Early Learning Scholarship
Family Subsidy Policy Handbook

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SECTION 1: ABOUT CHILDREN’S COUNCIL OF SAN FRANCISCO

Our Mission

Children’s Council connects families to child care that meets their needs and works with parents, providers, and community partners to make quality child care and early education a reality for all children in our city.

Core Values

Families – We work to support the growth and well-being of all San Francisco families. We know that when parents and their children have the opportunity to achieve their greatest potential, the future of our whole city is brighter.

Education – We believe education is empowerment. We provide parents the information they need to make good decisions regarding child care and early education for their children. We equip early educators with the expert resources they need to be better at what they do and simultaneously improve the quality of care that’s available in San Francisco. We believe all children must have high quality care and early education that meets their unique needs because their long-term success depends on it.

Partnership – We are committed to partnering with parents, early educators, government agencies, and other colleagues in the field because it is critical to accomplishing our goals.

Respect – We recognize that every family faces different challenges and that every family looks, speaks, and lives differently from the next—and we make sure every single family is heard, understood, and supported. We know that the child care and early education profession is a critical lynchpin to the well-being of these families on many levels and we are committed to supporting the success of early educators throughout their career.

Benefits of Early Childhood Education

Children’s Council provides information and resources to help families access quality child care and development programs. Studies have shown that quality early education helps to:

- Foster school readiness and create an easier transition to kindergarten
- Increase vocabulary, language acquisition, and early math and science skills
- Provide positive behavior support for children with challenging behaviors
- Promote health and nutrition awareness
- Identify issues that may interfere with learning, such as hearing, vision, or speech

Children’s Council and Your Child Care Subsidy

Children’s Council of San Francisco is a nonprofit organization authorized to handle government funds for child care subsidies. Children’s Council is bound to state and local government policies and regulations directing the management of subsidized child care programs.

Advocating for a Strong Child Care System

Our work gives us a strong understanding of how the shortage of funding for child care impacts families. We invite you to become an advocate for child care through the local chapter of Parent Voices, which is housed at Children’s Council. Please call 415.276.2900 to learn more.
Funded by the San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education (OECE), Early Learning Scholarships provide eligible San Francisco families who have children 0-5 years old with financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education. More than 320 Early Care and Education Centers and Family Child Care Homes across San Francisco have been qualified to participate in this program that prioritizes quality and continuity of care, supports the ECE workforce, and ensures that San Francisco’s youngest children, especially those who have the most to gain from participating, have access to high-quality early care and education.

This section describes the basic eligibility requirements for the Early Learning Scholarship programs at Children’s Council.

The Application Process

Early Learning San Francisco (Early Learning SF)
Families must apply for Early Learning Scholarship child care subsidies through Early Learning San Francisco (Early Learning SF). Early Learning SF is an easy-to-use, mobile-friendly website that connects families to quality early care and education. After answering a few questions about your family, income, and what type of program you are looking for, the system matches you to available early care and education programs when funding is available. You can review information about the programs, and communicate directly with staff from the programs to find out more.

*Early Learning SF is not a waiting list; it is an eligibility list that allows programs to serve the neediest families first based on certain program criteria.* How long you will be registered in Early Learning SF depends on many factors, including available funding, the number of child care openings in a program, and the priorities that programs use to determine need. Such priorities may include:
- Children’s current risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Family experiencing homelessness
- Family income according to state guidelines
- Number of children, and whether any of them are already enrolled in a subsidized program
- Transfer of parent(s) currently receiving subsidy assistance to a different funding program
- Length of time on the eligibility list

Early Learning Scholarship (ELS) Programs

Eligible families and children may receive Early Learning Scholarship funding only when sufficient funding is available, **AND** when State or Federal subsidies are unavailable. All Early Learning Scholarship programs serve children until they enter Kindergarten.
ELS Reserved
Only certain child care centers and family child care homes have ELS Reserved slots, which are designated to support Target Population families. When an ELS Reserved slot becomes open, Early Learning SF will determine the next eligible family that is the best match for that slot. When that match is made, the family is notified via their preferred contact method on their Early Learning SF application (email, text, or robocall) and they’re prompted to log in to Early Learning SF to review the program, and take a tour if they wish. If the family and the program agree on a start date and schedule, the program marks the family as “provisional” in Early Learning SF and care may begin! Children’s Council then assigns a Family Subsidy Specialist to the family who sends a provisional 30-day child care authorization to the parent and the program, and schedules an intake appointment to confirm and update the family’s eligibility and family fee as necessary, and extend the child care authorization.

ELS Voucher
This ELS Voucher program provides a portable voucher to eligible, low-income families, allowing the family to choose from multiple programs that have openings. When ELS Voucher funding becomes available at Children’s Council, the most eligible families on Early Learning SF are notified via their preferred contact method on their Early Learning SF application (email, text, or robocall) and they’re prompted to log in to Early Learning SF to review the 5 programs that the system has determined are “best matches” for the family, and take a tour if they wish. When the family and a program agree on a start date and schedule, the program marks the family as “provisional” in Early Learning SF and care may begin! Children’s Council then assigns a Family Subsidy Specialist to the family who sends a provisional 30-day child care authorization to the parent and the program, and schedules an intake appointment to confirm and update the family’s eligibility and family fee as necessary, and extend the child care authorization.

