
APPLICATION, ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND DOCUMENTATION
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is available without regard to income. Refer to [Chapter 7: Family Definition and Determining Income Eligibility](#) for more information about income eligibility.

F. Parental Fees

If the family is eligible for subsidized child care services, the parent may be required to pay a parental fee, i.e., a portion of the cost of care. The parental fee is assessed based upon the family's income and family size. Specific information about assessing parental fees can be found in [Chapter 8: Parental Fees](#).

III. APPLICATION PROCESS**A. Any of the following individuals may apply for child care services:**

1. A parent or responsible adult needing child care services. The parent or responsible adult refers to the person or persons with whom the child lives and who has primary responsibility for the care and well-being of the child. Refer to [Chapter 7: Family Definition and Determining Income Eligibility](#) for more information.
2. A representative for the parent or responsible adult if the parent or responsible adult is incompetent or incapacitated and needs child care services.
3. Staff designated by the DSS director if the child is in custody of the county department of social services. Designated staff may sign the application if child care services are needed to support child protective services or child welfare services.

NOTE: Authorized representatives who apply for child care services for the parent or other responsible adult have the same responsibility as parents to provide accurate and complete information to the LPA.

Social security numbers are not required to determine eligibility for subsidized child care services; however, this information may be requested for child only cases. Parents or other responsible adults may voluntarily provide the social security number of the children for whom services are requested.

B. Application Form Requirements

A formal request for subsidized child care services must be initiated by completing a written application. The Application for Child Care Services ([DCD-0456](#)) must be completed by the designated staff person and the

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Recipient Responsibilities for Subsidized Child Care Services ([DCD-0106](#)) must be completed by the parent or responsible adult. The parent or responsible adult or designated staff person (if the child is in county custody or if services are needed to support CPS, CWS) must sign the application at the time of initial determination of eligibility and during routine redetermination of eligibility to verify the information on the application.

Redetermination of eligibility must be made at least every twelve months (refer to [Chapter 11: Responding to Eligibility Changes and Redetermination](#) for more information). Clients are encouraged to come to the agency to apply for child care services unless doing so presents an extreme hardship on the client. In these cases, the application with instructions may be mailed to the applicant or recipient. Refer to the Application for Child Care Services ([DCD-0456](#)) and instructions for completion.

All individuals who request subsidized child care services must be allowed to sign an application unless the county does not have sufficient funding to serve additional families. When either funds or child care spaces are not available and services cannot be provided immediately, **counties are required to establish and maintain a waiting list**. Refer to [Chapter 10: Waiting List Policies](#) for more information.

C. Establishing the Initial Eligibility Period

1. Standard Eligibility Period

The local agency has 30 calendar days from the date the application is signed to determine eligibility. Eligibility determination is valid for twelve months for child care services provided the client remains eligible. The twelve month period of eligibility begins on the date the application was signed if eligibility is established no more than 30 calendar days from that date.

EXAMPLE: If a parent/responsible adult applies for child care services on 6-17-2002, and eligibility is established during this 30 day period, the eligibility period is 6-17-2002 through 6-16-2003. **If eligibility is not determined within 30 days, the application is denied and the twelve month eligibility begins on the date the new application is signed.**

2. Abbreviated Eligibility Period

Special situations in which an eligibility period of less than twelve months is established are limited to instances in which the need for care supports an abbreviated eligibility period. For example, if a parent/responsible adult is approved for child care for 30 days to seek

employment, an eligibility period may be established for the 30 day period. Or instances where services are needed for a short period of time such as when a parent/responsible adult requests child care services for her school-age child who needs care for the two (2) week school holiday period in December.

3. Vouchers with Limited Time Period

There are instances when the LPA may receive one-time funding or nonrecurring funds as a result of the reversion and reallocation process. The LPA may use the funds to issue a voucher for a specific period of time that is less than 12 months. However, the parent's 12-month eligibility period does not change. Vouchers issued for a limited time can only be used when the county has received one-time funding. The LPA can use the funds to pay for transportation, registration fees, serve families on the waiting list, provide care during the summer, or for other short periods of time. Parents should be informed that child care services can not be extended beyond the eligibility period indicated on the voucher or beyond the end of the state fiscal year, whichever comes first. Child care workers must initial and date the comment section of the time limited voucher to indicate it has been reviewed with parents. Parents must also initial and date the comment section on the voucher to indicate that they understand that the voucher is for a period less than 12 months. Child care workers and parents should use this time period to identify other programs or local resources to assist with offsetting the cost of child care after the time limited voucher expires. (Refer to [Chapter 9: Parental Choice and Voucher Procedures](#)).

D. Notifying the Applicant at Initial Application

The applicant must be notified of any eligibility decision within 30 calendar days after the date of application. A copy of the application serves as notice. Failure by the applicant to provide the required information to determine eligibility within the 30-day time frame is an allowable reason for the application to be denied.

IV. AUTHORIZING CHILD CARE SERVICES

A. Determining a Plan of Care

When a family has been determined to meet all eligibility criteria, the child care worker must then work with the family to determine what type of child care arrangement best meets the needs of the child and family. Refer to [Chapter 5: Establishing Need and a Plan of Care](#). The circumstances that justify the need for child care services and the plan of care must be documented in the case record.