



Item 4A

Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
**Community Development Division**

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**FACT SHEET**  
**CITY OF MADISON CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**What Is the City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program?**

The City of Madison Child Care Assistance Program pays child care 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 child care 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., domestic abuse, homelessness, etc.).

**What Is the Difference Between the City of Madison and The Dane County Program?**

Families who are eligible for City of Madison funding may only use a City accredited child care program. This includes centers and family child care providers. Families eligible for County funding may use City accredited, State licensed or County certified programs (center based or family child care).

The City of Madison's income guidelines and child care rates differ from Dane County's.

## **How Are the City of Madison's Rates Determined?**

The City of Madison's child care rates are based on the average rates charged by City accredited centers and family child care providers. The Community Development Division conducts a required survey annually. The Child Care Assistance Program will notify centers and family child care providers of rate changes.

City accredited centers and family child care providers must establish a fee schedule for child care services. If the center or provider's rate is above the City's maximum rates, the family will be responsible to pay the difference between the City and the center or co-pay. Centers and providers that charge rates that are lower than the City's maximum rates will be paid at the lower rate.

Centers and family child care providers are required to charge the same rate to City funded families as non-City funded families. In the case where there is a sliding fee scale offered to the public, the City will pay the scale's highest rate up to the City's maximum rate.

## **Payment of Vacation and Other Benefits**

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

1. Child vacation credits/charges
2. Sick day payments for child absences
3. Sick day payments for Family child care providers closing due to personal illness

The City contract with the center or provider will limit the following payments regardless of standard center provider contract language:

1. Maximum of two weeks cost of contracted care less parent co-pay charged as holding fees
2. Maximum of two weeks cost of contracted care less parent co-pay when a family provides notice of schedule change or discontinuance of care

The City can pay only one child care center or family child care provider at a time. If alternate care is required for the family, the City will pay one child care program for the same time period.

## **What Documents Should the Center or Family Child Care Provider Receive?**

A Child Care Assistance Authorization form giving formal notice of payment will be issued to eligible families. The center or family child care provider will receive a copy of the form. This authorization form includes:

1. Name of the child
2. Number of days eligible for care
3. City's payment rate, parent's *family share*\*
4. Termination dates, and comments.

*Any increase or decrease in fees or the amount of care will require an updated authorization form.*

\*A *family share* is the portion of the cost of care that the family must pay directly to the center or family child care provider. A client has a *family share* when their income is above the City income guidelines. The City of Madison will pay the balance up to the City's maximum rate. It is to the

center or provider's benefit to charge the *family share* ahead of time in order to apply *family adjustments* (see section below on *family adjustments*).

### **How Will the Center or Family Child Care Provider Be Paid?**

Families receiving Child Care Tuition Assistance are not required to pay directly to the center or provider more than their family share and Co-pay, if applicable. For example, families receiving Child Care Assistance cannot be required to pay the total cost of care prior to receiving that care and then be reimbursed when the program or provider receives payment following care from the City.

There are 12 billing statements in a calendar year. The Child Care Assistance Program will e-mail a billing statement for centers and family child care providers on a monthly basis.

*The center or family child care provider should review the invoice for accuracy, make adjustments if necessary (e.g., incorrect rate or addition of non-school days, etc.), sign and return the statement for payment.* The Child Care Assistance Coordinator will review the returned statement for adjustments, and enter the invoice into the city's payment system, which will issue the check to the center or family child care provider.

In the first billing period, child care programs will be paid for the actual number of days of care provided to new families. Subsequent billing periods will pay a full month (when child attends a full month. Weekly rate X 4.348) of care for continuing families.

### **When Can the Center or Family Child Care Provider Expect Payment?**

The center or family child care provider can expect payment about two weeks after the ending date of the invoice. The directions at the bottom of the invoice inform the center or provider of the scheduled payment date. If the center or provider is late in returning the invoice, the City of Madison will make payment as soon it is able.

Centers and family childcare providers may arrange for direct deposit.

### **What are the Family's Responsibilities?**

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 accredited program.
4. Each family is required to submit income verification when requested by the Child Care Assistance Program. Continuing income eligibility is reviewed for every family on a semi-annual basis.
5. Families must notify the Child Care Assistance Coordinator of any change in address, income, occupation, marital status or adult residents in the household within 5 days. Student families must notify the Child Care Assistance Coordinator of any changes in class schedule.

6. Families with a *family share* must pay that share directly to the center or family child care provider. Families are responsible to pay to the center or provider any rate differences between the City's maximum rate and the center or provider's actual rate.
7. Families must have a signed agreement with the program at the time care begins.
8. Families must give the center or family child care provider two weeks' notice when discontinuing care.

### **What Are the Center's or Family Child Care Provider's Responsibilities?**

1. In order to receive City of Madison Child Care Assistance, the center or family child care provider must maintain City of Madison accreditation.
2. The center or family child care provider 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 with the center.
3. The center or family child care provider must report the following to the Child Care Assistance Program:
  - Acceptance of a City funded client for child care
  - Beginning date of care
  - Rate being charged
  - Attendance issues or failure to use care for three consecutive days
  - Changes affecting child care assistance (e.g., decreased or increased hours of care, transfer to another child care program, etc.)
  - Care not provided (e.g., program vacation days, substitute care by another City accredited program, etc.)
4. The center or family child care provider must submit accurate invoices.
5. The center or family child care provider must complete and return the annual rate survey administrated by 4C's.

The City of Madison appreciates the facilitative and supportive role that child care programs have given to the City and its families. The child care program's advocacy has been instrumental in working through some difficult situations.

### **What Are the City of Madison's Responsibilities?**

1. The Child Care Assistance Coordinator determines a family's eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program.
2. The Child Care Assistance Program refers families to City accredited centers and the Family Child Care System (Satellite Family Child Care).
3. The Child Care Assistance Program monitors continuing eligibility (e.g., income reviews, revised school schedules, etc.).

4. The Child Care Assistance Program makes regular child care payments to the center or provider.
5. The Child Care Assistance Program gives two weeks' notice concerning child care discontinuance or rate changes. (Eligibility for other child care funding may affect this.)
6. The City of Madison Child Care Program, including Satellite Family Child Care, offers support to centers and family child care providers.

**What Are the Family Child Care System's Responsibilities? (Applicable only to Family Child Care.)**

1. Satellite Family Child Care refers City funded families to City of Madison accredited family child care providers.
2. Satellite Family Child Care ensures that family child care providers are meeting and maintaining City of Madison Accreditation Standards.
3. It is Satellite Family Child Care's responsibility to mediate childcare concerns and issues with parents and family child care providers.

**Where Does the Center or Family Child Care Provider Go with Concerns?**

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.

Centers that have child care concerns should contact their assigned Child Care Specialist at the Community Development Division- Child Care Program 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) 275-6740.

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.

We want to work in a positive, cooperative way to maintain a quality childcare service for families. Please feel free to call or e-mail with questions.

Child Care Assistance Program  
P.O. Box 2627 Madison, WI 53701

Child Care Tuition Assistance Coordinator  
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(608) 267-4996