ELS Moderate
Office of Early Care and Education (OECE) is interested in expanding, over time, ELS subsidies for low-moderate income families. Funding is assigned to a specific center who serves eligible children whose families desire ECE services, but who are not eligible for other state or federal subsidies and are not able to afford the full cost of care. Families are selected for available ELS Moderate funding through Early Learning SF. Families will be verified as low-moderate income - defined as above 85% of State Median Income, and at or below 110% of Area Median Income (see income table in Section 3 of this handbook).

ELS Bridge
When approved by Children’s Council of San Francisco, this funding provides continuity of care for children of families who lose their eligibility for state and/or federal child care subsidies. OECE aims to help such families maintain continuity of care in the safe, nurturing, high-quality setting and primary caregiving relationship for their child. Centers and Family Child Care Programs may apply to Children’s Council of San Francisco for ELS Bridge funding for a child they are serving (age 0-5) who has lost their state and/or federal subsidy eligibility. If a State-funded (CAPP, CalWORKs, and Title 5) family loses their subsidy, programs can request ELS Bridge funding for the child by completing an ELS Bridge
application and submitting to Children’s Council of San Francisco. The family's data file will be shared with Children’s Council of San Francisco, and assigned to a Family Subsidy Specialist who sends a provisional 30-day child care authorization. An intake appointment will be schedule to confirm and update the family’s eligibility and family fee as necessary, and extend the child care authorization. Families who are involved in the child welfare system and are receiving ELS funding whose Child Protective Services (CPS) case is closing and are unable to obtain state or federal funding, may request ELS Bridge funding to provide continuity of care. Families receiving ELS funding whose CPS case is closing and are enrolled in programming with a non-Qualified ELS program, must switch to an ELS Qualified program in order to remain eligible.

Child Screening & Assessments
While enrolled in ELS, programs will work with families to use screen and assessments to ensure the child’s development and readiness for school is on track. These tools provide valuable information about your child’s unique strengths and needs. Below are tools your child’s program may use. If you have more questions about a specific screening or assessment, please contact your Family Subsidy Specialist.

- State Licensing Form 701A – Physician Report: required immunization and child health checks, completed by child’s doctor
- Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ): questions to check on child’s development
- Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP): observations of child’s developmental progress, with parent conferences twice a year

Supporting Families
All members of Children’s Council’s staff are committed to providing families with the highest level of support possible. While participating in our program, please feel free to ask your Family Subsidy Specialist for additional resources. We are here to offer ongoing support as needed. Family Subsidy Specialists have access to a wide variety of resources and knowledge and strive to contribute to great outcomes for families and children. The more we know about the families in our programs, the better services we can provide.

**SECTION 3: INTAKE APPOINTMENT & DOCUMENTING INCOME**

This section describes the paperwork you will need to complete, documents you will submit, and your responsibilities in maintaining your eligibility for services.

**Establishing Your Eligibility**

*Within your 30-day provisional, your Family Subsidy Specialist will schedule an intake appointment with you.* At the intake appointment, the Family Subsidy Specialist reviews documentation, discusses your child care needs, explains program policies and procedures, and establishes a relationship to support you with whatever you may need to ensure the best possible
child care experience for you and your child. Families and programs can determine a child care schedule that fits everyone’s needs.

Documentation required at an intake appointment includes, but is not limited to:

- Documentation of family income
- Proof of residency, such as a utility or phone bill; **families must reside in San Francisco to be eligible**
- Proof of identity such as a driver’s license, state identification card, or passport
- Documentation of family members:
  - Proof of age and relationships of all children in the family (not just those receiving child care services), such as birth certificates, court orders verifying custody, foster care paperwork, child support verification and/or medical record

Any other adult counted in the family size must provide the same required documentation to establish his/her eligibility for child care services.

**Countable Income**

Families qualify as income-eligible based upon their total monthly gross income. **Parents are required to provide documentation of gross monthly income, including the earnings of anyone living in the household who is responsible for the care and welfare of the child.**

Families are income-eligible for ELS Voucher and ELS Reserved if income is below 85% of the State Median Income at the time of their initial intake, and will remain eligible until income exceeds 110% Area Median Income.

For ELS Moderate, families’ income must be above 85% of the State Median Income at the time of their initial intake, and will remain eligible until income exceeds 110% Area Median Income.

