

Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)

Information for foster carers and kinship carers

What is the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)?

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) is a payment by the Australian Government for families who need practical help with the cost of child care to support their child's wellbeing.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) is paid to child care providers on top of the Australian Government's existing Child Care Subsidy for parents and carers.

An eligible child may receive up to 100 hours of additional subsidised childcare per fortnight under the scheme.

Who is eligible?

Carers need to be eligible for the Australian Government's existing Child Care Subsidy and meet the extra criteria to be eligible for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing). Carers can check if they are eligible through the myGov website at my.gov.au.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) applies to any child subject to a protection order under the Victorian *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.

Children in informal care and not subject to a protection order under the Children, Youth and Families Act may also be eligible for the additional subsidy.

How is the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) paid?

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) will be paid directly to childcare providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction.

The childcare provider will provide a fortnightly Statement of Entitlement to carers, which will include details of the sessions of care and the resulting fee reduction amounts.

In some cases, the childcare provider may charge a fee that is higher than the subsidy. Carers should check with their childcare provider about the fee levels charged. If the rate is higher, carers should speak with their child protection case manager or their agency about reimbursement of the 'gap'.

How can carers apply for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)?

Carers that are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy should speak with their child care provider about accessing the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).

It is the childcare provider's responsibility to:

- collect evidence from you to support your application

- prepare the application to the Australian Government on your behalf.

Carers should also speak with their child protection case manager or agency worker if they would like to apply for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing). The child protection case manager or agency worker can assist carers to provide evidence to the childcare provider to support their application.

Once the childcare provider approves the child for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing), carers will immediately be given access to the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) for up to six weeks. The Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) can continue beyond six weeks pending confirmation by the child care provider that the child's circumstances remain unchanged.

What type of evidence must support an application?

Your child protection case manager or agency worker can arrange evidence to support your application in the form of a letter from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, that states:

- the name of the child
- the child's date of birth; or residential address; or name(s) of parent(s)/carer(s) to ensure that the evidence relates to the correct child
- the name and contact details of the organisation responsible for the document
- type of order and the date of the order
- the name of the person giving the evidence
- the person's title and/or position in the organisation.

Carers also need to contact Centrelink to link their Centrelink customer reference number to the child in their care.

Information for permanent carers

Carers of a child on a permanent care order can provide a copy of the child's court order to their childcare provider as evidence of eligibility for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).

The childcare provider may rely on the copy of the child's court order as evidence, however, the Australian Government decides if the evidence supports the application.

Agencies can also provide a written statement that confirms that the care order is still in place.

Children not subject to a protection order or involved with child protection

Children who are not subject to a protection order or involved with child protection may also be 'at risk' for the purpose of the subsidy if they are experiencing harm, because of current or past circumstances or events that resulted in the child experiencing or being exposed to:

- serious physical, emotional or psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- domestic or family violence, or
- neglect.

It also includes circumstances where the risk of harm or neglect to a child is real and apparent.

Carers can talk to their childcare provider about whether they are Child Care Subsidy eligible and whether they may be eligible for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).

More information

As the subsidy was introduced in July 2018, childcare providers are still developing their understanding of how it operates.

Further information is available on the [Australian Government Department of Education and Training Guide to ACCS \(child wellbeing\) webpage](https://www.education.gov.au/accs-child-wellbeing-guide) <<https://www.education.gov.au/accs-child-wellbeing-guide>>.

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