7 SYSTEM REPORTS

The Child Care Scholarship Program works a variety of reports in order to ensure that the most accurate information is updated in the system.

Reports include but are not limited to:

Monthly Caseload Report - An active child care caseload report is reviewed monthly against agency data systems to ensure continued child care eligibility. Upon reviewing the report, the appropriate action is taken to process seamless transitional child care for clients moving from TANF child care to TCC. The following reports are being reviewed on a monthly basis:

- TCC cases with open TANF benefit cases.
- TANF child care cases that have closed TANF benefit cases.

Pseudo Social Security Number Report – A report of all clients and recipients with pseudo social security numbers. Staff research CHIP, CAPSS and any other available systems to update the social security numbers to the actual social security number. This measure is used to prevent the same recipients from being entered into multiple records.

Provider Expiration Date Report – A report of all ABC Quality providers, their child care application number (CC number), the facility capacity and the license or registration expiration date. Staff access the Child Care Licensing system to obtain updated capacities and expiration dates and updates the Child Care Scholarship Program as needed. Any discrepancies or concerns are always addressed with child care licensing.

Provider Capacity Report – A report of all ABC Quality enrolled providers participating with the Child Care Scholarship Program that indicates the number of scholarship children and the licensed/registered capacity of the child care provider. This report shows only those providers that have more children connected than the licensed/registered capacity. Most providers on this list operate multiple shifts and remain in compliance with enrollment but this report is used to ensure the provider is under capacity with scholarship children. Any discrepancies or concerns are always addressed with child care licensing and ABC Quality.

Duplicate Client Report – A report worked daily to ensure clients are not entered into the Child Care Scholarship Program system under two different numbers. Example: One file under the original social security number and one under a pseudo social security number for the same family or to catch any mistyped social security numbers that create duplicate files. This report is worked daily to reduce the amount of errors in payments to child care providers.

9.8 INTERNAL AUDITS AND CLIENT CALLS

Internal audits conduct a series of audits per year in order to review child care provider documentation to ensure compliance with CCDF federal requirements as administered by the Child Care Scholarship Program. Additionally, internal audit staff will visit any child care provider identified by the Director of Early Care and Education or the Program Manager for the Child Care Scholarship Program when requested.

To further facilitate program integrity, internal audit staff will begin calling a random sample of clients that are currently receiving child care at an enrolled ABC Quality provider to verify that the child is actually attending the child care facility where payments are being made. A report of all active clients with active connections has been created by the Information Technology team and will be used by internal audits to make these calls. Any findings by internal audits from these calls that need action will be forward to the Child Care Scholarship Program designated staff for necessary adjustments.

9.9 ATTENDANCE AUDIT

In order to support program integrity, the Child Care Scholarship Program will begin performing an attendance audit of child care provider payment records to confirm that the children being paid for by the Child Care Scholarship Program were indeed enrolled and attending a program for a specified time frame.

A randomizer will be created of active providers with active connections to exclude family, friend and neighbor providers, grant only providers and out of state providers. Twenty five percent (25%) of all providers with active connections at the time the attendance is requested will be reviewed. Each provider will be pulled no more than once every 12 months. Attendance reports pulls will be notated in the Child Care Scholarship Program database when requested so the same child care provider is not selected more than once

during a 12-month period. 100% of the children connected will be reviewed for the time period requested.

The schedule of the pull of this information will be every quarter and each quarter will pull the previous three months. Example: For April 2026, the months of January 1, 2026-March 31, 2026, will be pulled. Information will be requested from the identified child care provider to be sent to a shared mailbox. Upon review of the documents, it will be determined if recoupments should be issued to the provider.

APPENDIX 1

Child Care Scholarship Program Child Care Income Standards October 1, 2026 - September 30, 2027

Note: A client must have income within the range in the entrance column in order to enter the program.
A client will become ineligible when his income exceeds the income in the exit column.

Family Size	Gross Family Income			
	Monthly		Annually	
	Entrance	Exit	Entrance	Exit
1	\$0 – \$2,538	\$3,922	\$0 – \$30,450	\$32,443
2	\$0 – \$3,318	\$5,128	\$0 – \$39,820	\$42,425
3	\$0 – \$4,099	\$6,335	\$0 – \$49,189	\$52,408
4	\$0 – \$4,880	\$7,542	\$0 – \$58,559	\$62,390
5	\$0 – \$5,661	\$8,748	\$0 – \$67,928	\$72,372
6	\$0 – \$6,441	\$9,955	\$0 – \$77,297	\$82,355
7	\$0 – \$6,588	\$10,181	\$0 – \$79,054	\$84,227
8	\$0 – \$6,734	\$10,407	\$0 – \$80,811	\$86,098
9	\$0 – \$6,881	\$10,664	\$0 – \$82,567	\$87,970
10	\$0 – \$7,027	\$10,860	\$0 – \$84,324	\$89,842
11	\$0 – \$7,173	\$11,086	\$0 – \$86,081	\$91,713
12	\$0 – \$7,320	\$11,312	\$0 – \$87,838	\$93,585
13	\$0 - \$7,466	\$11,539	\$0 - \$89,595	\$95,460
14	\$0 - \$7,613	\$11,765	\$0 - \$91,351	\$97,332
15	\$0 - \$7,759	\$11,991	\$0 - \$93,108	\$99,204
16	\$0 - \$7,905	\$12,217	\$0 - \$94,865	\$101,076

Note: Entrance is based on 55% of state median income, and exit is based on 85% of state median income.

APPENDIX 2

**Child Care Scholarship Program
Child Development Fee Scale
October 1, 2026 - September 30, 2027**

Family Size	Monthly Income	Client Fee	Family Size	Monthly Income	Client Fee	Family Size	Monthly Income	Client Fee	Family Size	Monthly Income	Client Fee
1	\$0-\$1,995	\$0	5	\$0-\$4,835	\$0	9	\$0-\$7,675	\$0	13	\$0-\$10,515	\$0
	1996-2380	\$6		4836-5618	\$6		7676-8273	\$6		10516-10720	\$6
	2381-2766	\$11		5619-6400	\$11		8274-8871	\$11		10721-10925	\$11
	2767-3151	\$14		6401-7183	\$14		8872-9468	\$14		10926-11129	\$14
	3152-3537	\$17		7184-7965	\$17		9469-10066	\$17		11130-11334	\$17
	3538-3922	\$20		7966-8748	\$20		10067-10664	\$20		11335-11539	\$20
2	\$0-\$2,705	\$0	6	\$0-\$5,545	\$0	10	\$0-\$8,385	\$0	14	\$0-\$11,225	\$0
	2706-3190	\$6		5546-6427	\$6		8386-8880	\$6		11226-11333	\$6
	3191-3675	\$11		6428-7309	\$11		8881-9375	\$11		11334-11441	\$11
	3676-4160	\$14		7310-8191	\$14		9376-9870	\$14		11442-11549	\$14
	4161-4644	\$17		8192-9073	\$17		9871-10365	\$17		11550-11657	\$17
	4645-5129	\$20		9074-9955	\$20		10366-10860	\$20		11658-11765	\$20
3	\$0-\$3,415	\$0	7	\$0-\$6,255	\$0	11	\$0-\$9,095	\$0	15	\$0-\$11,935	\$0
	3416-3999	\$6		6256-7040	\$6		9096-9493	\$6		11936-11991	\$6
	4000-4583	\$11		7041-7825	\$11		9494-9891	\$11		N/A	
	4584-5167	\$14		7826-8611	\$14		9892-10290	\$14		N/A	
	5168-5751	\$17		8612-9396	\$17		10291-10688	\$17		N/A	
	5752-6335	\$20		9397-10181	\$20		10689-11086	\$20		N/A	
4	\$0-\$4,125	\$0	8	\$0-\$6,965	\$0	12	\$0-\$9,805	\$0	16	\$0-\$12,645	\$0
	4126-4809	\$6		6966-7653	\$6		9806-10106	\$6		N/A	
	4810-5493	\$11		7654-8342	\$11		10107-10408	\$11		N/A	
	5494-6176	\$14		8343-9030	\$14		10409-10709	\$14		N/A	
	6177-6860	\$17		9031-9719	\$17		10710-11011	\$17		N/A	
	6861-7543	\$20		9720-10407	\$20		11012-11312	\$20		N/A	
Note: The client fee is per child per week.											
Note: \$0 client fee = Families at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level											