See the table below to determine eligibility based on family size and total monthly gross income.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8 or more</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Monthly Income 85% SMI *</td>
<td>$5,343</td>
<td>$5,802</td>
<td>$6,719</td>
<td>$7,794</td>
<td>$8,869</td>
<td>$9,070</td>
<td>$9,272</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Monthly Income 110% AMI *</td>
<td>$9,029</td>
<td>$10,163</td>
<td>$11,288</td>
<td>$12,192</td>
<td>$13,096</td>
<td>$13,996</td>
<td>$14,900</td>
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*85% SMI and 110% AMI income limits subject to change

Please see the table on the following page for examples of income sources that are included and excluded when determining a family’s gross monthly income.
### Countable income

- Wages or salaries
- Overtime, bonuses, tips, commission
- Cash aid
- Profit from self-employment (excluding business expenses) as documented on the Self Employment Verification Form
- Child support received
- Spousal support received
- Student grants or scholarships intended for living expenses
- Survivor benefits received
- Unemployment benefits
- Worker’s Compensation
- Foster care payment or assistance
- Disability Insurance payments
- Dividends, interest, or income from investments, real estate, trust, royalties, savings accounts and bonds
- Rental income earned for a room within family’s residence
- Net proceeds from the sale of property
- Pension annuities
- Veteran’s benefits
- Cash benefits
- Inheritance
- Earned Income Credit in excess of withholding
- Child SSA Income

### Income sources excluded from the calculation of family income:

- Earnings of a child under 18
- Loans
- Earnings of self-employed people that are used for business expenses
- Student loans, grants or scholarships intended for educational expenses
- Food stamps
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- GI Bill entitlements
- Adoption assistance
- Child support paid out by parent on file (documented)
- Non-cash gifts
- Insurance or court settlements (excluding lost wages and punitive damages)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or State Supplemental Program (SSP)
- Reimbursement for work related expenses such as uniforms, mileage, food and lodging
- Medical or dental insurance included in gross pay that have no cash value
- Disaster relief payments not going towards rent or unemployment

### Income Exceptions

Income eligibility requirements may not apply if you have a child with special needs, are receiving CPS services, families with children at risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited, or families experiencing homelessness. However, families of children with identified special needs or disabilities will be required to provide income documentation to their Family Subsidy Specialist for the purposes of Family Fee determination.

### Establishing Need for Child Care Services

In addition to meeting income eligibility requirements, parents, guardians and foster parents must be considered “in need of services” while participating in a qualifying activity. Qualifying needs include:

- Employment
- Seeking employment
• In job training /school
• Seeking permanent housing
• Incapacity

Documents to verify need are not required, however, your family subsidy specialist may verbally confirm your current need to keep accurate records.

SECTION 4: CHOOSING CHILD CARE AND ENROLLING WITH A PROVIDER

This chapter provides an overview of how Children’s Council can assist you in choosing a provider that meets your needs. Also included is a summary of requirements for child care providers, including special requirements for non-licensed providers. This section only provides partial highlights of provider responsibilities. For more information, please refer to the Provider Guidelines.

Support for Parent Choice

Children’s Council offers free information and support for all families seeking child care in San Francisco, including Choosing Child Care workshops, and our Inclusion Team, a program that helps families find quality care for children with special needs.

Our Resource and Referral service maintains a comprehensive citywide database of licensed child care providers. No appointment is necessary for one-on-one counseling. To speak with a counselor, you can drop in from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, or call 415.343.3300. You can also find information online at www.childrenscouncil.org.

Children’s Council only offers referrals, not recommendations. We strongly recommend that you take an active role in visiting and working with potential providers, including discussing mutual expectations for:

• Philosophy of care, including guidance and discipline
• Specific needs for your child’s care and development
• Days and times when the child care provider is available for child care
• Provider charges, particularly those not covered by your child care subsidy, called “co-pays”
• Emergency planning and contact information
• Any additional policies specific to your provider

We encourage families to call Community Care Licensing at 650.266.8843 to learn about the licensing complaint process, and to discover if there is a substantiated complaint about an individual child care provider you are considering.
**Types of Child Care Providers**

ELS Voucher, ELS Reserved, ELS Bridge, and ELS Moderate providers:

- Licensed child care centers include child centers, nursery schools, and preschool facilities.
- Licensed family child care homes who are authorized to provide care in their own home.

By including preferred programs on Early Learning SF application, families will have a better chance of being “matched” with child care that fits their needs. When an ELS Reserved slot becomes open, Early Learning SF will determine the next eligible family that is the best match for that slot. A family may receive up to 5 programs matches on Early Learning SF for ELS Voucher programs with vacancies. ELS Moderate programs are centers only.

A parent may not use more than one provider per child unless no child care provider is available for the total hours that the parent needs care. There are specific limitations that apply and Children’s Council only authorizes more than one provider for any family on a case-by-case basis.

Parents participating in the subsidy program at Children’s Council may change their primary provider two times within a fiscal year (July 1 –June 30), as research shows that children thrive in familiar, stable child care environments. Additional requests may be granted under select circumstances.

**Role and Responsibilities of Providers**

**Child Care Providers are Not Employees of Children’s Council**

The child care provider you select is not an employee of Children’s Council. As a parent, you enter a business relationship with your child care provider.

