

## PAYMENT OF FEES POLICY

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### 1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

RESPONSIBLE PERSON	Team Leader Family and Children’s Centres
APPROVED/ADOPTED BY	Mark Patterson Manager Family, Youth and Children’s Services
SIGNATURE	<i>Mark Patterson</i>
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### 2. PURPOSE

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Service fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits prior to enrolment. This policy explains process of fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children’s fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff and management of Kingston Family and Children’s Centres.

#### 4. IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately. Our Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

##### Enrolment Fee and Bond Payment

- A bond payment of \$100 per day is charged upon the acceptance of a booking offer and is applicable to every new offer made (including change of day requests) after the initial enrolment.
- Where 4 weeks' written notice is provided to cease care at the service, the bond payment will be credited to the final invoice.
- A bond payment of \$100 is charged to secure a child's sessional kindergarten place. The bond payment is non-refundable where the child does not commence at the service.
- The bond is waived for families who hold a valid Health Care or Concession Card.
- Where the bond payment poses a barrier to a family enrolling at the service, the bond may be waived at the senior coordinator's discretion.
- Children can attend one half-day session on their first day of commencement to assist settling into the service. These sessions are charged at half the daily rate.

##### General Fees

- Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to the service, and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's fortnightly invoice).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount, known as the 'gap' amount.
- Families are liable to pay full fees in cases where subsidy entitlements drop out or cease.
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment via email.
- Fees are payable for every session that a child is enrolled at the service. This includes when your child is absent for any reason including illness and family holidays.
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. Child Care Subsidy may be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day).
- Casual days may be offered to families on a case-by-case basis, subject to coordinator approval.

##### Holiday Discount

Families may be eligible for a holiday discount of 25% for up to 2 weeks of care (pro rata) if they notify the service a minimum 2 weeks in advance of their child/ren's absence of two or more consecutive days.

### Child Care Subsidy

- Parents/guardians are required to register for Child Care Subsidy through their myGov account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment.
- Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Service and this amount deducted from the parent/family account.
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstances to Centrelink (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances).
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.
- For more information about CCS and eligibility requirements visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

### Payment of Fees

- Families are required to pay fees using the services direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account.
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.
- Families will be issued with an invoice on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and regulatory requirements.
- The invoice will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts.
- The invoice is generated using our CCM Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

### Kindergarten

Eligible children attending our Victorian Government Approved funded kindergarten programs may receive reduced fees or free kindergarten. Parents/guardians should speak with our administration team or coordinators to understand which fees will apply to their chosen session type.

### Absences from the Service

- Families are required to contact the service if their child is unable to attend.
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the service if their child is unable to attend.
- Under Child Care Subsidy, families are allowed forty-two absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances.
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law.
- Records and evidence will be kept by the service for each additional absence, where required.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov.
- In a period of local emergency, such as a bushfire or pandemic, and our service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families may be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

- If our service is forced to close as a result of a public health directive, we may waive gap fees in line with Family Assistance Law legislation.

### Financial Difficulties

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation from the Administration and Operations Coordinator.
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink for additional fee assistance.
- For more information about ACCS and eligibility requirements visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy>

### Debt Recovery Procedure

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after one week and then again, after two weeks.
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which a family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time, the service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.

### Early Drop off and Late Collection Fees

- Families must drop off and collect their child during program session times. An early drop off or late fee will apply where children are dropped off prior to the session commencing or after the session has finished.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently attending outside of session times.

### Change of Fees

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of four weeks' written notice is given to all families.
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year.
- CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCMS Software.

### Termination of Enrolment

- Families must provide four weeks' written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law.

### Third Party Payments

- Parents are generally liable to pay the co-contribution for childcare fees. Only state and territory governments (and their agencies) can contribute to the cost, in part or full of childcare fees for families.
- Where an agreement has been made between an employer or charity to assist in the contribution of fees, the fees must be reduced accordingly before CCS has been applied.
- A third party can pay all of the family's childcare fees – but in such cases the family is not entitled to CCS.
- Our service will record all documentation regarding any third-party payments.

### Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy

- Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance.
- The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.
- Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone 1800 664 231 or email [tipoffline@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@education.vic.gov.au)

## 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Related policies and procedures are recorded in the [22/358905 - FCC POLICY MASTER](#)

## 6. SOURCES

[Child Care Subsidy](#)

[Additional Child Care Subsidy - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

[Absences from child care - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

[Centrelink Customer Reference Number](#)

[KFS Eligibility](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

[ACECQA](#)

[Child Care Provider Handbook - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)