



Child Care Financial Aid (CCFA) Policies Fiscal Year 2025-2026 for Parent and/or Responsible Adults

Child Care Financial Aid services may be provided to families who demonstrate a need for child care and who are determined eligible for services based on the following:

- Parent or Responsible Adult (Parent/RA) must be a resident of Mecklenburg County.
- The child who services are requested for must be U.S. citizen or a legal U.S. non-citizen.
- Maximum family gross income must be less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level for children ages 0-5 years and children with special needs and 133% of the Federal Poverty Level for children ages 6-12 years, effective July 2025

DOCUMENTATION OF NEED (Full-Time Services)

Eligibility:

- Parents/RA must be gainfully employed an average of thirty (30) hours each week and provide official verification (check stubs).

Employment:

- **Parent/RA must maintain gainful employment an average of thirty (30) hours each week.** Gainful employment is defined as earning a gross salary equivalent to an average of thirty (30) hours per week at the current minimum wage:
 - \$7.25 per hour or \$217.50 weekly, effective July 24, 2009
 - **Parent/RA is responsible for providing all information necessary to document the family's income and need to determine eligibility for child care financial aid.**
 - Self-employed Parent/RAs will be required to provide the previous year's tax returns for verification of eligibility. Newly self-employed Parent/RAs may provide verification of their current earnings from the date the business was established. Newly self-employed Parent/RAs will be given twelve months (12) to provide documentation that they are gainfully employed.
- OR Parent/RA must be enrolled and attend school at least twenty (20) hours a week (16 hours for high school completion course) and must provide official verification.

Education:

➤ Public School (Elementary, Middle, or High School)

- Parent/RA who is enrolled in a publicly funded school (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Charter School, Central Piedmont Community College High School, etc.) working toward graduation must attend school at least sixteen (16) hours a week and must provide official verification of enrollment.

➤ GED

- Parent/RA must provide official verification of enrollment in GED program and attend at least an average of sixteen (16) hours a week.

➤ Post-Secondary Education

- Parent/RA enrolled in post-secondary education must attend school at least twenty (20) hours a week and must provide official verification of enrollment.
- Child care financial aid for post-secondary education can only be authorized for a lifetime maximum of twenty (20) months.
- Parent/RA enrolled in online courses must provide documentation from the school that verifies their current enrollment, current courses, and statements of hours of participation needed for each course from the school or instructor.
- Child care services cannot be provided to support parents who are participating in graduate or postgraduate programs.

- OR Parent/RA must provide official verification of a combination of work and school of at least thirty (30) hours per week

- OR Parent/RA must be actively participating in Work First Employment Services activities at least thirty (30) hours per week and justify need for child care as part of his/her Mutual Responsibility Agreement.

REPORTING CHANGES

Parent/RA must report directly to CCRI the changes listed below within ten (10) business days of occurrence:

- Change in your contact information (address and telephone number)
- Child receiving services moves out of your home
- Increase in income that exceeds 85% State Medium Income (chart attached)
- Loss of current employment, no longer attending, or completed a schooling or training program
- Change in the recipient's choice of provider
- You want or need to end child care services

Note: Failure to report changes or provide information in a timely manner may result in termination of services. Providing false information (verbal or written) may result in repayment of services provided or court action.

VOUCHERS

- Parent/RA should call Child Care Search at 704-348-2181 for information about selecting a child care program to meet his/her needs. Parent/RA should visit child care programs before requesting placement and notify the subsidy department of his/her program choice.
- Children must enroll in licensed child care programs that are agreed to be enrolled in the NC FAST payment system.
- A voucher will be generated and the Parent/RA must sign the voucher. Once the Parent/RA signs the voucher, the Subsidy Department will enter the voucher information into NC FAST, where the child care provider will approve once the child enrolls. If a voucher is generated from the ONECase system, the provider is also required to sign the voucher and return to CCRI by the deadline listed on the voucher.
- If the Parent/RA has not selected their child care provider, he/she must contact the CCFA Specialist once their choice has been made. It is the Parent/RA's responsibility to return the signed NC FAST voucher to CCRI. It is the provider's responsibility to return vouchers from ONECase.
- Vouchers can only be issued if funding is available at the time of request.

