

Service Chapter: Child Care Assistance Program 400-28

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

Overview

Effective July 1, 2025, policy changes around the CCAP Workforce Benefit and clarifications around payments have been made.

Description of Changes

1. Basic Eligibility Alignment 400-28-20-40 - Change

Adding in the allowable option for households who reside outside of ND to be eligible for the CCAP Workforce Benefit. These cases will need an override to be eligible in the system until system changes are in place to accommodate this change.

2. Verification of Child Care Costs 400-28-130 - Update

Information added to clarify a child must attend at least 8 hours in a month in order for a provider to be eligible for payment. CCAP does not pay to hold spots when a child does not attend.

Policy Section Updates

1. Basic Eligibility Alignment 400-28-20-40

NDCC 50-33-05

CCAP Workforce Benefit

Households who have at least one caretaker participating in employment as an employee in a ND licensed or ND tribally licensed or registered child care setting that is open and operating child care services a minimum of 25 hours a week can be eligible for CCAP with a waived co-payment. Households applying for CCAP who have verified employment in a licensed or certified child care program are eligible to have all household income excluded, if they meet all other eligibility requirements. In households with two caretakers, the second caretaker does not need to be in an allowable activity.

Child Care employees must work at least 25 hours per week at a ND licensed child care program or ND tribally licensed program. The employee must have their employer complete a SFN 354, which will serve as verification of their employment. Providers who are Approved Relatives, Self-Declared, or out-of-state licensed are not eligible to have employees who would qualify.

Households who reside outside of North Dakota but are employed with a ND licensed program may be eligible for the Workforce Benefit.

Owners of a licensed child care program do not qualify for the CCAP Workforce Benefit, unless their children attend a different licensed child care program.

At the time employment ends, or the license for the child care program ends or hours are reduced below 25 hours a week, it must be reported within 5 days by the household or the employer. Income will no longer be waived for these households, and co-payments will be determined the month following the month of employment ending. If there is no other known allowable activity the household must be allowed three months of continued assistance. The three months of continued assistance begins in the month following the month of the employment ending. CCAP will be closed for any household with monthly gross income, minus allowable deductions over 85% SMI for the household size.

Note: Maternity leave is allowable exception for hours to reduce below the minimum 25 hours a week.

Example 1: A two caretaker household applies for CCAP in July. An SFN 354 is turned in for one caretaker. The other caretaker is not in an allowable activity. The

SFN 354 is reviewed and it is determined that one caretaker is employed with a ND licensed child care program with 30 hours a week. CCAP is approved for an eligibility period of 18 months from July through December of the next year.

Example 2: A two caretaker household applies for CCAP in July. An SFN 354 is turned in for one caretaker. The other caretaker is employed and provides income verification. The SFN 354 is reviewed and it is determined that this caretaker is only employed for 20 hours per week. The household must meet all CCAP eligibility requirements as they do not meet the minimum work hour requirement for the CCAP Workforce Benefit.

Example 3: A household is approved under the CCAP Workforce Benefit for an eligibility period of 18 months from July through December of the next year. In October it is reported that the child care program's license has ended October 17th. Starting November, income is evaluated and it is determined the household is over 85% SMI. The CCAP case closes October 31.

Example 4: A household is approved under the CCAP Workforce Benefit for an eligibility period of 18 months from July through December of the next year. In February the household reports that they are no longer employed with the child care program. The household will be allowed three full months of activity search beginning March.

2. Verification of Child Care Costs 400-28-130

Child care costs are paid based on enrollment of the child, **however a child must attend a minimum of 8 hours for a provider to be eligible for a payment.** Enrollment amounts for each child must be reported in the Provider SSP by the provider.

It is the responsibility of the provider to certify in the Provider SSP that the child that they are requesting payment for are still enrolled in their care every month. All children need to be certified by the 25th of the month prior to receive payment by the first of the following month.

The system will use the determined level of care and amounts charged by the provider to issue the correct payment amount. Co-payment amounts are then subtracted from the determined payment amount.

If the provider charges an amount that is over the state max rate for the determined level of care, CCAP will continue to pay up to the state maximum rate based on the

determined level of care. It is the responsibility of the household to report when there is an increased need in child care hours.

If the provider charges an amount less than the state max rate for the determined level of care, CCAP will pay based on the actual enrollment cost entered into the SSP. This may result in a payment that is less than state maximum rate.

The provider must keep monthly attendance reports that must be submitted through the SSP. Attendance records must be submitted before the certification of the child in the following second month. Providers can submit their own attendance records or can complete a SFN 1220. **Attendance records must verify the child attended the minimum of 8 hours for each child paid.**

If attendance records are not being submitted, future payments will not be issued.

Example:

Provider certifies child is enrolled for the month of November. Provider has until end of January to submit an attendance record for the month of November. If provider has not submitted attendance records for November, the provider SSP will not allow certification for any future months beginning the month of February.

The family is responsible to report the use of new provider timely for the following months payment. When a household uses multiple providers or changes to a new provider in the current month, the household is responsible for making the appropriate payment arrangements with their providers. A household who changes providers after payment has been issued to a provider for a service month, may not be eligible for an additional payment for that service month.

Only one full-time payment will be issued per child, per month. If a household changes providers after payment has been issued to a provider for a service month, and the child attends a minimum of 8 hours, the additional provider reported will only receive up to a part-time payment.

If a household changes providers after payment has been issued to a provider for a service month, and the child does not attend a minimum of 8 hours, the additional provider reported will only receive up to a part-time payment, and the first provider will be responsible to return the payment. In these cases, another full-time payment will not be issued.

Note: For households who have two associated providers, if a change in providers is reported for a service month in which payments have already been issued, the

newly reported provider will not be eligible for a payment until the following month, even if the child did not attend a minimum of 8 hours. Overpayments may be established when appropriate.

The family is responsible for the costs of child care to the provider that exceeds the Level of Care determination on the certificate for the payment month.