



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Community Development Division

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Child Care  
Community Resources  
Community Development Block Grant  
Madison Senior Center

## CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FACT SHEET

REVISED SEPTEMBER 2017

The City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program pays child care costs on a sliding fee scale for low-income families who reside within the City of Madison, are ineligible for other funding sources, and who qualify for the program. City of Madison Child Care Assistance may only be used with City of Madison Accredited child care programs. Program criteria are detailed below.

### FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

City of Madison Child Care Assistance is only for families who are ineligible for other child care assistance programs such as the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program (W-2) administered by Dane County and Child Care Tuition Assistance Program (CCTAP)

To be eligible, families must have resided a minimum of six months in the City of Madison and continue to reside within the City of Madison limits. They must also qualify based on the City of Madison income guidelines. Income guidelines are set each year based upon the Federal poverty level (FPL). If a family's income falls between 185% and 300% FPL, the family may be eligible for Child Care Assistance if they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must meet at least one of the following criteria to be considered eligible:

- Be employed or looking for work.
- Be enrolled in school or a training program.
- Have special needs (e.g. parental or child disability, family stress).

Families are encouraged to call the Child Care Assistance Program at (608) 267-4996 to complete an initial phone screening which will determine the family's eligibility.

### CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE VS. WI SHARES CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Families are only considered eligible for the City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program if they are ineligible for the WI Shares Child Care Subsidy. Families who are eligible for City of Madison funding may only use a City of Madison accredited child care program. This includes centers and family child care providers.

The City of Madison's income guidelines, family share calculation, and child care rates differ from the WI Shares Child Care Subsidy.

## **RATES**

Child care programs are required to charge the same rate to City of Madison funded families as other families. Child care programs are encouraged to update the Child Care Assistance Program of rate changes. Funding may be adjusted for families based on increased child care program rates, not to exceed the City of Madison maximum reimbursement rates.

The City of Madison's child care rates are based on the average rates charged by City of Madison accredited centers and family child care providers. The Community Development Division conducts a required survey annually. The survey establishes a maximum weekly rate that the City will pay. If the child is in care for an entire month, the weekly rate will be multiplied by 4.348 to establish the monthly rate. If a child attends a portion of the month, the weekly rate will be used to determine the correct payment amount. For example, if a child whose family has no family share attended two week during July and the weekly rate was \$250, the program would be paid \$500. The Child Care Assistance Program will notify child care programs of rate changes.

City of Madison accredited child care programs must have established rates. If the child care program's rate is above the City of Madison's maximum reimbursement rate, the family will be responsible to pay the difference between the two rates directly to the child care program. In the case where there is a sliding fee scale offered to the public, the City of Madison will pay the scale's highest rate up to the Child Care Assistance Program's maximum reimbursement rate.

A client has a family share when their adjusted income is above the City of Madison income guidelines. A family share is the portion of the cost of care that the family is assigned to pay directly to the child care program. The City of Madison will pay the balance up to the City of Madison maximum reimbursement rate less the family share.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

A Child Care Assistance Authorization form giving formal notice of authorized funding will be issued to eligible families and the corresponding accredited child care program. This authorization form includes:

- Names of the parent and authorized child.
- Number of days eligible for care.
- City of Madison weekly funding rate and parent's weekly family share.
- If applicable, termination dates and comments.

Child care programs should review the authorization for any corrections including correct child information (e.g. name, date of birth) as well as correct rate reimbursement. The combined reimbursement rate of the City share and family share should equal the rate being charged to the family by the child care program, with exception of program rates above the City of Madison's maximum reimbursement rate. Any changes (e.g. rate category, change in fees, schedule changes) require an updated authorization form.

In order to receive payment, all child care programs are required to complete the Vendor

Information Forms and return them to the City of Madison Finance Department. These forms include the W-9 and direct deposit forms. Direct deposit is strongly recommended.

## **PAYMENTS**

The Child Care Assistance Program reimburses providers on a monthly basis after care is provided. The child care program serving a City of Madison funded family will receive a Child Care Assistance Payment Schedule each year.

The Child Care Assistance Program will send out invoices at the end of each billing period. This invoice will be e-mailed directly to the child care program every four weeks per the payment schedule. If the child care program prefers to receive the invoice via standard mail, please make that request. When invoices are sent through standard mail, a file copy will be included for the child care program's records.

At the top right hand corner of the invoice are the dates when the invoice is due back to the Child Care Assistance Program, the date checks are mailed, and the date when direct deposits will be made. The invoice includes the billing period, authorized charges for funded children, and instructions to child care programs.

The child care program should compare the invoice to their attendance records and the most current assistance authorization. This should be standard procedure for all third party payments. The child care program should review the invoice for accuracy, make adjustments if necessary (e.g. incorrect rate, child attendance) sign and return the invoice for payment. Child care programs are required to report absences of five consecutive days, inconsistent use of care, and program disenrollment. Programs must also report changes in child attendance or rates (e.g., child is being charged a different rate than the current authorization).

The Child Care Assistance Coordinator will review the returned invoice, and forward it to the City of Madison Finance Department. The City of Madison Finance Department will make the direct deposit or will issue the check directly to the child care program.

Child care programs can expect payment approximately two weeks after the invoice is sent. In order to be paid on time, child care programs must submit their invoice by the due date. If the child care program is late in returning the invoice, the City of Madison Finance Department will make payment, as it is able.

The child care program cannot require families receiving child care assistance to pay the full cost of care in advance of the City of Madison payment. The child care program may charge the family their assigned weekly family share and, if applicable, the difference between the program rate and the family's funding.