PARENTAL FEES

- Monthly parental fee is based on 10% of the countable gross income, not the cost of the program selected. The parental fee is usually assigned to the youngest child receiving child care financial aid.
- Parent/RA is responsible for paying the assigned parent fee to the child care program each month. Please review the child care program's policies for their procedures for receiving payment.
- All parents/RAs must receive a receipt from the child care program for the amount paid, service paid for, and date of payment.
- Parent/RA who does not pay the parental fee can be terminated by the child care program at any time, without notice, in accordance with the child care program's established payment policies for private paying parents.
- All unpaid fees must be paid before the parent/RA can re-enter the child care financial aid program a new voucher must be issued and funding must be available for the child.
- Parent/RA is responsible for a parent fee even if the child is absent from the child care program.

Additional out of pocket charges for Parent/RA

- Parent/RA is responsible for paying registration fees, late pick-up charges, activity fees, transportation fees, etc. that the child care program may charge.
- Some child care programs charge tuition rates that are higher than the maximum allowable payment from CCRI. The parent/RA will have to pay the additional charge in addition to the assigned parent fee or choose another child care program. We encourage you to discuss these charges prior to enrollment.

HOURS OF CARE

- **Full-time** child care is defined as an average of 32 hours to a maximum of 55 hours per week.
- **Three-quarter time** child care is defined as an average of 18 to 31 hours per week.
- **Part-time** child care is defined as less than 18 hours per week.
- Employment/school enrollment hours must match hours that child care is authorized.
- Parent/RA must report any change in the hours he/she needs child care to the CCFA department. This change must be approved by CCRI before a change in the plan of care (hours) will be authorized.
- If the parent/RA wishes to use additional hours, other than those authorized, the child care program can charge the parent/RA its private rate for the time requested.
- Children are expected to attend child care regularly.

CHANGING CHILD CARE PROGRAMS (Transfer)

- A ten-day (10 working days) notice must be given by the Child Care Financial Aid Specialist to the current child care program.
- If parent/RA wishes to change child care programs, he/she must call their Child Care Financial Aid Specialist to request the new child care program. A new voucher will be needed to enroll the child at a new child care program.
- Parent/RA is responsible to pay all parent fees during the ten (10) day notice.
- After the CCRI subsidy department verifies with the current provider that the parent does not have any outstanding parent fees, a new voucher for the new provider will be created and sent to the parent for their signature.

YEARLY REDETERMINATION

- Yearly Redetermination packets are mailed by NC FAST to the last reported address one month prior to the end of the certification period.
- Parent/RA must complete **all** information in packet, provide verifications prior month check stubs, current school schedule, etc. (documentation to support need for child care and income) and return the completed and signed packet to CCRI. CCRI must receive the signed packet no later than 5 pm on the last business day of the month that certification expires. To avoid a gap in services, CCRI encourages you to send in your completed, signed recert packet no later than the 17th of the month your certification expires to allow time for completion.
- OR parent/RA can call for an appointment to complete the yearly eligibility determination.
- If the parent/RA is no longer meeting requirements for full-time care, the plan of care will be reduced based on hours working.
- Failure to be determined eligible for services will result in termination of services on the last day of the certification month.
- **Please review the following tips to assist you in maintaining services:**
 - Report address changes within 10 business days of move by emailing or calling your assigned CCFA Specialist. If you are unable to reach your worker, you may email us at Subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org or call 704-335-9438.
 - Put an alert in your phone for the month your certification expires. You can find the end date of your current certification period on your child's voucher.
 - Consider signing up for the US Postal Service's Informed Delivery services. The Post Office will send you a daily email with previews of mail you are scheduled to receive. CCRI's return address is on the envelope.
 - Recert packets are mailed by NC FAST about 45 days in advance of your certification expiring. If you have not received the recert packet by mail by the first of the month your certification is scheduled to expire, please contact your assigned CCFA Specialist. If you are unable to reach your worker, contact us at Subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org or call 704-335-9438 to request a duplicate packet.. Please include your email address so that the copy can be sent via email. Once you have submitted your recert packet, please follow up to confirm receipt by CCRI with your assigned CCFA Specialist.

