

WORKING CONNECTIONS CHILD CARE

Introduction

Washington State now subsidizes child care for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and some low-income working parents. The benefit is called Working Connections Child Care (WCCC).

◆ **NOTE: You can** apply for child care at your local DSHS Community Services Office (CSO) or online at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/f2esaapps/esaosa/>. At the CSO, you have the right to make a written application for child care and get a written decision on your application. The rules for child care eligibility are in the Washington Administrative Code at [WAC 170-290](#).

Which parents are eligible for help with child care?

Effective March 1, 2011, the following families will receive priority access to WCCC:

- Families receiving TANF benefits;
- Families with pending TANF due to curing a Work First sanction; and
- families of children with special needs will
- Families with incomes at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines will receive childcare benefits on a “first come, first served” basis until the program reaches an enrollment cap of 35,200 cases. DSHS will maintain a waiting list of potentially eligible families who apply when the cap has been reached.

◆ Note: In order to receive WCCC, you must be a caretaker of one or more children, and either a U.S. citizen or a legal immigrant.

◆ Note: TANF recipients in sanction aren’t eligible for WCCC unless childcare is necessary to get or keep a job, participate in a WorkFirst activity or remove the sanction.

Which children are eligible for care under this program?

- Children who are citizens or legally residing in the United States;
- Children who are under age thirteen;
- Children who are between the ages of thirteen and nineteen if:

- a medical provider gives a statement that the child is physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of self-care

or

- child is under court supervision.

Who can provide child care under this program?

- A child may receive care in an adult relative's home **or** the child may be cared for in the child's home by an adult friend, neighbor or relative; but only if the friend or in-home/relative provider registers with the department, meets minimum health and safety requirements; and passes a criminal background check;
- Licensed child care centers and family homes;
- Certified child care providers such as tribal child care facilities, child care facilities on a military installation or on public school property and run by a school district.

How does the program work?

- Parent/caretaker applies at local DSHS office.
- If the application is approved, DSHS will give information on the types of care they'll fund and how to locate providers and select care.
- Child care will be paid for the number of hours the parent or caretaker is working, looking for work, or doing WorkFirst activities, including transportation time from the child care provider to work or other activity and back.
- Whether or not you receive TANF benefits, if you're working 20 hours or more per week and you're participating in education or training, DSHS may authorize child-care for your time spent in education or training activities. This includes up to 10 hours per week of study time before or after classes or up to 3 hours per day when needed to cover time between approved classes.
- Child care may be authorized for employment retention activities if you're receiving TANF, or for up to one year after going off TANF and you're working 20 hours or more per week. Additionally, child care may be authorized for hours of participation in labor exchange activity if you're receiving TANF, or for up to two years after going off TANF and you're working 20 hours or more per week. As a former recipient, your earnings must be below 200% of the federal poverty level to qualify for WCCC.
- Parents then must locate a child care provider willing to accept their child at the DSHS payment rate, which is a lower amount than some providers charge.

Must parents pay a share of daycare costs?

Yes. The parents' share is called a co-payment.

The copayment is figured by adding the total amount of all gross earned and unearned income. This is your countable income, unless you pay child support. If you pay child support, then countable income is the sum of total income minus the amount of child support you paid based on a state or tribal court order or Division of Child Support administrative order.

- ❖ If your countable income is at or below 82% of Federal Poverty Level (Column 2 in the chart below), then your co-pay = \$15.
- ❖ If your countable income is over 82% up to 137.5% of Federal Poverty Level (Column 3 in the chart below), then your co-pay = \$65. **(This amount is new effective March 1, 2011)**
- ❖ If your countable income is over 137.5% through 175% of the Federal Poverty Level (Column 5 in chart below), then your co-pay is figured by using the formula set out below.

(If you've gotten full-time employment and you're going to be off TANF, the continued TANF cash assistance paid under DSHS income budgeting rules for the two months after the income changes isn't included in the co-payment calculation.)

