



Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy helps with the cost of approved child care. If you are eligible, we will pay it directly to your child care provider to reduce the fees you pay.

To be eligible you must meet all of the following:

- care for a child 13 years of age or younger who is not in secondary school, unless an exemption applies
- use an approved child care service
- be responsible for paying the child care fees
- meet residency and immunisation requirements.

To meet the residency requirements, you or your partner must be living in Australia and have one of the following:

- Australian citizenship
- a permanent residence visa
- a Special Category visa
- a certain temporary visa type, for example, a Partner Provisional or Temporary Protection visa.

You may also meet the residency requirements if any of the following apply:

- you or your partner are an overseas student, sponsored by the Australian Government to study in Australia
- you are in hardship or special circumstances apply.

You may be exempt from some of these criteria in specific circumstances.

The amount of Child Care Subsidy you can get may depend on all of the following:

- your family's income
- the number of children in your care
- the hourly rate cap based on the type of approved child care you use and the age of your child
- the hours of recognised activities you and your partner do.

Family income

We will use your family income estimate to work out how much of your hourly fee we will pay.

Number of children in care

If you have more than one child aged 5 or under in care, and are eligible for more than 0% Child Care Subsidy, you may get a higher Child Care Subsidy. This will apply for one or more of your children.

If you are eligible:

- your eldest child aged 5 or under will get your standard income tested rate, which is the percentage you are eligible for based on your family income estimate

- any younger children may get a 30% higher subsidy, capped at a maximum of 95%
- Any children aged 6 and above will continue to get your standard Child Care Subsidy percentage. The higher Child Care Subsidy rate does not apply to In Home Care sessions of care. You can read more about this at servicessaustralia.gov.au/higherccs

Hourly rate cap

The amount of Child Care Subsidy you can get will depend on the type of approved child care you use, and the age of your child.

Your Child Care Subsidy percentage will apply to either the hourly fee you are charged by your child care service, or the hourly rate cap whichever is lower.

Recognised activities:

You need to do a recognised activity to get Child Care Subsidy. This can include:

- paid work – including leave, like maternity leave
- study and training
- unpaid work in family business
- looking for work
- volunteering
- self-employment
- other activities on a case-by-case basis.

There will be exemptions for parents who cannot meet the activity test requirements, as well as to support children's participation in preschool.

Hours of activity

If you have a partner we will look at both of your activity levels. We will work out how many hours of Child Care Subsidy you can get each fortnight by using the lower of the 2 activity levels.

Withholding

To help reduce the chance of an overpayment, we will withhold 5% of your Child Care Subsidy each fortnight.

At the end of each financial year we will balance your payments. We will do this by comparing your income estimate to your actual income. This will ensure you got the correct amount of subsidy.

If you underestimate your income you may have an overpayment which you will need to pay back. We will use the Child Care Subsidy we withheld to reduce the amount you have to pay back.

If you overestimate your family income and don't get enough Child Care Subsidy, we will pay any outstanding amount directly to you. This will include the Child Care Subsidy we withheld.

You are able to vary your withholding amount.

How to claim Child Care Subsidy

To make a claim online you need a myGov account and a Centrelink online account. Your myGov account must be linked to Centrelink.

If you do not have a myGov account, go to **my.gov.au** to create one.

For help setting up your myGov account, go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/mygovguides**

Use your Centrelink online account in myGov to provide your information and any supporting documents.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

Additional Child Care Subsidy offers some families extra help with their child care fees. You must be eligible for Child Care Subsidy to be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy. There are different types you can apply for:

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). This helps with the cost of child care if you are a grandparent or great grandparent with primary care of your grandchild or great grandchild. You must receive an income support payment.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (Temporary Financial Hardship). This gives short-term help with the cost of child care if you are experiencing temporary financial hardship due to circumstances beyond your control.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (Transition to Work). This helps with the cost of child care if you are transitioning from an income support payment by engaging in work, study or training activities.

Additional Child Care Subsidy (Child Wellbeing) helps vulnerable or disadvantaged families and children. Your child care provider will apply on your behalf.

How to apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy

To apply online you need a myGov account and a Centrelink online account. Your myGov account must be linked to Centrelink.

Use your Centrelink online account through myGov to provide your information and any supporting documents.

Estimate your child care fee assistance

You can use the Starting Blocks website in English to see how much child care fee assistance you can get. Go to **startingblocks.gov.au/fees-estimator**

If your child hasn't been at care for 26 weeks or more

From 11 July 2022, if your child has stopped using child care for at least 26 continuous weeks, they will not be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

We will reassess your family if one or more of your children stop using child care. We will check to see if any other children still using child care can get the higher subsidy rate from 11 July 2022 onwards.

If you decide not to use child care you can contact us to end your child's Child Care Subsidy eligibility.

If your child starts to attend care again you will need to submit a new claim for Child Care Subsidy for that child.

For more information

- Call **131 202** to speak with us in your language about Centrelink payments and services.
- Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/yourlanguage** where you can read, listen to or watch information in your language.
- Go to **servicesaustralia.gov.au/childcaresubsidy** for more information in English.
- Visit a service centre.

Note: calls from your home phone to '13' numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services. It's your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make an application with regard to your particular circumstances.