APPENDIX 3

Child Care Scholarship Program Maximum Payments Allowed FFY2022: October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2027 Revised

LEVEL A+ CHILD CARE CENTERS (NAC)		Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
		Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT		\$ 296	\$ 158
Age 1 FT		\$ 284	\$ 158
Age 2 FT		\$ 284	\$ 155
Age 3 FT		\$ 275	\$ 150
Age 4 FT		\$ 274	\$ 150
Age 5 FT not in K'garten		\$ 274	\$ 150
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT		\$ 274	\$ 130
Under age 1 HT		\$ 197	\$ 125
Age 1 HT		\$ 196	\$ 125
Age 2 HT		\$ 196	\$ 125
Age 3 HT		\$ 195	\$ 125
Age 4 HT		\$ 195	\$ 125
Age 5 HT not in K'garten		\$ 195	\$ 125
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT		\$ 150	\$ 125
LEVEL A CHILD CARE CENTERS (ERS)		Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
		Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT		\$ 254	\$ 155
Age 1 FT		\$ 254	\$ 155
Age 2 FT		\$ 250	\$ 150
Age 3 FT		\$ 242	\$ 140
Age 4 FT		\$ 242	\$ 140
Age 5 FT not in K'garten		\$ 242	\$ 139
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT		\$ 242	\$ 125
Under age 1 HT		\$ 180	\$ 123
Age 1 HT		\$ 180	\$ 123
Age 2 HT		\$ 177	\$ 120

LEVEL B+ CHILD CARE CENTERS (EPC)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 240	\$ 150
Age 1 FT	\$ 237	\$ 150
Age 2 FT	\$ 231	\$ 140
Age 3 FT	\$ 218	\$ 135
Age 4 FT	\$ 218	\$ 135
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 218	\$ 135
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 197	\$ 120
Under age 1 HT	\$ 175	\$ 121
Age 1 HT	\$ 165	\$ 121
Age 2 HT	\$ 155	\$ 112
Age 3 HT	\$ 150	\$ 105
Age 4 HT	\$ 150	\$ 105
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 139	\$ 105
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 110	\$ 85
LEVEL B CHILD CARE CENTERS (ECR)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 223	\$ 145
Age 1 FT	\$ 223	\$ 140
Age 2 FT	\$ 216	\$ 135
Age 3 FT	\$ 203	\$ 130
Age 4 FT	\$ 200	\$ 130
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 200	\$ 130
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 175	\$ 115
Under age 1 HT	\$ 160	\$ 105
Age 1 HT	\$ 160	\$ 105
Age 2 HT	\$ 150	\$ 105
Age 3 HT	\$ 139	\$ 100
Age 4 HT	\$ 125	\$ 100

Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 125	\$ 100
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 100	\$ 80

LEVEL C CHILD CARE CENTERS (LRC)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 213	\$ 135
Age 1 FT	\$ 213	\$ 135
Age 2 FT	\$ 205	\$ 130
Age 3 FT	\$ 195	\$ 127
Age 4 FT	\$ 191	\$ 125
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 191	\$ 125
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 165	\$ 110
Under age 1 HT	\$ 140	\$ 100
Age 1 HT	\$ 140	\$ 100
Age 2 HT	\$ 140	\$ 100
Age 3 HT	\$ 123	\$ 95
Age 4 HT	\$ 122	\$ 85
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 122	\$ 85
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 88	\$ 75

EXEMPT/WAIVERED Level A+ CHILD CARE CENTERS (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 266	\$ 142
Age 1 FT	\$ 256	\$ 142
Age 2 FT	\$ 256	\$ 140
Age 3 FT	\$ 248	\$ 135
Age 4 FT	\$ 247	\$ 135
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 247	\$ 135
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 247	\$ 117
Under age 1 HT	\$ 177	\$ 113

Age 1 HT	\$ 176	\$ 113
Age 2 HT	\$ 176	\$ 113
Age 3 HT	\$ 176	\$ 113
Age 4 HT	\$ 176	\$ 113
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 176	\$ 113
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 135	\$ 113

EXEMPT/WAIVERED Level A CHILD CARE CENTERS (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 229	\$ 140
Age 1 FT	\$ 229	\$ 140
Age 2 FT	\$ 225	\$ 135
Age 3 FT	\$ 218	\$ 126
Age 4 FT	\$ 218	\$ 126
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 218	\$ 125
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 218	\$ 113
Under age 1 HT	\$ 162	\$ 111
Age 1 HT	\$ 162	\$ 111
Age 2 HT	\$ 159	\$ 108
Age 3 HT	\$ 154	\$ 99
Age 4 HT	\$ 152	\$ 99
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 152	\$ 99
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 113	\$ 77

EXEMPT/WAIVERED Level B+ CHILD CARE CENTERS (EBB)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 216	\$ 135
Age 1 FT	\$ 213	\$ 135
Age 2 FT	\$ 208	\$ 126
Age 3 FT	\$ 196	\$ 122
Age 4 FT	\$ 196	\$ 122
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 196	\$ 122
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 177	\$ 108
Under age 1 HT	\$ 158	\$ 109
Age 1 HT	\$ 149	\$ 109
Age 2 HT	\$ 140	\$ 101
Age 3 HT	\$ 135	\$ 95
Age 4 HT	\$ 135	\$ 95

Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 125	\$ 95
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 99	\$ 77

EXEMPT/WAIVERED Level B CHILD CARE CENTERS (EXB)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 201	\$ 131
Age 1 FT	\$ 201	\$ 126
Age 2 FT	\$ 194	\$ 122
Age 3 FT	\$ 183	\$ 117
Age 4 FT	\$ 180	\$ 117
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 180	\$ 117
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 158	\$ 104
Under age 1 HT	\$ 144	\$ 95
Age 1 HT	\$ 144	\$ 95
Age 2 HT	\$ 135	\$ 95
Age 3 HT	\$ 125	\$ 90
Age 4 HT	\$ 113	\$ 90
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 113	\$ 90
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 90	\$ 72
EXEMPT/WAIVERED Level C CHILD CARE CENTERS (EXT)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 192	\$ 122
Age 1 FT	\$ 192	\$ 122
Age 2 FT	\$ 185	\$ 117
Age 3 FT	\$ 176	\$ 114
Age 4 FT	\$ 172	\$ 113
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 172	\$ 113
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 149	\$ 99
Under age 1 HT	\$ 126	\$ 90
Age 1 HT	\$ 126	\$ 90
Age 2 HT	\$ 126	\$ 90
Age 3 HT	\$ 111	\$ 86

