

Consumer Education Statement

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Maine's Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) is part of Maine's Office of Child and Family Services' is designated as the lead agency with primary responsibilities for the planning and administration of child care subsidies funded with the Child Care Development Fund Block Grant.

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Block Grant Act of 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 9858b (b) (1) (A), (the Act) requires the Lead Agency to "administer, directly, or through other governmental or non-governmental agencies" the funds received. The regulations at 45 CFR 98.11 provide that, in addition to retaining "overall responsibilities" for the administration of the program, the Lead Agency must also (among other things) promulgate all rules and regulations governing the overall administration of the CCDF program.

The Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP)

Child Care Subsidy Program Mission is to

1. Ensure the health and safety of children in child care.
2. Help parents make informed consumer choices and access information to support child development.
3. Provide equal access to high-quality child care for families with low-income.
4. Enhance the quality of child care and the early childhood workforce.

For more information about Maine's Child Care Subsidy program please visit:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/step.htm>

CCSP Guidelines

The Office of Child and Family Services is responsible for approving Child Care Subsidy eligibility through review of the completed program application.

- The Parent must be determined financially eligible for Child Care Subsidy by the Office for Family Independence (OFI) no more than sixty (60) calendar days prior to the date of the OCFS' receipt of the completed program application.
- Parents enrolled in a Job Training or Educational Program must verify enrollment upon initial application and re-determination, and are required to attend classes either in-person or online.
- If a Parent is income eligible and provides documentation from the SSA or MaineCare's Medical Review Team (MRT) indicating he/she has a disability which renders him/her unable to care for the Child(ren) and unable to work and the other Parent is working, attending an Educational or Job Training Program, the Family may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.
- If a Child is home-schooled, the Parent is not eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy during regular school hours, as defined within their school district.
- To the extent funding is available, the Department may waive Employment, Job Training or Educational Program requirements and authorize Child Care Subsidy:
 - For a period of no more than twelve (12) months, for the following:
 - At-risk Children;
 - A Child involved in an Open Child Protective Case; or
 - A Child in Care and Custody.

- A Child placed under the legal guardianship of an individual who has reached Retirement Age.

Income Guidelines

All families must meet income guidelines of gross family income at or below 85% of the State Median Income.

Fee Assessment - Fees are assessed to all families. Parent fees are based on gross family income. For more information and Maine's Sliding Fee Scale please visit:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/step.htm>

MAXIMUM INCOME GUIDELINES – CHILD CARE SERVICES

85% of the SMI,

Fund for a Healthy Maine (FHM), Child Care Development Funds (CCDF), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

Effective April 1, 2018 until further notice

FAMILY SIZE	ANNUAL INCOME	MONTHLY INCOME	WEEKLY INCOME
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1.	\$35,022.75	\$2,918.56	\$673.51
2.	\$45,798.99	\$3,816.58	\$880.75
3.	\$56,575.22	\$4,714.60	\$1,087.98
4.	\$67,351.45	\$5,612.62	\$1,295.22
5.	\$78,127.68	\$6,510.64	\$1,502.46
6.	\$88,903.91	\$7,408.66	\$1,709.69
7.	\$90,924.46	\$7,577.04	\$1,748.55
8.	\$92,945.00	\$7,745.42	\$1,787.40
9.	\$94,965.54	\$7,913.80	\$1,826.26
10.	\$96,986.09	\$8,082.17	\$1,865.12

For Family Size over 10 add \$168.38 to Monthly income.

For families with more than one child in care, the youngest child is always considered the first child enrolled. The total amount of assessed fees to a family shall not exceed 10% of the family's gross income for all of their children.

Weekly fee assessments must be rounded down to the nearest dollar. All assessed parent fees shall be paid directly to the caregiver by the parent.

Additional Resources for Families

For more information about resources for families please visit:
<https://childcarechoices.me/index.php/resources/>

For more information on developmental screenings please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html>

Services for Children and Families

DHHS helps individuals and families find and receive assistance programs including financial assistance, Food Stamps, Medical, Child Care, Nutrition, and Community Services.

For more information about these services please visit: <https://www1.maine.gov/benefits/account/login.html>

You can also apply for benefits and renew benefits by using the online resource for cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), child care, health care coverage, and home heating assistance (LIHEAP)

To Find Child Care in Maine

Maine's Child Care Choices is a tool allows users to search child care facilities around state of Maine. Child Care facilities could be found in one of the three ways:

- By giving full address including city and ZIP
- By giving just the city
- By giving just the ZIP

You can also choose other filter options according to your requirements.

To search for a child care program please visit: <https://search.childcarechoices.me/>

Constituent Services

Assists and acts as a liaison between the Commissioner's office and Maine's Congressional delegation, Office of the Governor, members of the State Legislators and members of the public by answering informational inquiries and attempting to resolve problems, in a quick, courteous and helpful manner.

For more information on Constituent Services please visit:

https://www.maine.gov/DHHS/legislature/constituent_services.shtml

Mandated Reporting

Mandated Reporters are a critical part of Maine's Child protection system and act as an early warning network to identify suspected child abuse and neglect; promptly enough to avoid serious and long term damage to a child. Professionals who frequently encounter children in their work are in the best position to recognize and report suspected child abuse and neglect and are required by law to do so. The Maine Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) operates the statewide hotline for child abuse and neglect. Mandated Reporters call this hotline to make a report. Highly trained staff is available to guide callers through the process of making a report of suspected abuse and neglect. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 1-800-452-1999 to report child abuse or neglect.