## **VACATION AND OTHER BENEFITS**

The City will be guided by the terms of the written, signed provider-parent agreement and policies regarding:

- Vacation (e.g. child, family child care provider).
- Sick leave (e.g. child, family child care provider).

The child care program is required to report to the Child Care Assistance Program if a child is absent for five consecutive days. If the family has not notified the child care program or the Child Care Assistance Program of this absence, it will be determined that the family has withdrawn from the Child Care Assistance Program, and funding will be discontinued.

The City of Madison will limit the following payments regardless of standard provider contract language:

- Registration fee: The city may (at the discretion of the Tuition Assistance Coordinator) assist with partial payment, if necessary for child to start attending provider.
- Holding fees: If necessary to hold a slot for up to two weeks prior to the actual need for attendance. For example, if the family will need care for an infant starting October 1<sup>st</sup> when the mother returns to work, but a provider has a slot opening in mid-September, the City could pay for up to two weeks to hold the slot for that specific child.
- Schedule change or discontinuance of care: Maximum of two weeks cost of contracted care less family share. If discontinuing care and the parent is not receiving funding from another source.

In cases where alternate care is needed (e.g. primary child care program is closed, child is transferring programs), the City of Madison will pay one child care program for the same time period. Payment is based on the primary child care program's policy. The child care program should notify the Child Care Assistance Program if they are approving a fee waiver in such cases.

## **FAMILY OBLIGATIONS**

### Obligations to the City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program

1. Families must maintain residency within the City of Madison limits.
2. Families must be ineligible to receive assistance from all other child care assistance programs.
3. Families must be enrolled in a City of Madison accredited program.
4. Each family is required to submit income verification to the Child Care Assistance Program when requested. Continuing income eligibility is reviewed regularly.

5. Families must notify the Child Care Assistance Coordinator of any change in address, occupation, marital status or adult residents in the household. Student families must notify the Child Care Assistance Coordinator of any changes in class schedule.
6. The family must notify the child care program and the Child Care Assistance Program of their child's absence if the child will be absent for five consecutive days or more. If they have not notified either program, it is assumed the family has withdrawn from the Child Care Assistance Program and funding will be discontinued.

#### Obligations to the center or family child care provider

7. Families with a family share must pay that share directly to the center or family child care provider. If the child care program charges more than the maximum City of Madison reimbursement rate, the family may be charged the difference.
8. Families must have a signed agreement with the child care program at the time care begins.
9. Families must give the child care program two weeks' notice when discontinuing care.

#### **CHILD CARE PROGRAM'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. In order to serve City of Madison funded client, the child care program must maintain City of Madison accreditation.
2. The child care program must complete and sign an agreement with the parent regarding the terms of the child care being provided. A signed copy should be on file.
3. The child care program must report the following to the Child Care Assistance Program:
  - Enrollment of a City of Madison funded client if they have not received an authorization form.
  - Beginning date of care.
  - Rate being charged.
  - Attendance issues or failure to use care for five consecutive days.
  - Changes affecting child care assistance (e.g. decreased or increased hours of care, transfer to another child care program).
  - Care not provided (e.g. program vacation days).
4. The child care program must submit accurate invoices. Refer to the payment section of this document.
5. The child care program must complete and return the City of Madison's annual rate survey administered by 4-C.

#### **CITY OF MADISON'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Child Care Assistance Coordinator determines a family's eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program and monitors continuing eligibility (e.g. income reviews, revised school schedules).

2. The Child Care Assistance Program refers families to City of Madison accredited centers and the Family Child Care System (Satellite Family Child Care). Satellite Family Child Care refers families to City of Madison accredited family child care providers.
3. The Child Care Assistance Program works with the City of Madison Finance Department to issue regular payments to the child care program.
4. The Child Care Assistance Program gives two weeks' notice to the child care program concerning funding changes or discontinuance.
5. The City of Madison Child Care Program and Satellite Family Child Care offer support to child care programs in working with funded families.
6. The City of Madison Child Care Program and Satellite Family Child Care ensure that accredited child care programs are meeting and maintaining City of Madison Accreditation Standards.

#### **WHERE TO ADDRESS CONCERNS**

##### Funding Questions

When issues concern financial payment and other questions regarding the City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program, centers and family child care providers should contact the Child Care Assistance Coordinator at (608) 267-4996 or at [child\\_careassistance@cityofmadison.com](mailto:child_careassistance@cityofmadison.com).

##### Child Care Questions

Centers that have child care concerns should contact their assigned Child Care Specialist at the Community Development Division for support, assistance and problem solving at (608) 266-6520.

Family child care providers should contact their assigned Family Child Care Consultant at Satellite Family Child Care for the same at (608) 270-3438.

The Satellite Family Child Care staff should contact the assigned Child Care Specialist at the Community Development Division for problem-solving and additional support services if needed.

The City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program strives to work in a positive cooperative way to maintain a quality child care service for families. If you have questions or concerns regarding these policies please call (608) 267-4996 or send e-mail to [child\\_careassistance@cityofmadison.com](mailto:child_careassistance@cityofmadison.com).

#### **CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE CONTACT INFORMATION**

Send Mail to: Child Care Assistance Program  
P.O. Box 2627  
Madison, WI 53701

E-mail: [child\\_careassistance@cityofmadison.com](mailto:child_careassistance@cityofmadison.com)

Phone: (608) 267-4996

FAX: (608) 261-9626