Age 4 HT	\$ 110	\$ 77
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 110	\$ 77
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 79	\$ 68

LEVEL A+ GROUP CHILD CARE HOMES (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 190	\$ 140
Age 1 FT	\$ 190	\$ 140
Age 2 FT	\$ 185	\$ 140
Age 3 FT	\$ 180	\$ 135
Age 4 FT	\$ 180	\$ 135
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 178	\$ 135
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 160	\$ 115
Under age 1 HT	\$ 162	\$ 130
Age 1 HT	\$ 162	\$ 130
Age 2 HT	\$ 162	\$ 130
Age 3 HT	\$ 140	\$ 130
Age 4 HT	\$ 140	\$ 130
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 140	\$ 130
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 140	\$ 100

LEVEL A GROUP CHILD CARE HOMES (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 180	\$ 130
Age 1 FT	\$ 180	\$ 130
Age 2 FT	\$ 175	\$ 130
Age 3 FT	\$ 160	\$ 127
Age 4 FT	\$ 160	\$ 127
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 160	\$ 127
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 150	\$ 110
Under age 1 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126
Age 1 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126

Age 2 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126
Age 3 HT	\$ 138	\$ 120
Age 4 HT	\$ 138	\$ 120
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 138	\$ 120
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 121	\$ 85

LEVEL B+ GROUP CHILD CARE HOMES (EPG)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 170	\$ 127
Age 1 FT	\$ 170	\$ 127
Age 2 FT	\$ 165	\$ 127
Age 3 FT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 4 FT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 149	\$ 110
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 145	\$ 104
Under age 1 HT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 1 HT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 2 HT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 3 HT	\$ 137	\$ 115
Age 4 HT	\$ 137	\$ 115
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 137	\$ 115
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 120	\$ 80

LEVEL B GROUP CHILD CARE HOMES (EGP)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 160	\$ 126
Age 1 FT	\$ 160	\$ 125
Age 2 FT	\$ 160	\$ 125
Age 3 FT	\$ 145	\$ 119
Age 4 FT	\$ 145	\$ 119
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 141	\$ 111
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 130	\$ 111

Under age 1 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 1 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 2 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 3 HT	\$ 124	\$ 110
Age 4 HT	\$ 120	\$ 110
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 120	\$ 110
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 105	\$ 78

LEVEL C GROUP CHILD CARE HOMES (LRG)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 150	\$ 125
Age 1 FT	\$ 150	\$ 120
Age 2 FT	\$ 150	\$ 110
Age 3 FT	\$ 140	\$ 105
Age 4 FT	\$ 140	\$ 105
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 140	\$ 105
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 125	\$ 100
Under age 1 HT	\$ 125	\$ 120
Age 1 HT	\$ 125	\$ 113
Age 2 HT	\$ 125	\$ 113
Age 3 HT	\$ 100	\$ 100
Age 4 HT	\$ 100	\$ 100
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 100	\$ 100
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 100	\$ 75
LEVEL A+ LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$190	140
Age 1 FT	\$190	140
Age 2 FT	\$185	140
Age 3 FT	\$180	135
Age 4 FT	\$180	135
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$178	135
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$160	115

Under age 1 HT	\$162	130
Age 1 HT	\$162	130
Age 2 HT	\$162	130
Age 3 HT	\$140	130
Age 4 HT	\$140	130
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$140	130
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$140	100

LEVEL A LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (TBD)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 180	\$ 130
Age 1 FT	\$ 180	\$ 130
Age 2 FT	\$ 175	\$ 130
Age 3 FT	\$ 160	\$ 127
Age 4 FT	\$ 160	\$ 127
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 160	\$ 127
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 150	\$ 110
Under age 1 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126
Age 1 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126
Age 2 HT	\$ 159	\$ 126
Age 3 HT	\$ 138	\$ 120
Age 4 HT	\$ 138	\$ 120
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 138	\$ 120
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 121	\$ 85
LEVEL B+ LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (EPF)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$170	\$ 127
Age 1 FT	\$170	\$ 127
Age 2 FT	\$165	\$ 127
Age 3 FT	\$150	\$ 125
Age 4 FT	\$150	\$ 125
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$149	\$ 111
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$145	\$ 111

Under age 1 HT	\$150	\$ 125
Age 1 HT	\$150	\$ 125
Age 2 HT	\$150	\$ 125
Age 3 HT	\$137	\$ 115
Age 4 HT	\$137	\$ 115
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$137	\$ 115
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$120	\$ 80

LEVEL B LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (LFY)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 160	\$ 125
Age 1 FT	\$ 160	\$ 125
Age 2 FT	\$ 160	\$ 125
Age 3 FT	\$ 145	\$ 119
Age 4 FT	\$ 145	\$ 119
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 141	\$ 110
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 130	\$ 110
Under age 1 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 1 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 2 HT	\$ 135	\$ 123
Age 3 HT	\$ 124	\$ 110
Age 4 HT	\$ 120	\$ 110
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 120	\$ 110
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 105	\$ 78

LEVEL B+ REGISTERED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (RFY)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 157	\$ 123
Age 1 FT	\$ 157	\$ 123
Age 2 FT	\$ 157	\$ 123
Age 3 FT	\$ 143	\$ 116

Age 4 FT	\$ 143	\$ 116
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 138	\$ 100
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 105	\$ 99
Under age 1 HT	\$ 132	\$ 122
Age 1 HT	\$ 132	\$ 122
Age 2 HT	\$ 132	\$ 122
Age 3 HT	\$ 111	\$ 103
Age 4 HT	\$ 111	\$ 103
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 111	\$ 103
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 102	\$ 77

LEVEL B REGISTERED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (EFY)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 153	\$ 122
Age 1 FT	\$ 153	\$ 122
Age 2 FT	\$ 153	\$ 112
Age 3 FT	\$ 142	\$ 108
Age 4 FT	\$ 142	\$ 108
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 142	\$ 98
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 103	\$ 97
Under age 1 HT	\$ 128	\$ 121
Age 1 HT	\$ 128	\$ 121
Age 2 HT	\$ 128	\$ 121
Age 3 HT	\$ 102	\$ 102
Age 4 HT	\$ 102	\$ 102
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 102	\$ 102
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 101	\$ 76

LEVEL C LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (LFH)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 150	\$ 121
Age 1 FT	\$ 150	\$ 120
Age 2 FT	\$ 150	\$ 110

Age 3 FT	\$ 140	\$ 105
Age 4 FT	\$ 140	\$ 105
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 140	\$ 105
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 100	\$ 95
Under age 1 HT	\$ 125	\$ 120
Age 1 HT	\$ 125	\$ 113
Age 2 HT	\$ 125	\$ 113
Age 3 HT	\$ 100	\$ 100
Age 4 HT	\$ 100	\$ 100
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 100	\$ 100
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 100	\$ 75

LEVEL C REGISTERED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES (RFH)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 125	\$ 121
Age 1 FT	\$ 125	\$ 95
Age 2 FT	\$ 125	\$ 95
Age 3 FT	\$ 120	\$ 90
Age 4 FT	\$ 120	\$ 90
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 120	\$ 90
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 90	\$ 75
Under age 1 HT	\$ 95	\$ 70
Age 1 HT	\$ 95	\$ 70
Age 2 HT	\$ 95	\$ 70
Age 3 HT	\$ 95	\$ 65
Age 4 HT	\$ 95	\$ 65
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 95	\$ 65
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 60	\$ 50

