



Child Care Financial Aid (CCFA) Policies Fiscal Year 2023-2024 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 2022.

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.**
 - Newly self-employed Parent/RAs will be given twelve months (12) to provide information and documentation to support the hours child care is needed and that his/her gross income is equal to an average of thirty (30) hours per week at the current minimum wage.
- 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, change in an education setting or hours attending, or any other temporary change in need for child care
- Change in the recipient's choice of provider
- Desire 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 subsidy department with their choice. 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.

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.
- 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.
- Parent/RA terminated for nonpayment of fees will be given ten (10) days to pay the outstanding fee in full.
- All unpaid fees must be paid before the parent/RA can re-enter the child care financial aid program, unless the Parent/RA and the child care program mutually agree to a repayment plan.
- 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.

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 the subsidy department to request the new child care program. A new voucher will be needed to enroll the child at a new child care program.
- The CCRI subsidy department then creates the new voucher and sends it to the parent for signatures.
- Parent/RA is responsible to pay all parent fees during the ten (10) day notice.

YEARLY REDETERMINATION

- Yearly Redetermination packets are mailed by NC FAST to last reported address one month prior to the end of the certification period.
- Parent/RA must complete all information in packet, provide prior month check stubs/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 packet by the last day of the month, in order to process and prevent a gap in child care services
- 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 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 CCRI at Subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org or 704 335 9438 ext. 804.
 - 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 on that day. 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 us at Subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org or call 704 335 9438 ext. 804 and request that a duplicate packet be sent to you. 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. You may contact us at Subsidy@childcareresourcesinc.org or by calling 704 335 9438 ext. 804 for confirmation of receipt.

TERMINATION

- 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.
- The subsidy department will always send a notice to the parent/RA (to the last known 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 with 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 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, 2023

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	\$2,430	\$3,287	\$4,143	\$5,000	\$5,857	\$6,713	\$7,570	\$8,427	\$9,283	\$10,140	\$10,997	\$11,853

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	\$1,616	\$2,186	\$2,755	\$3,325	\$3,895	\$4,464	\$5,034	\$5,604	\$6,173	\$6,743	\$7,313	\$7,882

85% State Median Income

Parent Co-Payment	10%											
Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Maximum Gross Monthly Income	\$3,273	\$4,280	\$5,287	\$6,294	\$7,301	\$8,308	\$8,497	\$8,686	\$8,874	\$9,063	--	--

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