TERMINATIONS

- Parent/RA is expected to notify both the subsidy department and the child care program when care is no longer needed or wanted.
- If the request is during the certification period and is a temporary change, parent/RA must request a new voucher if eligibility has been maintained when care is needed again. Vouchers can be issued if funding is available.
- The subsidy department will always send a notice to the parent/RA (to the last known mailing or email address) if parent/RA becomes ineligible for child care financial aid.
- To receive child care services for the entire eligibility period, the parent/RA must maintain eligibility and **report changes as listed above within ten (10) business days of the change. (See tips above).**
- Parent/RA must contact CCRI when he/she moves out of Mecklenburg County and child care services will be transferred to the new county of residence in North Carolina (only). This does not apply to children with time-limited county funding.

Temporary terminations

- Parent/RA requests that the child attend another program (unlicensed summer camp, summer school, etc.) for a specific amount of time.
- Parent/RA provides documentation that child must be absent for an extended period of time due to a medical situation or visit with absent parent.

SMART START FUNDING

- The Mecklenburg Partnership for Children (Smart Start) subsidy program assists eligible families with children ages birth to 5 years.
- All children funded through Smart Start child care financial aid must be enrolled in 4- or 5-star child care programs.
 - New Smart Start-funded children also will be allowed to enroll during the temporary license issued for “expansion and location change.”
 - Only siblings of Smart Start-funded children currently enrolled will be allowed to enroll in a child care program that receives a temporary license due to a change of ownership.
 - No Smart Start funds may be used for new placements of children in facilities operating with a provisional, probationary, or special provisional license issued by the North Carolina Division of Child Development as a result of findings of conditions that are hazardous to the health and safety of children or staff. All Smart Start-funded children will be removed within thirty (30) days of the date CCRI is made aware of the change in license status.

WAITING LIST

- Parent/RA receiving child care financial aid who wishes to place **additional child/ren** in child care may have to be placed on the waiting list until funding becomes available. Parents expecting a new baby cannot add the child until the baby has been born.
- Parent/RA whose child care financial aid is terminated should call 704-348-2181 once they feel they are eligible. If determined to be eligible, he/she will be placed on the waiting list from date of call.
- Once funding becomes available, parent/RA will be contacted via email for an application. If CCRI is unable to reach the parent/RA or the parent/RA does not respond by the deadline, the name will be removed from the waiting list.

For questions, contact CCRI’s Child Care Financial Aid Department

subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org

200 B Regency Executive Park Drive, Suite 240 Charlotte, NC 28217

704-335-9438 (phone) | 704-376-7865 (fax) Attn: CCFA Department

To report abuse/neglect/licensing complaints or inquiry about program history, call 1-800-859-0829 the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education.

Initial Income Eligibility Limits
State, Smart Start of Mecklenburg County &
Mecklenburg County Waitlist Reduction Initiative Child Care Subsidy

Maximum Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Limits and Fee Percentages for Subsidized Child Care Service
Effective July 1, 2025

200% Federal Poverty Level
(Children ages 0-5 and children ages 6-12 with documented special needs)

Parent Co-Payment	10%											
Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Maximum Gross Monthly Income	\$2,608	\$3,525	\$4,442	\$5,358	\$6,275	\$7,192	\$8,108	\$9,025	\$9,927	\$10,858	\$11,775	\$12,692

133% Federal Poverty Level
(Children ages 6-12)

Parent Co-Payment	10%											
Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Maximum Gross Monthly Income	\$1,735	\$2,344	\$2,954	\$3,563	\$4,173	\$4,782	\$5,392	\$6,002	\$6,601	\$7,221	\$7,830	\$8,440

To compute eligibility, multiply the gross family income by the following:

4.3 if paid weekly
2.15 if paid bi-weekly
2 if paid twice per month

Families currently enrolled in any of these programs whose income increases to 85% of State Median Income are eligible for the EEWf Subsidy Program until their income reaches 300% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Revised 7/1/25