**Child Care Scholarship Program Maximum Payments Allowed FFY2022:
October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2025 Revised**

RELATED FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE – PROVIDED IN THE CHILD’S HOME (FRI)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 2 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 3 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 4 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 5 FT not in K’garten	\$ 46	\$ 46
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Under age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 2 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 3 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 4 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 5 HT not in K’garten	\$ 30	\$ 30
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 24	\$ 24
UNRELATED FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE – PROVIDED IN THE CHILD’S HOME (FNI)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 2 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 3 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 4 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 5 FT not in K’garten	\$ 46	\$ 46
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Under age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 2 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 3 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30

Age 4 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 30	\$ 30
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 24	\$ 24

**Child Care Scholarship Program Maximum Payments Allowed FFY2022:
October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2025 Revised**

RELATED FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE – PROVIDED OUTSIDE CHILD’S HOME (FRO)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 2 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 3 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 4 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 46	\$ 46
Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Under age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 2 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 3 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 4 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 30	\$ 30
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 24	\$ 24

UNRELATED FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE – PROVIDED OUTSIDE CHILD’S HOME (FNO)	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021	Maximum Weekly Payment 10/1/2021
	Urban	Rural
Under age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 1 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 2 FT	\$ 50	\$ 50
Age 3 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Age 4 FT	\$ 46	\$ 46

Child Care Scholarship Policy

Age 5 FT not in K'garten	\$ 46	\$ 46
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Ages 5 thru 12 in school FT	\$ 46	\$ 46
Under age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 1 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 2 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 3 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 4 HT	\$ 30	\$ 30
Age 5 HT not in K'garten	\$ 30	\$ 30
Ages 5 thru 12 in school HT	\$ 24	\$ 24

- Rates for children funded through special needs can be paid up to an additional \$20 per week per child.
- Rates for children funded through foster care will be paid at an additional \$30 per week per child.

Appendix 4 Urban / Rural County Designation

For the purpose of establishing the maximum payment rates paid by the Child Care Scholarship Program, each county is designated as either a rural or urban county. The maximum payment rates for urban counties are slightly higher than those for rural counties. A county is designated as either urban or rural based on specific criteria as identified by the SCDSS. The following urban/rural designations apply:

Urban		Rural		
Aiken	Greenville	Abbeville	Greenwood	Saluda
Allendale	Horry	Calhoun	Hampton	Union
Anderson	Lexington	Chester	Jasper	Williamsburg
Bamberg	Marion	Chesterfield	Kershaw	
Barnwell	Marlboro	Clarendon	Lancaster	
Beaufort	Pickens	Colleton	Laurens	
Berkeley	Richland	Darlington	Lee	
Charleston	Spartanburg	Dillon	McCormick	
Cherokee	Sumter	Edgefield	Newberry	
Dorchester	York	Fairfield	Oconee	
Florence		Georgetown	Orangeburg	

Appendix 5

Glossary of Terms

ABC Quality: The entity that enrolls, monitors, and provides technical assistance to providers enrolled in the ABC Quality Child Care Scholarship Program, and makes all changes to a provider's file. There are two offices of ABC Quality; one located in Columbia and one in Greenville. www.abcquality.org

Absence:

Any time a child does not attend the facility.

Adjustments:

Adjustments are made to payments to a provider that has been over paid or under paid for a particular timeframe. There are four types of adjustments:

- **Receivable Adjustment:** The process of collecting an over-payment made to providers. In this case, funds will be taken back for the specific period requested. The connection will be deleted or shortened once adjustment is complete.
- **Partial Receivable Adjustment:** The process of collecting a portion of the over-payment made to providers. In this case one would actually process the adjustment for the difference between FT and HT care. The connection will not change; it will still reflect a FT connection but the difference between the FT and HT rate will be taken from the provider's payment.
- **Partial Payable Adjustment:** The process of paying a provider for under-payment. In this case one would actually process the adjustment for difference between HT and FT care. The connection will not change; it will still reflect a HT connection, but the provider would receive the difference between the HT and FT rate.
- **Payable Adjustment:** The process of paying a provider for services due that cannot be paid under the normal SVL payment process.

A/R:

Applicant/Recipient

Authorized Service Period:

The specific time frame that child care services are authorized to a client and a specific provider.

BBA:

Balanced Budget Act

Billing Rate:

The provider's weekly service rate minus any applicable copay, and any discount for a second child.

Care Type:

The age groups 0-1,1,2,3,4,5-12 not in kindergarten, 5-12 and 13-19 when special needs in which the provider has enrolled with the Child Care Scholarship Program. Providers cannot offer services to Child Care Scholarship clients or receive payment for service in a care type in which they have not been enrolled.

CCC:

Child Care Center

CCDF:

Child Care Development Fund

CCL:

Child Care Licensing

Center-based Care:

Facility licensed by SCDSS to serve 13 or more children.

Child:

The recipient of child care services.

Child Care Payables Department:

The area that is responsible for overseeing the receipt, tracking and processing

of all child care payments for the Child Care Scholarship Program. This area is also known as Fiscal or Child Care Expenditures.

Child Name:

The first and last name of the child that is eligible to receive child care services.

Child Number:

The client's Social Security number plus the two-digit code 01, 02, etc. assigned to the child. It identifies the child for the purpose of payment and system activities. Providers should never change the assigned child number.

Client/Client Name:

An individual who has met the eligibility criteria and is funded for child care. The client is listed on the SVL by the initial of their first name and their last name. Example: S. Jones

Client Fee:

That portion of the provider's weekly service rate (cost) which is based on the client's family size and income and paid by the client directly to the provider. The fee amount is established by SCDSS on the basis of family size and gross family income.

Client Number/ID:

The client's Social Security Number (SSN). This number identifies all client activity in the system. The on-line SVL will list only the last four digits of the SSN.

CM:

Case Manager

Connection:

A start and stop date (linked to a specific provider) within the Child Care Scholarship Program.

Connection form:

The connection form or fax that must be completed by both the client and the child care provider and submitted to the Control Center for approval prior to the

child starting the facility.

CPS:

Child Protective Services

CPS-In:

Child Protective Services child care identifier when the child remains in the home.

CPS-Out:

Child Protective Services child care identifier when the child placed with a caretaker relative out of the child's home.

DLL:

Dual Language Learner.

DIPR:

Division of Individual and Provider Rights

Drop/Transfer:

The date indicated by the provider of when a child stopped attending the facility or moved to another child care provider.

Eligibility Period:

The potential amount of time for which a client can receive child care services. Eligibility periods are for 12 months (52 weeks).

Emancipation Statement:

A NOTARIZED statement signed by both parents stating that the parents have entirely surrendered the responsibility of the care and custody of the minor and the right to the minor's earnings and is under no legal obligation to support the minor. The Child Care Scholarship Program uses this statement for eligibility purposes only. However, this information may be made available under the Freedom of Information Act.

End Date:

The last date of service authorization.

Enrollment

Defined as a child who is connected to a child care provider and is anticipated to attend.

Facility Cost:

The cost a provider charges all parents for a week of child care.

NOTE: Parents are responsible for the difference between the facility cost and the amount paid by the Child Care Scholarship Program, plus any applicable copay.

Family Child Care Home (FCCH):

Home registered or licensed by SCDSS to serve no more than six children.

Family Household Unit:

Term used by the Child Care Scholarship Program to refer to a TANF Benefit Group (BG). Per the TANF Policy Manual, a BG is considered the group of individuals whose income, resources, and/or needs impact the eligibility and amount of benefits in a TANF case. BG members include sanctioned and disqualified individuals, as well as Family Cap children.