**General Expectations for Providers**

Once you have selected a child care provider, he or she should be prepared to do the following:

- Read and understand the Provider Handbook, any forms or paperwork, program policies and procedures.
- Read, sign and submit all necessary paperwork promptly and regularly by given due date.
- Notify Subsidy Provider Coordinator 30 days in advance of any changes in business hours, facility address, license, or other factors of child care services.
- Collect family fees, where applicable.
- Providers are not allowed to charge co-payments to families enrolled in ELS.
- Must provide at least 10 business notice if provider intends to terminate services with the family.
- Charge the same rates for children receiving subsidies as for other children in care.
- Truthfully report all information including days and times of child care provided.
• Conduct business with partners and Children’s Council staff in a professional manner.
• Comply with all applicable child care licensing regulations at all times.
• Maintain an Open-Door Policy: Allow parents to have reasonable access to their children and ability to visit or pick up at all times.
• As an independent contractor selected by the parent, comply with self-employed tax requirements (see Section 7)
This section provides an overview of important information to help you maintain enrollment in your subsidized child care program. This includes the types of notices you will receive, updates you will have to complete, the termination process and your appeal rights.

The Notice of Action

You will receive a Notice of Action (NOA) from Children’s Council in the event of an official decision affecting your child care services, including approval, denial, change or termination of services.

Important information to note on the NOA:

Section 1: If you are being enrolled for the first time, box 1.A will be complete.

If you are already enrolled, all Changes and Terminations will be checked in box 1.B.

Note “Effective Date” of Action.

Days and hours of child care approved per day.

Part Time/Full Time Monthly Family Fees shown here.

Calendar indicates if Family Fee will be Full Time or Part Time in each month.

Section 7: Your Family Subsidy Specialist will write additional details regarding the basis for the Change or Termination.
Recertifications

Families enrolled in a child care subsidy program need to complete recertification appointments every 24 months. You will be asked to meet in person with your Family Subsidy Specialist to renew all need and eligibility documentation. If you are due for a recertification, your Family Subsidy Specialist will make multiple attempts to reach you via phone and email as necessary, and you will receive a written notice with detailed instructions and time frames for responding. Parents are asked to promptly review any documents you receive from Children’s Council, as mail is a primary method of communicating with parents and providers.

- You will receive a Request for Documentation that includes the date and time for your recertification appointment, as well as a list of documents to bring.
- During a recertification, the Family Subsidy Specialist collects and reviews current information to verify your continuing need and eligibility.
  - This includes updated verification of need activity, income, residence, family members, and parents in the home, even if none of these aspects have changed.
- If you need to reschedule the appointment, call your Family Subsidy Specialist as soon as possible before the appointment. You can reschedule only one time.
- If you miss your appointment and do not call beforehand to reschedule, a Notice of Action for Termination will be issued.
- If you appear for the appointment but do not have all of the documentation requested, you have 30 days from the date you sign the application for child care services (CD9600) to submit all need and eligibility documents.

Reporting Changes

Families are required to report the following changes to their Family Subsidy Specialist:

- Receiving subsidized child care at other programs like CSPP, CCTR, Head Start or any other program other than the one currently being paid by Children’s Council to care for a family’s child(ren) during the same days and hours. Failure to report a change of this manner constitutes fraud and will result in termination from the program.
- Relocating out of the City and County of San Francisco. Only families currently residing in the City and County of San Francisco are eligible for ELS subsidies.
- Families must provide notice of at least 2 calendar weeks before the last day of child care with their current program. This notice must be given to both the program and the family’s Subsidy Specialist. If a family fails to do so, Children’s Council will not be able to pay a new ELS child care provider until at least 2 weeks from the last day of care with the previous program, and may not be able to pay the new program at all if they are not a qualified ELS program. Please see the next section for more information about changing programs.

Families should also report the following information to minimize disruptions in service:
• Change in address or phone number
• The desired child care schedule (days/hours) is different from authorized hours
• Re-engagement in CalWORKs

Changing Child Care Programs

Parents may change programs two times per fiscal year. Parents seeking to change child care programs must notify their Family Subsidy Specialist in advance, and at least two full calendar weeks (ten business days) prior to any change.

- Start dates with a new program must be at least two weeks from the date the family notifies their Family Subsidy Specialist, and their current program, to account for a two-week notice period.
- Children’s Council representatives must confirm stop and start dates of care with previous and new programs.
- Payment of all family fees to the previous program must also be up to date. (Family Fees are reviewed in Section 6.)

If your ELS program decides to terminate services with you, they must also notify you in writing at least two full calendar weeks (ten business days) prior to any change. Please call your Family Subsidy Specialist if they do not adhere to this policy.

Temporary Leave from Program: Temporary Suspension of Services

During your 24-month eligibility period, families may be placed on a “Temporary Suspension of Services” during which no child care payments will be made but the family retains a space in the program. Some examples include abandonment of care, vacation, extended family emergency, and any other extenuating circumstances. If you stop using care for any reason, you must notify your Family Subsidy Specialist and your child care program.