For more information on mandated reporting please visit: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/mandated-reporters.shtml>

Child Development Services (CDS)

The Child Development Services system is an Intermediate Educational Unit that provides both Early Intervention (birth through two years) and Free Appropriate Public Education (for ages three through five years) under the supervision of the Maine Department of Education. The CDS system ensures the provision of special education rules, federal and state regulations statewide, through a network of regional sites.

CDS consists of nine regional sites and a state office. The state CDS office maintains a central data management system, system-wide policies and procedures, and provides centralized fiscal services for regional CDS sites.

Regional CDS sites provide case management and direct instruction for families with children from birth through age five. Each site conducts Child Find, which is the process of identifying children with disabilities. Screenings and evaluations are provided in order to identify children who are eligible for services. Regional CDS sites arrange for local services that include early intervention and special education and related services for eligible child from birth to age five and their families.

To learn more about Child Developmental Services please visit: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds>

Criminal Background Checks for Child Care Providers

All licensed child cares and all license-exempt providers who have an agreement to accept children on the Child Care Subsidy Program are required to complete a criminal background check. Background Checks (in the State where the individual resides) includes all the following checks: Child Protective Services (CPS), State Bureau of Identification (SBI) with fingerprints, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), State Sex Offender Registry, NCIC National Sex Offender Registry, and FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification. In each state where the individual has resided for the previous five (5) years) includes all the following checks: Child Protective Services (CPS), State Bureau of Identification (SBI) with or without fingerprints, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), State Sex Offender Registry, NCIC National Sex Offender Registry, and FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification.

Unsatisfactory results is defined by one (1) or more of the following: A conviction for any Class A crime (as defined by State statute) or its equivalent, A conviction within the last ten (10) years for any Class B or C crime or its equivalent that involved the use of force; A conviction for any crime within the last ten (10) years that resulted in time served in a correctional facility; A conviction for any crime in the last ten (10) years that jeopardized the health and safety of a minor; More than one (1) conviction within the last three (3) years based on an action which would be deemed, by the Department, as detrimental to the welfare of a Child; A drug-related offense committed during the preceding five (5) years, unless the Department determines the individual is eligible pursuant to a review of the conviction or convictions; A conviction for an OUI or Driving to Endanger within the last three (3) years. The Department may approve Child Care Subsidy if another adult in the household (not the Child Care Provider) is found to have this conviction and he or she signs a written agreement not to transport Children receiving Child Care Services; More than one (1) operating under the influence (OUI) conviction, with the latest conviction in the last five (5) years; Three (3) or more convictions in the last five (5) years for speeding in excess of twenty (20) miles per hour over the speed limit by the Child Care Provider. The Department may approve Child Care Subsidy if the Child

Care Provider signs a written agreement not to transport Children while providing Child Care Services; A suspended driver's license at the time of application by the Child Care Provider. The Department may approve Child Care Subsidy if the Child Care Provider signs a written agreement not to drive the Children while providing Child Care Services;

To learn more about criminal background checks please visit:

<https://backgroundcheck.maine.gov/DHHS/MBC/>

To learn more information on offenses that prevent individuals from being employed by a child care provider or providing child care please visit: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/documents/Child-Care-Subsidy-Program-Rules.pdf>

Child Care Licensing Unit

Maine's Division of Licensing and Certification, Children's Licensing and Investigation Services ensures that children attending child care programs are in safe and healthy environments and are provided with care, supervision and developmentally appropriate activities that meet each child's physical and emotional needs. The Children's Licensing and Investigation Services licenses and monitors three types of child care: Family Child Care Homes, Child Care Centers, and Nursery Schools.

To learn more about the different types of child care programs please visit:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/cclicensing.htm>

Health and Safety Requirements for Child Care Subsidy Providers

All licensed programs and license exempt providers who have an agreement to accept children on the Child Care Subsidy Program are also required to meet health and safety training requirements.

For more information on the health and safety requirements and trainings please visit:

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/healthsafety.html>

Child Protective Services

Complaints can be called into the statewide Child Protective Services Intake hotline. In addition, Child Care Licensing Specialists are assigned to the daily complaint intake on a rotating basis. Those calls come in to the main number for Child Care Licensing and are transferred to the Child Care Licensing Specialist assigned to the complaint intake. In addition, any parental complaints can be reported to the Department through means of phone, fax, or email.

To make a complaint please call: 1-800-452-1999

Monitoring Statements

Maine's Division of Licensing and Certification, Children's Licensing and Investigation Services provides monitoring inspection reports for each on-site visit to a licensed child care program. This report outlines if there were any health and safety violations and includes action step(s) the child care program took to correct the violation(s).

Maine's Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) provides monitoring inspection reports for each on-site visit to a license-exempt child care program. This report outlines if there were any health and safety violations and includes action step(s) the child care program took to correct the violation(s).

To search for the licensing history and inspection reports of a child care program please visit:

<https://search.childcarechoices.me/>

Maine Data on Deaths and Serious Injuries in Child Care Settings

To learn more about Maine's Data on Deaths and Serious Injuries in Child Care Settings please visit:

<https://childcarechoices.me/index.php/mainedata/>

Quality Rating

Maine's Quality for ME was created by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide parents a way to easily identify high quality early childhood and education programs. The rating system is based on four steps, each step leading to higher quality. Step Four is the highest step a program/provider can achieve. All licensed child care programs in Maine – family child care, child care centers, school age programs – are eligible to participate after being in operation for one year. Families can use this information to inform their choices for quality child care. CCSP Licensed Providers must be at minimum a Step 1 on the QRIS.

To learn more about Maine's quality rating system please visit:

<https://childcarechoices.me/index.php/quality-rating-and-improvement-system/>