Family Independence (FI):

Child care assistance provided to current TANF stipend clients to encourage participation in approved employment, education, or training activities. These requirements are met through the Family Independence Program in South Carolina in an effort to emphasize parental responsibility and self-determination.

Family Independence Stipend:

A monthly payment made to a family who meets the required eligibility standards; previously referred to as Welfare or AFDC.

FEIN:

Federal Identification Number

FFN:

Family, Friend or Neighbor Provider.

FI CARES Program:

Family Independence Challenging Adults through Rehabilitation, Education and Services Program.

Fiscal/Child Care Expenditures:

The area that is responsible for overseeing the receipt, tracking and processing of all child care payments for the Child Care Scholarship Program. This area is also known as Child Care Payables.

FLSA:

Fair Labor Standards Act

FNO:

Family, Friend and Neighbor provider where child care is provided by a non-relative outside of the child's home.

FNI:

Family, Friend and Neighbor provider where child care is provided by a non-relative in the home of the child.

FOIA:

Freedom of Information Act

Foster Care (FC):

Children who are in the custody of SCDSS and placed out of their home by and/or under the supervision of SCDSS.

FRO:

Family, Friend and Neighbor provider where child care is provided by a relative outside of the child's home.

FRI:

Family, Friend and Neighbor provider where child care is provided by a relative in the home of the child.

Full-Time Care:

Twenty-five or more hours of child care service provided during one week.
There is no outer limit for full-time care.

Funded:

Any child for whom dollars have been allocated in their name.

GED:

General Equivalency Diploma

Group Child Care Home (GCCH):

Home or building licensed by SCDSS to serve no more than 12 children.

Half-Time Care:

Less than thirty (25) hours, but more than fifteen (15) hours of child care service provided during one week.

HUD:

Housing and Urban Development

IFCCS:

Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services

IIRIRA:

Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act

In Loco Parentis:

In the position or place of a parent.

IRS:

Internal Revenue Service

LES:

Leave Earning Statement

Less than Half-Time Care (LHT):

Less than fifteen (15) hours of child care services provided during a week. No

registration fee is allowed for this care-type. This care-type only applies to Welfare Reform participants (FI, TCC1, TCC2, TCC/24, and TCC/FS) receiving subsidized child care and can be used in conjunction with a full or half-time connection and may be used alone. It cannot be used in conjunction with F/T or H/T to pay the same provider.

Letter 147-C

IRS Form; EIN Previously Assigned. The taxpayer and/or their authorized representative must call the IRS Business and Specialty Tax Line at 1-800-829-4933 to request the Letter 147-C, EIN Previously Assigned. A practitioner may call the Practitioner Priority Service (PPS) Line at 1-866-860-4259 for verbal confirmation. A faxed or written verification will not be provided to the practitioner calling PPS.

Level A:

Exemplary programs measured against rigorous quality standards.

Level B:

Programs measured against quality standards beyond basic state regulations.

Level C:

Programs meeting basic licensing regulations (health & safety).

Major Parent:

The parent of a teen parent (under the age of 18) who resides in the same household.

Maximum Rate:

Maximum weekly rates established by SCDSS on the basis the approved rate setting methodology.

OHAN:

Out-of-Home Abuse and Neglect

OnBase:

Imaging database that houses all child care applications and documentation except TANF child care cases which are in SCOSA.

Processed:

When a payment has gone through the payment process.

Prospective Payment:

Paying in advance of service delivery.

Provider:

An authorized child care group, home, or center-based facility or a non-regulated care arrangement provided by family, friends, or neighbors to care for eligible children with the Child Care Scholarship Program.

PROWA:

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act

Provider Number:

The Federal Employer Identification Number [FEIN] or Social Security Number (SSN) of the provider. This number identifies the provider for purposes of payment, tracking and reporting.

Registration Fee:

A fee most providers charge to client's participating in a child care program. This fee covers program costs not included in the service rate i.e., insurance, materials, supplies. This fee may not exceed the fee charged to private-paying children in the child care program. Registration fees are automatically paid based on registration information submitted by the provider at initial enrollment. A provider is not eligible for a registration fee for clients receiving less than half-time care. The provider may require the client to pay the fee if the client has used up their allocation for registration fees.

Remittance Advice:

A document included with the provider's check. There are three different types:

- 1) Paid Remittance Advice: indicates what clients and weeks were paid.
- 2) Rejected Remittance Advice: indicates which clients and weeks were not paid and the reason.
- 3) Adjusted Remittance Advice: indicates if funds were deducted from the provider's check, the amount, and the reason. An Adjusted Remittance Advice is sent only when there have been adjustments to the provider's

payment due to overpayments.

SCDE:

South Carolina Department of Education

SCDSS:

South Carolina Department of Social Services

Child Care Scholarship Program:

The South Carolina statewide child care assistance program funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and State match.

Child Care Scholarship Program Control Center (Control Center):

The authorized Child Care Scholarship system management center that is available to provide assistance to clients and providers, and to handle child care applications, funding and connecting.

Providers call:

1-800-262-4416 for notification requirements and/or questions concerning Child Care Scholarship Program procedures.

Parents call:

1-800-476-0199 for any questions.

Child Care Scholarship Program Database:

Automated child care eligibility system used to process the child care application, connect children to providers, and make payments to the providers.

Second Child Discount:

The second child discount is a discount that is determined by the provider at enrollment to apply to families with multiple children. The second child discount applies to all children in the family except the youngest.

Service Codes:

Those codes assigned to identify the type of payment being made to the provider, i.e. CS for client services, RF for registration fees, and GR for grants.

Service Cost:

The provider rate as reflected in the Child Care Scholarship Program.

Service Unit:

One week of child care [Monday - Sunday]. A service unit may be for half-time, full-time, or less than half-time child care.

Service Voucher Log [SVL]:

A pre-printed payment request form used to process payments to providers for eligible clients.

SNAP:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SSA:

Social Security Administration

SSBG:

Social Services Block Grant

SSI:

Supplemental Security Income

SSN:

Social Security Number

Start Date:

The date services are authorized to begin by SCDSS or the Child Care Scholarship Program/ Control Center staff.

Stop Date:

The last date of service authorization. Services are not paid past this date.

TANF:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TANF/CO:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – Child Only.

TCC:

Transitional Child Care

TCC/FS:

Transitional Child Care/Full Family Sanction.

Teen Parent:

Individual under the age of 20 who has parented or is pregnant.

Teen Parent/Adult:

Individual under the age of 20 whose primary role in the TANF Family is parent.

Two-Parent Family:

A Benefit Group (BG) in which two or more parents are included in the family as defined in the TANF Policy Manual.

