

What Is The City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program?

The City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program pays childcare costs on a sliding fee scale for low-income families who qualify for funding. Program criteria are detailed below.

Who Is Eligible For City of Madison Child Care Assistance?

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

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's income guidelines. Families with income above the income guidelines pay a portion of their child care expenses. This portion is called a *family share*.

Parent/guardians must meet at least one of the following criteria to be considered eligible:

1. Be employed or looking for work; or
2. Be enrolled in school or a training program; or
3. Have special needs (e.g., family stress, child developmental issues, etc.).

Employment Categories:

1. **Minimum Employment:** Only paid employment of at least 20 hours a week will be considered eligible employment.
2. **Self-Employment:** Exceptions to the minimum wage rule may be made for job development for self-employed persons if the person can demonstrate that there is a likelihood of meeting the Minimum Wage Rule within six months.
3. **Looking for Work:** A parent is eligible annually for 12 weeks of half-time child care assistance to look for work. If the parent prefers, they may request 6 weeks of full-time funding instead of 12 weeks of half-time funding. The OCS Supervisor may approve looking for work funding twice in one year if there are exceptional circumstances involved.

Eligible Training Activities:

A parent meets occupational eligibility requirements if s/he is completing high school, enrolled in a qualified vocational school or college, or completing an approved job training program. A parent must verify enrollment and completion by submitting a class schedule, and grade report or other documentation of completing the education-related activity.

Special Needs

1. **Family:** Special needs of families are conditions that threaten family stability because of severe stress. Examples would be homelessness, family violence, and other extreme events.
2. **Parent:** Special needs of parents are those conditions that cause a parent not to be able to provide adequate care for the child. Included would be such problems as chemical and drug abuse, mental health problems, mental retardation, and physical problems preventing the parent from being able to provide child care.
3. **Child:** A child's special needs are those conditions that threaten normal growth and development. Included would be developmental delays, inappropriate or unsafe environments that threaten development or safety, or mental health or emotional problems that can be alleviated by a quality child care placement. English proficiency is not, by itself, an special needs indicator.