Please note that child care subsidies cannot be used to hold a space with a child care program while a child is not using care. This means your child’s space may not be available with the same child care program upon your return to the program. You are encouraged to discuss your plans directly with your program.

Termination of Services

In the event that a family’s services are terminated, the family will always be issued a Notice of Action, which provides the family with the opportunity to appeal the action by following the instructions on the Notice of Action (please see “The Appeal Process” below). A family’s services may be terminated for reasons of non-compliance including, but not limited to:

- Missing scheduled certification appointments with the Family Subsidy Specialist
- Providing false or misleading information regarding need, eligibility, family or household members, residence, providers, child care provided, or any other aspect pertaining to
participation in child care programs (Refer to Section 7)

- Family Subsidy Specialist unable to independently document and/or verify need for child care
- Failure to comply with the requirements of their subsidy program
- Repeated inaccurate completion of Attendance Sheets
- Overlapping use of multiple subsidized child care programs
- Failure to pay assigned Family Fees
- Failure to respond to a request to contact a Children’s Council staff member

Changes in family need or eligibility may also result in termination. Child care programs vary in eligibility requirements and must first serve families with the highest need for services. Reasons for a family to lose eligibility include, but are not limited to:

- Family moves out of the area; families must reside in San Francisco to be eligible for ELS
- Family earns more income than program limits allow
- Parent voluntarily withdraws from subsidized child care program
- Children become older than the ages served by the program (see Section 2)

If you lose services due to any of the above program limitations, your Family Subsidy Specialist and our Resource and Referral department will help you apply to the Early Learning SF eligibility list.

Loss of Funding

Children’s Council makes our best effort to inform families of any government funding cuts that may affect their child care subsidies. When funding for a child care subsidy program decreases, families are generally discontinued from services based on enrollment date: families enrolled last will be first to be terminated from the program.

The Appeal Process

*Parents in ELS programs who disagree with any Notice of Action (NOA), such as a Termination, have the right to an appeal through an appeal hearing.* A parent must respond to a NOA if the parent disagrees with an action. The parent(s) may file a request for a hearing with the Children’s Council within 14 calendar days of the date the Notice of Action was received.

A parent can request an appeal by filling out the back of the NOA or they can call their Family Subsidy Specialist to appeal. Otherwise, the action will become effective as indicated on the NOA.
When an Appeal is Requested
After filing an appeal, a parent’s child care subsidy will continue unchanged until a decision has been reached regarding the appeal. Within ten working days following the receipt of a request for an appeal, Children’s Council will notify the parent of the appeal hearing’s time and date.

- Parents have 19 days from the date the NOA was issued to file an appeal.
- Read the information on the back of your NOA.
- The hearing must take place in person.
- Only one reschedule is permitted, and you must contact Children’s Council prior to the hearing in order to reschedule.

The hearing will be conducted by a hearing officer who is at a staff level higher in authority than the staff person who made the contested decision. The family, or its authorized representative, is required to attend the meeting. If needed, an interpreter will be provided. If the family or its representative fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the family will forfeit its right to an appeal and the intended action will stand.

After an appeal hearing, Children’s Council will mail or deliver a written decision to the family within ten calendar days. Those parents who have completed a hearing with Children’s Council following the procedures outlined on the NOA, and who do not agree with the result of the hearing, may move the appeal to the government agency that funds the corresponding subsidized child care program.
This section reviews how your child care costs are reimbursed to your child care program. It explains the Child Care Certificate and Attendance Sheet. The section also outlines how Family Fees are determined and collected, and how to report a child absence.

**The Child Care Certificate**

Once your program marks your family as “provisional” in Early Learning SF, your Family Subsidy Specialist will issue you a Notice of Action and Child Care Certificate confirming your 30-day provisional child care period. You and your program will receive a Child Care Certificate that clearly states the days and hours authorized. After you complete your intake appointment and all documents have been submitted and verified by your Family Subsidy Specialist, a certificate will be generated for 24 months.

---

### CERTIFICATE FOR CHILDCARE SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider:</th>
<th>Provider ID #:</th>
<th>4684</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider Name and Address:</td>
<td>Provider Phone:</td>
<td>(415)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124-3709</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effective Date:** 03/06/2019  
**End Date:** 03/04/2021

**Child(ren) Authorized:**

| Start and Stop dates of child care  
| Days and Hours of care  
| Provider’s Requested Rate  
| Family Fees (if applicable)  
| Additional notes will be in Comment section |