USCIS:

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

USDA:

United States Department of Agriculture

VISTA:

Volunteers in Service to America

Week:

Monday through Sunday

Appendix 6

Glossary of Forms

THE FOLLOWING FORMS AND LETTERS ARE FOR REFERENCE ONLY

Please consult the Master Forms Index for the original form

DSS Form 1105-1	Authorization Agreement and Enrollment Form for Electronic Vendor Payment and Remittance Advice
DSS Form 1245	Request for Wage Information
DSS Form 1245 Spanish	Request for Wage Information (Spanish version)
DSS Form 1247	Medical Release/Physician's Statement
DSS Form 127-SPA	Medical Release/Physician's Statement (Spanish version)
DSS Form 1269	Request for Support Services
DSS Form 3004	CPS/Foster Care Child Care Referral Form
DSS Form 3772	Client Rights and Responsibilities
DSS Form 3772 SPA	Client Rights and Responsibilities (Spanish Version)
DSS Form 3774	FFN Child Care Enrollment and Agreement Form
DSS Form 3775	Non-Related FFN Application for Consideration of Enrollment
DSS Form 3776	FFN Child Care Certification
DSS Form 3778	Health and Safety Grant Reimbursement Grant
DSS Form 3791	Child Care Scholarship Program Application
DSS Form 3791-SPA	Child Care Scholarship Program Application (Spanish version)
DSS Form 3791 A	Child Care Scholarship Program Special Needs Addendum
DSS Form 3792	Client Connection Form

DSS Form 3792 SPA	Client Connection Form (Spanish Version)
DSS Form 37101	ABC Quality – Provider Agreement
DSS Booklet 37103	Policy Manual for FFN Providers
DSS Booklet 37104	Parent Handbook
DSS Booklet 37104 SPA	Parent Handbook (Spanish Version)
DSS Form 37107	Provider Rate Form
DSS Form 37108	Provider Enrollment Form
DSS Form 37109	Fair Hearing Process
DSS Form 37110	Client Eligibility Worksheet
DSS Form 37117	Guardianship/In Loco Parentis Verification
DSS Form 37124	FFN Central Registry Release of Information and Consent Form
DSS Form 37126	Out of State Enrollment and Agreement Form

VOLUME 040 – Revision Date 10/01/2026

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
1.	Title page	Updated manual version
2.	Table of Contents	Updated
3.	Table of Contents	Remove all previous manual version except the 2/2026
4.	Entire manual	Reformatted sentence structure.
5.	Entire manual	Changed language from part time to half time for wording consistency
6.	Entire manual	Updated all 85% SMI language to reflect effective 10/01/2026 entrance income is 55% SMI, and 85% SMI is the exit income.
7.	§1.10 Child Care Scholarship Wait List	Added section about new wait list effective 10/01/2026
8.	§2.1.1 – Residency	Revise list of acceptable documents for proving residency.
9	§2.1.8 – Income Definitions and Calculation	Updated semi-monthly calculation example when only hourly rate and number of hours having worked.
10.	§2.1.8 Income Definition and Calculations	Updated self-employment calculations when the amount is negative.
11.	§2.1.8 Income Definition and Calculations	Revised federal formula statement.
12.	§2.1.9 Graduated Phase Out	Updated section to include 55% SMI as entrance income and 85% SMI as the exit income.
13.	§2.2.1 Verification Requirements	Added CHIP must be checked on all applications prior to eligibility determination and must be notated on the eligibility worksheet.
14.	§2.2.3 Verification of an Absent Parnet	Updated list of acceptable documents. No longer accepting absent parent form. No longer accepting no father listed on birth certificate as proof.
15.	§2.2.8 Verification of Self Employment	Removed language allowing print outs if self-employed for less than a year. Replaced with New Self Employment Form information.
16.	§2.3.1-Temporary Changes	Remove duplicate bullet
17.	§2.3.4-Voluntarily Withdrawing	Added “through the end of the original eligibility period” language.
18.	§2.4.1 Protective Service Definitions /Categories	Removed DLL and added The Dream Center.

19.	§2.5.1 CARES Program	Update Disabilits and Special Nees to Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DDSN to OIDD)
20.	§2.5.3 – TANF-Child Only	Remove parent/caretaker must pay a copay.
21.	§2.8-TCC2	Changed 30 hours to 25 for full time.
22.	§2.11.3 CPS	Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
23.	§2.11.6-Foster Care	Changed from SCDHEC to SCDPH.
24.	§2.11.7-AdoptCC	Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
25.	§2.11.10-Reunify	Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc. Added DSS Form 3004 form is required only at initial eligibility.
26.	§2.11.11-KINGAP	Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
27.	§2.14-Head Start	Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
28.	§2.16-Special Needs	Changed DDSN to OIDD.
29.	§2.17-Homeless	Added who send in the homeless verification. Added direct referrals no longer accepted. Removed 2-year limit at same address. Added everything comes through benefits portal.
30.	§2.19-Dual Language Learners	Deleted section of the manual since this funding ended on 06/30/2026.
31.	§2.19-Working Families Child Care	Previous §2.20 became §2.19
32.	§2.20 Early Child Care Partnership	Previous §2.21 became §2.20
33.	§2.21 CCDF-CR	Previous §2.22 became §2.21 Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child

		support. SSA, pension, etc.
34.	§2.22 4K Plus Siblings	Previous §2.23 became §2.22 Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc. Added if 4K Plus Siblings never start the First Steps 4K funded program, services will be terminated.
35.	§2.23 Starlight	Previous §2.24 became §2.23 Removed work, school, training must be verified. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
36.	§2.24 SNAP E&T	Previous §2.25 became §2.24
37.	§2.25 Strong Start – 85%	Previous §2.26 became §2.25
38.	§2.26- The Dream Center	Added section and criteria. Income should be zero unless there is unearned countable income such as child support. SSA, pension, etc.
39.	§3.2.3 In loco parentis	Added note regarding an end date needing to be provided on POA.
40.	§3.2.5 Signature Requirements	Added if there is no signed date, the received date may be used in place of a signed date. Also, applications submitted through the portal will use the submit date.
41.	§3.4-Child Care Income Standards	Added entrance income is at 55% SMI and exit income at 85%SMI
42.	§3.4.1 Assessment of Fees	Remove fees must be under 7% of income as this has been removed from federal requirements.
43.	§3.6-Notification of Eligibility	Added “email” to ways the clients are notified when email is available.
44.	§4.1.7 Dual Funding	Changed example from Strong Start to Head Start.
45.	§4.1.8 Notice of Connection	Added “email” to ways the clients are notified when email is available.
46.	§5.3 Health and Safety Pre-service	Remove “see chart”. Added other training will be at the caregiver’s expense.
47.	§5.7.3 FFN	Updated checks from every 5 years to every year. Added related FFN providers have 90 days to complete training or will be terminated.

		Added no non-related out of state FFNs will be approved since a monitoring visit is required within 90 days of enrollment. Added Note: Sled fingerprint checks are required every 5 years and Central Registry every year.
48.	§5.7.4 Denial of FFN	No out of state non-related FFN providers will be approved since a monitoring visit is required within 90 days of enrollment.
49.	§5.7.6 Out of State Providers	No out of state non-related FFN providers will be approved since a monitoring visit is required within 90 days of enrollment.
50.	§6.9 Situational Changes	Added Ht-FT changes are notified via benefits portal, email or letter if denied.
51.	§6.10.3 Notifying Clients and Providers of Termination	Added are emailed when email addresses are available.
52.	§6.14-System Generated Letters	Added denial letter description.
53.	§7.1 Payment Information	Added the word remittance to the validation sections language.
54.	§7.1.4 Payment Instructions	Added the word remittance to the validation sections language.
55.	§9.4 Misuse of Services	Changed the “situations” to “examples”
56.	§9.10 Collection of Attendance by CCL	Removed entire section. No longer doing.
57.	Appendix 1 – Income Standards	Updated with the 2026-2027 Income Standards
58.	Appendix 2 – Fee Scale	Updated with the 2026-2027 Fee Scale
59.	Glossary	Updated major parent definition.