INCOME STANDARDS FOR SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE

Family Size	Column 1 100% Federal Poverty Level for Family Size	Column 2 If your "total" income is between these amounts your co-pay is \$15	Column 3 If your "total" income is between these amounts your co-pay is \$65	Column 4 If your income is between these amounts your co-pay is \$65 or greater, depending on formula below	Column 5 147.5% of Federal Poverty Level
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Total income is adjusted earned income plus unearned income.

2	\$1,226	\$0 and 1,005	\$1006 and 1,686	\$1,687 and 2146	\$1,808
3	\$1,544	\$0 and 1,266	\$1267 and 2,123	\$ 2,124 and 2,702	\$2,277
4	\$1,863	\$0 and 1,528	\$1,528 and 2,562	\$ 2,562 and 3,260	\$2,748
5	\$2,181	\$0 and 1,788	\$1,789 and 2,998	\$2,999 and 3,817	\$3,217
6	\$2,499	\$0 and 2,049	\$2,050 and 3,436	\$3,437 and 4,373	\$3,686
7	\$2,818	\$0 and 2,311	\$2,311 and 3,875	\$3,876 and 4,932	\$4,157
8	\$3,136	\$0 and 2,572	\$2,572 and 4,312	\$4,313 and 5,488	\$4,626

Formula: Families with income between the two amounts in column 4 subtract 147.50% FPL (column 5) from their countable income, multiply by .5 and then add \$65.00. Families whose income is greater than the high figure in column 4 aren't eligible for subsidized child care.

◆ Note: All amounts are monthly.

EXAMPLE 1

A parent with three children earns gross income of \$500 per month receives a TANF grant of \$392.

Figure total income:	\$500	earned income
	<u>+ 392</u>	unearned income
	\$892	total income

Figure Co-payment: Family size is 4; go to row of chart with that family size. Total income is between \$0 and \$1266.08, so co-payment is \$15.

EXAMPLE 2

A person with two children earns gross income of \$1,800 per month. Parent owes \$300 per month in court-ordered child support.

\$1,800	earned income
<u>- 300</u>	minus child support
1,500	equals countable income

Figure copayment: Family size is 3; go to row of chart with that family size. Total income is between \$1267 and 2,123, so copayment is \$65.

EXAMPLE 3

Two parent family with one child. Mother has gross earnings of \$1,850 per month. Father receives \$760 in Social Security Disability benefit.

\$2,610	total earned and unearned income
<u>2,277</u>	minus 147.5% FPL for household of 3
333	
<u>x .5</u>	multiply by .5
166.5	
<u>+ 65.</u>	add \$65
\$231.50	is the amount of copayment each month

◆ EVERY FAMILY WILL HAVE A CHILD CARE CO-PAY OF \$15 OR HIGHER DEPENDING ON THE FAMILY’S INCOME.

- You make your co-payment directly to your child care provider.
- DSHS may terminate your child care funding if you don’t pay your co-payment.
- It’s okay for any other person or agency to pay your co-payment, as long as it’s paid directly to your child care provider.
- Child care providers cannot require payment above the co-payment amount to keep your child in care. Providers have agreed to accept the payment rate paid under WCCC for your child.

- Fees that are charged all children for registration, equipment and/or activities will be paid by DSHS.
- In Home/Relative Care - DSHS will issue payment to the parent/caregiver and then the parent/caregiver must pay the provider. If you don't pay the provider, DSHS may set up a protective payee for you to ensure payment.
- For all other care - DSHS issues its portion of payment directly to the child care provider.

How do I request a fair hearing?

If you disagree with a DSHS decision, you may ask for a fair hearing. To ask for a fair hearing, fill out a Fair Hearing Request at your local welfare office or write to the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 42488, Olympia, WA 98504. If it's an emergency, ask to have your hearing held as soon as possible by calling the Office of Administrative Hearings at (360) 664-8717 or 1-800-583-8271. This is called an "expedited" hearing. Please see our publication [Representing Yourself at a Fair Hearing](#) for more information.

You may keep getting the same benefits if you request a hearing within 10 days of the date on the notice or before the date the notice takes effect, except if your child care certification has run out. This is called "continued assistance."

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