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Name</th>
<th>Test Child</th>
<th>Provider Requested Rate</th>
<th>Rate Type</th>
<th>Child Category</th>
<th>Rate Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Date: 03/06/2019 Monthly</td>
<td>PROGRAM 48, 49, 50 ONLY</td>
<td>Infant D:5:59</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>$546.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Date: 07/11/2020 Monthly</td>
<td>PROGRAM 48, 49, 50 ONLY</td>
<td>Toddler 2:5:59</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>$1,078.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Date: 07/11/2020 Monthly</td>
<td>PROGRAM 48, 49, 50 ONLY</td>
<td>Preschool 3-K</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>$1,185.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Family Fees (if any):**

- **Effective Date:** 03/01/2019
- **Part Time (less than 150 hours per month):** N/A
- **Full Time (150 hours or more per month):** N/A

*The maximum allowable benefit is based on the certified need of each eligible child in the family. The maximum benefit level paid is either the provider’s usual and customary charges or the state established ceiling, whichever is lower.*
Costs Covered by Children’s Council Subsidy

Children’s Council will only reimburse child care that occurs per the schedule on a current Notice of Action and Certificate.

*Child care provided outside the authorized days or hours on the Notice of Action and Certificate is the responsibility of the parent and the child care provider.*

Family Fees

Parents may be required to pay for part of their child care services. These shared costs, called Family Fees, are determined by the California Department of Education, and vary depending on your family size and documented gross monthly income. Your Family Subsidy Specialist calculates the exact amount of this payment and will notify you with a Notice of Action.

- Full-time family fees apply if a child is authorized for 130 hours or more of care per month.
- Part-time family fees apply if a child is authorized for less than 130 hours of care per month.
- Family fees are based on authorized care and not actual attendance.

Parents must pay their family fee directly to the child care provider, and the fee is due in the beginning of each month of services provided. Child care providers document fees paid on monthly Attendance Sheets.

*Important: Family Fees are not adjusted in the middle of a month due to a change in a parent’s need or their use of services. Any changes made to Family Fees take effect on the first of a future month.*

Delinquent Family Fees

Parents may be terminated from their subsidized child care program if they do not pay family fees. Family Fees are considered delinquent when Children’s Council is notified by the provider that the fees have not been paid, or when Children’s Council receives an Attendance Sheet that does not include fee payment documentation. Parents may be able to arrange a payment plan with their child care provider, but the agreed-upon repayment plan must allow current fees to be paid on time and allow for repayment of fees that are past due. A copy of the plan must be given to your Family Subsidy Specialist.

Co-Payments

ELS programs are prohibited from charging co-pays of any kind to subsidized families, such as optional items or services such as field trips, extra classes or parent groups

- School-related costs for a school-age child
- School-related tuition
- Any extra charge for child care that is not pre-approved on the Child Care Certificate. For example; if a parent is late picking up a child or uses child care outside of what has been authorized.
Absence Policies

Any time a child is absent from care, parents must notify their child care provider on, or before, the day the absence occurs. Providers must notify Children’s Council when a child is absent for more than three (3) consecutive days.

Non-Operational Days
Licensed child care providers may be paid up to ten (10) days per fiscal year for holidays, staff in-service days, or other closure days. Families should refer to the provider’s policy handbook for a list of closure days and discuss any possible co-payments for the closure days that are not paid by Children’s Council.

Using Your Authorized Services
Children’s Council considers a family’s use of child care to be broadly consistent with the care authorized for that family if:

- The total hours of care used in the month do not change the maximum reimbursement ceiling from full-time to part-time, or vice versa.
- The total hours of care used in the month do not change the family fee from full-time to part-time, or vice versa.

If attendance records indicate a pattern of care used that is not broadly consistent with care approved on the Notice of Action and Certificate, your Family Subsidy Specialist will notify you and request any updates to your need for child care. Failure to respond may result in termination of services.

Families and programs are encouraged to agree on a set schedule, and will be paid based on the guidelines below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Schedule</th>
<th>Type of Provider</th>
<th>Children’s Council will pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set Hours, Full or Part Time</td>
<td>Licensed home or center</td>
<td>Child Care on Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable Hours, Full Time or Part Time</td>
<td>Licensed home or center</td>
<td>Child care used (actual attendance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance Sheet Guidelines

Parents and child care providers are required to maintain and submit monthly attendance sheets recording a child’s attendance. If an attendance sheet is completed inaccurately and does not comply with the Attendance Sheet Guidelines in this section, parents will be notified of the error in writing. Repeated inaccurate attendance sheets may result in termination of services. Families enrolling in ELS Reserved will not be required to complete attendance sheets, and can ignore the following requirements.
Time In and Time Out
• The parent must record the time they drop off or pick up the child. Providers may not enter times for the parent.
• The entire attendance sheet must not be completed at the beginning or end of the month. This is not an accurate record of each day of care.
• If the child care provider drops off or picks up a child from school or another child care, the provider must write the times using the center section.
• In/out times should reflect the actual time children are dropped off or picked up and should not be rounded up or down. For example, if the child’s approved schedule on their child care certificate is 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, but the child was actually dropped off at 7:57 am and picked up at 4:43 pm, the hours on the attendance sheet must be 7:57 am and 4:43 pm.