VOLUME 039 – Revision Date 2/9/2026

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
1.	Title Page	Updated volume and revision date.
2.	Entire Document	Reformatted sections and made grammatical, punctuation and formatting changes.

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
3.	General Information Page	Added effective 12/1/2025, the Child Care Scholarship placed a pause on accepting any new applications unless the families fall within a protected category.
4.	Table of Contents	• Reformatted entire Table of Contents • Removed 6.10 -Desk Reviews -moved to Program Integrity • Removed 6.11 – Monthly Child Care Caseload **Moved to Program Integrity section • Renumbered 6.12 to 6.10 Termination of services. • Renumbered 6.12.1 to 6.10.1 – Termination of a client and written notification. • Renumbered 6.12.2 to 6.10.2 Termination of a client and written notification. • Renumbered 6.12.3 to 6.10.3 Notifying client and provider of termination. • Renumbered 6.13 Client Complaints to 6.11 • Renumbered 6.14 to 6.12 End of Service Notification • Renumbered 6.15 to 6.13 Close Outs • Renumbered 6.16 to 6.14 System Generated Letters • Created Chapter 9 •
5.	Updated Chapter 9	Updated Chapter 9 in Table of Contents from Fraud/Improper Payments to Program Integrity
6.	§1.7 Child Care Payables	Added personal or business account language. And added “valid” checking account.
7.	§1.9 Child Care Scholarship Benefits Portal	Adjusted language to indicate the portal is used for most of the child care applications submissions. Removed the reference of it being primarily for CCDF 85% and Strong Start – 85%.
8.	§2.1.1 Residency	Added current copy to the proof of residency.
9.	§2.1.2 Age	Added “both” parents of the minor must sign an emancipation statement.
10.	§2.1.3 Citizenship	Added clarification that being a legal resident of the United States and is not the same as being a citizen or qualified non-citizen.
11.	§2.1.3 Citizenship	Added “Qualified”

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
12.	§2.1.4 Establishing Need	Added note “This means a parent may be working 10 hours, adding 5 hours of travel, equals 15 hours which meets the need requirement of 15 hours.
13.	§2.1.5 Establishing Full Time or Part Time Care	Added clarification on how full time and half time is determined.
14.	§2.1.5 Establishing Full Time and Half Time	Added Note: When calculating the hours worked, follow the mathematical rule of rounding and always round to the nearest whole number. Also added an example.
15.	§2.1.6 Travel Time	Removed may be given and added should be given.
16.	§2.1.7 Family Definition	Removed language from bullet point 1 “or who has assumed full physical responsibility for a child with, or without custody.
17.	§2.1.8 Calculating Income	Added under calculating income how to compute when a family is paid semi-monthly, but we only have the hours and rate of pay.
18.	§2.1.8 Calculating Income	Added clarification on why the formulas of 4.33 and 2.16 are used when calculating income.
19.	§2.1.8 Calculating Income	Added definition of earned vs unearned income.
20.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under alimony how to calculate and what information should be used when listed in CHIP vs. the application.
21.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under Social Security how to calculate and what information should be used when listed in CHIP vs. the application.
22.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under Veterans Pension how to calculate and what information should be used when listed in CHIP vs. the application.
23.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under Unemployment Compensation how to calculate and what information should be used when listed in CHIP vs. the application.
24.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under Workers Compensation how to calculate and what information should be used when listed in CHIP vs. the application.
25.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	removed the words tax forms under self-employment and added schedule c.
26.	§2.1.14 Income Inclusions	Added under Self-Employment (non-Farm) information about the newly self-employed form and removed the information about other documentation that clients could submit.
27.	§2.1.14	Added information about the newly self-employed

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
	Income Inclusions	form and removed the information about other documentation that clients could submit.
28.	§2.2.2 Acceptable Methods of Verification	Added pay stubs are required when a client has been employed over 60 days.
29.	§2.2.2 Acceptable Methods of Verification	Under Leave Earning Statement -Added clarification that if paid monthly, one LES is needed. If biweekly or semi-monthly two LES' are needed.
30.	§2.2.2 Acceptable Methods of Verification	Under Self-Employment, added newly self-employment form and removed all information about accepting ledgers, logs, etc.
31.	§2.2.2 Acceptable Methods of Verification	Added newly self-employment form. Removed ledgers and logs being accepted.
32.	§2.2.2 Acceptable Methods of Verification	Added wage forms are not accepted as proof of employment. Was originally removed in 2024.
33.	§2.2.3 Verification of Absent Parent	Removed legal papers verifying marital status "may also be used" and changed to legal papers are preferred.
34.	§2.2.3 Verification of Absent Parent	Added legal papers verifying marital separation are preferred. Removed may also be used.
35.	§2.2.3 Verification of Absent Parent	Updated language that when parents have a newborn baby under 10 months of age and have not listed the absent parent, proof of separate residences will be requested. Removed may be.
36.	§2.2.3 Verification of Absent Parent	Updated language that if a parent is unable to provide proof of separate residences, the application will be denied. Removed may be.
37.	§2.2.3 Verification of Absent Parent	Updated language that the absent parent form should always be the last resort to obtain information about the absent parent.
38.	§2.2.4 Work	Added how the 15-hour minimum is calculated.
39.	§2.2.4 Work	Added detailed explanation of how full time and part time are calculated.
40.	§2.2.5 Verification of Work	Added example of when we receive only three pay stubs and they are representative, how to calculate.
41.	§2.2.6 Verification of School	Added labs, practicums and seminars may be counted.

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
42.	§2.27 Verification of Training	Added how to calculate full time or part time training hours.
43.	§2.2.8 Verification of Self-Employment	Added the Newly Self-Employment form under acceptable verification for self-employed clients that have not yet filed taxes.
44.	§2.2.8 Verification of Self-Employment	Removed the allowance of ledgers and logs for self-employment. Added language about S Corporation and K1 Partnerships.
45.	§2.2.8 Verification of Self-Employment	Added SPARK drivers to the list of independent contractors.
46.	§2.2.8 Verification of Self-Employment	Added what documents should be submitted for UBER, LYFT, etc. when employed less than a year.
47.	§2.2.10 Verification of Disability	Added If disability is temporary, indicate the duration of the temporary disability. Also added that a return-to-work letter should be submitted when coming off of temporary disability.
48.	§2.2.10 Verification of Disability	The amount of disability income may be self-attested and clarified when information from CHIP or the application should be used.
49.	§2.3.3 Use of 10 Day Termination Policy	Added When clients exceed 85% SMI after a non-temporary change.
50.	§2.4.1 Protective Services Definition	Added the title of Protective Services Definitions/Categories and added Special Needs under the protected categories.
51.	§2.6 Transitional Child Care	Added how to calculate full time and half-time care.
52.	§2.6 Two Parent Family	Added language that travel time is also added when determining the number of hours worked. Removed considered.
53.	§2.11.1 Exception Criteria for CPS/FC	Removed in writing and changed to via email.
54.	§2.11.1 Exception Criteria for CPS/FC	Removed “staff with their supervisor” and added coordinate with their supervisor to ensure the arrangement is appropriate.
55.	§2.11.3 CPS-In	Added language about \$1 under maximum income or entering \$0 for clients that do not have income.
56.	§2.11.3	Added for the purpose of supporting family

