

Subsidized Child Care



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The Massachusetts Scene

HIGH COST OF CHILD CARE

Full-time care in a center for an infant = **\$20,000** per year

(More than 1 year's tuition at UMass!)



CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

- \$670 million in federal funds
- Pre-COVID 55,000 children with subsidies
- 10,000 children on waitlist for subsidy

Subsidized Child Care in Massachusetts: 3 Gates



- On TAFDC and doing a work activity
- TAFDC closed in past 24 months and working or in education or training program



- Open Case
- Closed Case (for up to 12 months)



- Income Eligible (includes Homeless)

PRE-COVID: Income Eligible Child Care: Who's Eligible?

- Children up to age 13 or 16 if disability
- Income below 50% State Median Income (\$52,641/yr for family of 3)
 - Full chart is at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/state-median-income-smi-eligibility-chart-fy2020/download>
- **“Service Need”**
 - Working
 - Job Search
 - Parenting Leave
 - Homeless- Process written for families in shelter
 - Parent with any health issue the interferes with their ability to look after their child- In litigation. Contact Sarah @ GBLS if family runs into problems
 - In approved Education or Training Program- Contact an advocate if program is considered not approved by EEC
- Teen Parents

NOW: Income Eligible Child Care: Who's Eligible?

Changed rules for "Service Need"

No work activity

- Subsidy lasts for 6 months
- At end of 6 months, if document activity, subsidy continues for another 12 months

Work activity or homelessness or parent disability

- Subsidy lasts for 12 months
- At end of 12 months, if document activity subsidy continues

How do I apply for Income Eligible Child Care?

- Get on the waitlist for income eligible child care –the waitlist is moving
 - Anytime, before you need the care.
 - No documentation needed
 - Best way to do this is to call 2-1-1
- Homeless families eligible for child care without waitlist and without other activity
 - Includes being in shelter or doubled up with someone else because of \$
 - Still call 2-1-1 to get in the system and **be sure to say homeless**
 - Contact CCR&R to make sure don't fall through the cracks

Waitlist- Be aware

- One waitlist
- Make sure to respond when get yearly mail or you'll lose your spot
- Make sure to keep address up to date so you get your yearly letter
- Need to show you're eligible once a subsidy is available, not before

What happens when I get to the top of the waitlist?

- You will get a letter in the mail from the subsidy administrator “Notice of Available Funding”
- Could be from the Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (e.g. Child Care Choices in Boston) or from the specific provider who has an opening
- You need to respond ASAP or you could lose out
- The subsidy administrator will then give you an appointment to go through the process to get a subsidy

What's the process?

- Appointments are currently by phone
- Can submit documents by electronically
- Paperwork

What documents do I need?

Proof of:

- Identity of the applicant(s)
- Live in Massachusetts
- Citizenship or immigration status of Child(ren) only
- Income
- “Service need” for each Parent in the home = WHY you need care
- Relationship of the Parent to all Children and Dependent Relatives in the household.

EEC Forms:

- “Household Composition” form, Income form and Financial Assistance Agreement

If I'm eligible for Income Eligible Child Care, what do I get?

- Either a Voucher or a slot
 - Voucher= Choice: can take to any provider who accepts subsidies and has space
 - Slot: A space with a specific provider
 - Policy says if you turn down the slot, you go back on the waitlist. This is wrong. Contact legal services.
- For all children and can add children at any time
- If provider offers transportation and has space on the bus, transportation can be added at no cost to the family
- Fee- Based on family size and income above poverty line. **No fees** through June 30th and probably not thru December

What if I'm not comfortable sending my child now due to COVID?

Do the process now anyway and ask for an “Approved break in care”

- Means you have a subsidy but are waiting to use it
- When you're ready, you can use the subsidy
- Does not guarantee a spot with a specific child care program
- Fill out a form <https://www.mass.gov/lists/forms-for-managing-financial-assistance#attendance-forms->
- Currently, can take a break for 6 months

How do I find a child care provider?

EEC's search engine: https://eeclead.force.com/EEC_ChildCareSearch

- By location (home or work)
- By commute
- More info
 - Whether accept subsidies
 - Size
 - Language
 - Experience with allergies
 - Experience with other needs
 - Transportation
- Then, call and visit (virtual visits happening now)

You have rights.

Many people do not get child care because they do not know their rights.

There are even more barriers for individuals with disabilities, children with disabilities, and people who are not fluent in English.

We see people wrongfully terminated and denied from child care all the time. We have been hearing from a number of community partners and sharing a number of concerns with EEC.

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Thank you!



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