Signature and Ink Requirements
• Signatures must be complete and original. A full signature must be used at the bottom of the attendance sheet. Initials are not accepted.
• All writing on the attendance sheet must be in ink. If you make a mistake on the attendance sheet, please cross it out; correction fluid or tape is not allowed.

Child Absences
• The parent or guardian must write in the reason for all absent days in the “Absence Reason” box on the attendance sheet.
• Parents should never enter hours if the child does not attend child care.

Attendance Sheet Payment Schedule
• Attendance sheets are due in the office by the third working day of the month following the month of child care and will be paid by the 12th business day of the month. Attendance sheets that are received after the third working day are considered late and will be paid within two (2) weeks.
• Any attendance sheets received more than three (3) months after the original due date may not be paid.

* A sample Attendance Sheet appears on the following page.*
Please note that parents are not required to sign on a daily basis. Parents are only required to indicate the drop off and pick up times each day that care is use.

- Providers do not need to initial if picking up or dropping off from school
- Parents must write the absence reason in the “comments” section
- The attendance sheet requires one parent and one provider signature at the bottom

### Times in/out recorded here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time In (AM/PM)</th>
<th>Time Out (AM/PM)</th>
<th>Time In (AM/PM)</th>
<th>Time Out (AM/PM)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/4</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>Wed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parent and Provider sign & date here

__________

### FAMILY FEE CERTIFICATION & RECEIPT

(Please Check One Box)

- All Family Fees have been paid.
- Family Fees have not been paid and I do not have a payment plan in place.
- A Payment Plan is in place between the parent and the provider.

Amount Collected: $__________  Provider Initial:__________

Outstanding Balance: $__________  Provider Initial:__________

Amount Collected: $__________  Provider Initial:__________

### PARENT Self-Certification

As a parent, I declare under penalty of perjury that the information above is an accurate record of child care provided and that during this time period I was employed, or attending training/school, or other qualifying activity.

Parent/Guardian Signature:__________  Date:__________

### PROVIDER Self-Certification

As the provider, I declare under penalty of perjury that the information above is true and correct, and that the child care as stated above was provided. I understand that I may be required to repay any overpayment.

Provider Signature:__________  Date:__________

Printed 9/28/2018. Return the attendance sheet by 5:00 PM on the third working day of the month to:
445 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, (415) 276-2900

21
This section explains important Children’s Council policies regarding fraud, liability, provider status, harassment, conduct, grievance process, and privacy.

**Parent Rights**

Children’s Council is committed to fully complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Furthermore, all families receiving services through Children’s Council of San Francisco have the right to:

- Culturally sensitive services based on equality and respect that affirm and strengthen diversity.
- Service that is fair, responsive, accountable, and provided without discrimination.
- Clear and timely information related to participation in a child care subsidy program.
- Confidentiality of personal information.
- Due process in the event of any adverse action affecting participation.

**False or Misleading Information Policy**

All parents participating in a child care subsidy program are required to understand and sign a copy of Children’s Council’s False or Misleading Information Policy.

*Any false or misleading information provided to Children’s Council regarding employment, income status, enrollment in a training program, or eligibility relating to the medical incapacity of the child or parent, will be grounds for the termination of child care services and will be cause for Children’s Council to recover funds for child care payments received.* Any family terminated for providing false or misleading information will not be eligible for future services from Children’s Council.

Examples of false or misleading information include, but are not limited to:

- False or misleading reporting of child care attendance on an attendance sheet (or any database used to report attendance).
- Any arrangement created for the purposes of generating a child care payment for services that did not occur.
- Any arrangement directing payment intended for child care services to parties or persons other than the child care provider.
- Sources and number of subsidy payments – for example, if you accept subsidies from both Children’s Council and another funding agency with overlapping dates and hours of child care.
- Providing inaccurate information regarding family size or income including wages (commissions, overtime, bonuses, tips, etc.), child support, social security, alimony or any other income described in this handbook required to establish eligibility and assess family fee.
- Falsified, misleading or inaccurate documentation regarding employment, training programs, school, or physical/mental incapacity or any other required criteria to establish need for services.
- Any other falsified information, when such information influences the determination of eligibility, family fee, need for services and/or reimbursements for services.
**Damage and Injury Policy**

Children’s Council does not assume responsibility for any injuries or damages that result from the provider’s performance of services authorized in a Child Care Certificate. This includes injuries or damages resulting from the provider’s or parent’s failure to comply with program eligibility requirements that may cause injury or damages in connection with the child care services funded by the program.

Children’s Council does not inspect individual child care facilities. We can neither warrant nor guarantee any information related to a child care provider. Children’s Council is not responsible for the licensing status of any child care provider.

Children’s Council reserves the right to recommend that a parent or guardian remove their child(ren) from care and seek alternative care upon receiving a significant complaint about a provider or a licensing violation from Community Care Licensing. In many circumstances, the parent has the right to decide to continue care with the provider under investigation as long as the provider remains open. Parents exercising this right will be required to sign a waiver. In such cases the agency will continue to reimburse related child care costs under the guidelines of the parent’s subsidized child care program.