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
	CPS-IN	stability.
57.	§2.11.4 CPS-Out	Added language about \$1 under maximum income or entering \$0 for clients that do not have income.
58.	§2.11.4 CPS-Out	Added for the purpose of supporting family stability.
59.	§2.11.6 Foster Care Criteria	Added foster children are given a 90 days grace period to provide proof of immunization.
60.	§2.11.7 Adopt CC	Added Adopt CC is for the child being adopted only. Other children will be approved only when CCDF funding is available.
61.	§2.11.9 CC for baby of a foster child	Added the funding category for this type of child care is foster care funding.
62.	§2.11.11 KinGap	Added this funding is limited to one year.
63.	§2.11.11 KinGap	Added language about \$1 under maximum income or entering \$0 for clients that do not have income.
64.	§2.15 First Steps	Added language about \$1 under maximum income or entering \$0 for clients that do not have income.
65.	§2.16 Special Needs	Added language about \$1 under maximum income or entering \$0 for clients that do not have income.
66.	§2.16 Special Needs	Added IEP, IFSP and 504 Plans must have current begin and end date. Signature page is not required. Addendums must also have current dates and must be signed by the early interventionist. Added only the special needs child will be funded unless CCDF funding is available.
67.	§2.17 Homeless	Removed 12 weeks of presumptive and changed to 12 months of child care.
68.	§2.17 Homeless	Added information around using chip to verify homeless status when available and information around when a client changes addresses for the purpose of obtaining child care.
69.	§2.20 General CCDF/DISC Funding	Added the word General to title
70.	§2.22 CCDF-CR	Added clarification that child care will only be approved for the nieces, nephews or grandchildren of the relative caretaker. The biological children will not be approved unless the program is accepting applications from the general public.

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
71.	§2.23 4K Plus Siblings	Removed language about email being sent with link to application. Child care portion of application included with FS 4K app. Added income for this category is \$0.
72.	§2.23 4K Plus Siblings	Added that when 4K Plus apps are submitted and existing services do not expire for over 6 months, no change will be made until that original funding has ended. Added exception to adding a child.
73.	§2.24 Starlight	Added income for this category is \$0.
74.	§2.25 SNAP E&T	Added we do not make direct referrals. Listed email address clients can email if they want to apply.
75.	§2.26 Strong Start – 85%	Added Pause on application intake 12/1/2025.
76.	§2.27 Strong Start – 85%	Added temporarily or permanently disabled.
77.	§3.2.2 Pseudo Social Security Numbers	Added note: Changes to names and social security numbers must be coordinated with designated staff to avoid payment rejections.
78.	§3.2.4 Custody Verification	Removed signed, notarized statements and added legal court documents showing custody or guardianship. Added when custody is split between mother and father, whichever parent has 51% of physical custody should apply. When parents have never been married, custody defaults to mother.
79.	§3.3.1 Applicant Rights	Added funding is not an appealable issue.
80.	§3.3.2 Applicant Responsibilities	Added any change reporting in the above information should be reported to the Child Care Scholarship Control Center or to scchildcare@dss.sc.gov
81.	§3.2.4 Custody Verification	Added language indicating that the applicant must have physical and legal custody of the child and information regarding if the child is in an open SNAP case under someone else.
82.	§3.5 Eligibility Worksheet	Added CHIP should be checked on all applications regardless of fund source. CHIP screens are required for only seamless cases.

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
83.	§4.1 Provider Authorization/Connection	Added services could be backdated up to three months when there is no discrepancy between providers.
84.	§4.1.6 Funding and Connecting Under Appropriate Age Group	Added language that the child remains under the originally funded age group for the entire 12-month eligibility unless the child is within six months of being in another age group and the provider is not authorized.
85.	§5.2.4 Provisional Licenses	Added P providers.
86.	§5.2.7 When New/Updated Paperwork Required	Added P providers.
87.	§5.4.3 Recoupment of Grant Funding	Added note that recoupment of grant funds is not appealable.
88.	§5.7.2 Enrollment Process	Added we can no longer accept printouts from the Social Security Administration.
89.	§5.7.3 Family, Friend and Neighbor Care	Added we can longer accept printouts from the Social Security Administration.
90.	§5.7.3 For Non-Related FFN	Removed Once Child Care Scholarship Program Staff receive the completed documents and the SLED/FBI, Central Registry and sex offender checks are satisfactory, the potential FFN provider will then receive a full enrollment packet, minus the SLED questionnaire, to become enrolled. Added we can no longer accept printouts from Social Security Administration
91.	§5.7.5 Family Friend and Neighbor Care	Added cousins or other relations not previously listed are not considered related for the purpose of child care.
92.	§5.7.6 Out of State Providers	Added provider team will verify through out of state child care websites that the provider participates in the state's subsidy program.
93.	§5.17.3 Final Notification	Added P providers.
94.	§5.18.1 Fraud and ABC Quality	Added the complaint line number.
95.	§5.19 Amendments to a Providers File	Added P providers.
96.	§5.19.1 Adding or Deleting Age	Updated section and removed on-site assessment to add age groups and added process of ensuring

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
	Groups	the provider meets regulatory requirements.
97.	§ 6.2 Breaks in Work, School or Training	Added if clients become employed during the 90-day period, they must submit documentation to SCChildcare@dss.sc.gov with the subject of "termination reversal". And process for when a client submits updated information.
98.	§6.4 Transfers from One Provider to Another	Added section on prospective payments and transfers.
99.	§6.5 Early Releases	Added language around early releases and prospective payment.
100.	§6.6 Transfers of Foster and CPS Clients	Added language around transfers and prospective payments.
101.	§6.7 Notifying Clients and Providers of Transfers	Added language around early releases after prospective payment.
102.	§6.9 Situational Changes	Clarified language that situational changes do no lessen the 12 months of eligibility.
103.	§6.9 Situational Changes	Situational changes will not be processed during the child care pause except for protected categories.
104.	§6.9 Situational Changes	Clarified services will not be reduced to half time.
105.	§6.10 Desk Reviews	Moved to chapter 9 – Program Integrity New 6.10 is Termination of Services to Clients
106.	§6.11 Monthly Child Care Caseload	Moved to chapter 9 – Program Integrity New 6.11 is Client Complaints
107.	§6.12 End of Service Notification	Added note: Applications submitted more than 60 days prior to services ending will be denied for applying too early.
108.	§7.1 Payment Information	Removed reimbursement is mailed.
109.	Chapter 9	Renamed to Program Integrity
110.	§9.0	Program Integrity definition
111.	§9.1 Desk Review Process	Moved from chapter 6
112.	§9.2 Improper Payments	Moved from Chapter 6
113.	§9.3 Reporting/Investigating Misuse	Updated section number.
114.	§9.4	Moved to new program integrity section.

Change	Section Title/Number	Change
	Misuse of Services	Added situations of misuse.
115.	§9.5 Determination of Misuse	Gave new section number.
116.	§9.6 Fraud	Gave new section number. Added suspected fraud or misuse will be referred to the Office of Inspector General.
117.	§9.7 System Reports	Updated entire reports sections and listed common reports worked.
118.	§9.8 Internal Audits and Client Calls	New section created to detail new process of internal audits making calls to clients.
119.	§9.9 Attendance Audit	New section created to detail a new process of monitoring provider attendance.
120.	§9.10 Collection of Attendance by Child Care Licensing	New section created to detail a new process of collection of attendance records by child care licensing staff at unannounced visits.
121.	Appendix 1 Child Care Income Standards	Updated Dates and Income
122.	Appendix 2 Child Care Fee Scale	Updated Dates and Amounts
123.	Appendix 3 Maximum Allowable Rates	Updated dates
124.	What's New Section	Reformatted