

Child Care Works Subsidized Child Care Program

The subsidized child care program helps low-income families pay their child care fees. The state and federal governments fund this program, which is managed by the [Early Learning Resource Center \(ELRC\)](#) office located in your county.

If you meet the guidelines:

- The ELRC will pay a part of your child care cost. This is called a subsidy payment.
- You will pay a part of the cost. This is called the family co-pay.
- The subsidy payment and the family co-pay go directly to the child care program.

NOTE: If your child care subsidy does not pay the full amount that your child care program charges, the provider may ask you to pay the difference between the subsidy payment and their private charges.

Guidelines

You must submit an [application](#) to the ELRC to see if you meet the guidelines for the subsidized child care program.

The following are the basic guidelines:

- You must live in Pennsylvania
- Have a child or children who need child care while you work or attend an education program
- Meet income guidelines for your family size
- Work 20 or more hours a week - or-
- Work 10 hours and go to school or train for 10 hours a week
- Have a promise of a job that will start within 30 days of your application for subsidized child care
- Teen parents must attend an education program
- The child who needs care must be a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residency
- Have proof of identification for each parent or caretaker in the home.

Income Guidelines

The annual income for a family to be eligible to receive subsidy is 200 percent or less of the [Federal Poverty Income Guidelines](#):

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Family Income (May 2018)
2	\$32,920
3	\$41,560
4	\$50,200
5	\$58,840
6	\$67,480
7	\$76,120
8	\$84,760

(Note: The above information provides only general guidelines. Other conditions may apply. Please contact your county Early Learning Resource Center to apply for assistance.)

Additional Guidelines

- Each Adult family member must work at least 20 hours a week or work at least 10 hours a week and participate in an approved training program at least 10 hours a week.
- The hours that a child may receive subsidized child care must coincide with hours of work, education, or training.
- Children are eligible for care from birth until the day prior to the date of the child's 13th birthday. Children with disabilities may be eligible through age 18.
- The parent is responsible to help pay for child care. This is called co-payment. The co-payment may be as little as \$5.00 per week and varies according to your income and the number of people in your family.
- The parent may choose the provider of his or her choice. The parent may choose a child care center, a small family day care home, a group day care home or even a relative to care for his or her child.
- The parent who is receiving subsidy must choose an eligible child care provider. Relative providers must complete an Agreement with the ELRC, must comply with the participation requirements listed in the Agreement and must complete CareCheck in order to be eligible to participate in the Subsidized Child Care Program. CareCheck is the Department of Human Services's program that requires background clearances (see below).
- If funding is not available at the time that a low-income, working parent applies for subsidized child care, the child may be placed on a waiting list.

You can also apply for benefits and renew benefits by using [COMPASS](#), the online resource for cash assistance,

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), child care, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP), school meals, SelectPlan for Women and long-term living services.

Getting a list of and information on child care facilities

You may contact your local Early Learning Resource Center for resource and referral services. Your ELRC can assist you in finding a facility that meets your needs. You can also find a listing of regulated child care providers through the [Online Child Care Provider Search](#). To request information regarding a facility's certification or registration history, current certification status, and verified complaint history you may contact the [Regional Child Development Office](#) or review a facilities history [Online](#).

Making a complaint or reporting a facility that is operating illegally without a department license

Contact the appropriate Department of Human Services' [Regional Child Development Office](#). Each regional child day care office is assigned responsibility for certain counties in Pennsylvania. Regional office staff investigate complaints about child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes that do not follow the regulatory requirements for operating a facility. You may also register an [Online Complaint](#).

Ensuring your child's Safety

The most important way to be certain that your child is safe and well cared for is to become a partner with your child care provider. Here is a [checklist](#) that will provide you with ideas about what to look for at the provider location you choose.

For more information, call the Child Care Works helpline at 1-877-472-5437 or [find the appropriate ELRC for your county](#). Click to view the [Subsidized Child Day Care Eligibility Regulations](#)

CareCheck: is the term for required child abuse and State Police background clearances for relatives who care for children whose parents participate in the subsidized child care program.

Relatives who care for three or fewer children, not including their own children, are not required to have a state license, but can receive subsidized child care funding. Relatives who participate as providers for the subsidized child care are required to complete CareCheck. CareCheck is the Department of Human Services program that requires State Police criminal history and child abuse background clearances for all relative providers. In addition to CareCheck, relatives must obtain Federal criminal history clearances. The relative provider must pay the cost of the Federal criminal history clearance, which is \$23.00. Relatives must complete CareCheck and Federal criminal history clearances in order to be eligible to be paid through the Subsidized Child Care Program. Relatives are defined as grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings. All relative providers must be 18 years of age or older and live in a residence separate from the residence of the child for whom they will provide care.

To find out more about background clearances, call the Child Care Works helpline at **1-877-4-PA-KIDS** (1-877-472-5437).