**Provider Independent Contractor Policy**

*Child care providers providing care outside the child’s home are independent contractors, not Children’s Council employees.* Nothing in this handbook is intended or to be interpreted as conveying an employee/employer relationship with Children’s Council.

Children’s Council reports the total annual child care payments to both the IRS and the California State Franchise Tax Board, and sends child care providers an IRS form 1099 in January of each year. Providers complete an IRS form W-9 with either a Tax ID or Social Security Number. Providers shall pay the state and federal taxes due on their monthly earnings. Taxes are not deducted from child care reimbursements. Failure by a provider to report income to the IRS and California Tax Board may result in fines.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

Children’s Council does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, place of origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or ancestry. Furthermore, Children’s Council affirms and encourages respect for individual diversity and fully supports inclusion and reasonable accommodations of families and children with exceptional needs. Providers will refrain from providing religious instruction to children receiving subsidized child care.
**Respectful Conduct Policy**

Children’s Council requires that all clients be respectful in interactions with the staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other clients. Children’s Council will not tolerate behavior that is aggressive, threatening, verbally abusive, or otherwise disrespectful towards others. In addition, Children’s Council will not tolerate conduct which results in damage to, or the threat of damage to, any property of Children’s Council. Consequences for violation of this policy can include termination from services and denial of future services from Children’s Council.

**Anti-Harassment Policy**

Children’s Council is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment. Children’s Council prohibits harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religious creed, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, registered domestic partner status, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation.

All such harassment is unlawful. Children’s Council’s anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the agency and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee of the agency, including managers, supervisors and coworkers as well as vendors, customers, clients, independent contractors and any other persons doing business with Children’s Council. This policy prohibits unlawful harassment based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.

Prohibited unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments.
- Visual displays such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement, or interfering with work because of sex, race, or any other protected basis.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual request as a condition of continued employment or services or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.

Consequences for violation of this policy include, but are not limited to, termination from services and denial of future services from Children’s Council.

**Uniform Complaint Policy**

If you experience any problems or issues with your child care subsidy or your customer service, please contact your Family Subsidy Specialist as a first step. In the event that your Family Subsidy Specialist is not able to resolve the issue, please contact his/her Family Subsidy Manager.

If you have complaints regarding a perceived violation of federal or state law, you have the right to file a complaint with the California Department of Education, Child Development Division.
Individual agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint. Complaints may include allegations of unlawful discrimination in any program or activity funded directly by the state or receiving Federal or State financial assistance. Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the State Department of Education at the following address:

Child Development Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

If the complaint is not addressed by the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. The complainant should seek the advice of an attorney of his/her choosing in this event. A complainant filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders.

**Confidentiality Policy**

As a family receiving subsidized child care, your records are covered by government regulations prohibiting the disclosure of information, except under limited circumstances. Children’s Council will refuse requests for records covered by these regulations, and will not identify you as a participant in any subsidy program in such circumstances. If you have a need for us to verify your information in writing for another party, you must personally request information about your records, and will be asked to come in person with personal identification.

Family records may be disclosed in limited circumstances, such as when:

- The parent gives written consent for information to be released.
- The information requested does not identify the family as program participants.
- The information is part of an internal communication between Children’s Council and subsidy partners.
- The information is needed for a medical emergency.
- A court orders the information to be released.
- The information is needed to investigate allegations of child abuse or fraud against the program or program staff.

**Viewing Your Records**

Parents have the right to review their family records upon request, with advance notice, during our hours of operation. Children’s Council will make every attempt to accommodate these requests within a reasonable timeframe. These records may also be reviewed by your representative if we receive written authorization for them to do so, and if we are able to verify the authenticity of the request and the identify of the representative. Please note that the files and personal information of child care providers are kept confidential. These records are only available for review upon direct request by the child care provider or the child care provider’s authorized representative.
Family Subsidy Policy Handbook Acknowledgement

This document is a record indicating that each eligible family has received the Family Subsidy Policy Handbook, and is responsible for understanding and abiding by the policies and procedures within. It also describes two key requirements for maintaining continuous services. Please initial next to each line after reviewing:

_____ Other than reporting income in excess of the amounts on page 7, I understand that I may report any information to increase to my services or lower my family fee to my Family Subsidy Specialist as needed, and that I have the right to maintain my current level of services until my next recertification even if my need and eligibility changes as long as my income is below the amounts above.

_____ I understand that in order to maintain continuous services, I will maintain communication with my Family Subsidy Specialist if my need for child care changes from what is currently authorized on my Notice of Action and Certificate for Child Care Services.

I hereby acknowledge that I have received the Family Subsidy Policy Handbook, and that I am responsible for understanding and abiding by the policies and procedures within.

__________________________________________          ________
Parent/Guardian Signature          Date