

## Fees Policy

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### NQF

QA7	7.1.2	Management systems - Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
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### Aim

Parents fully understand fee payment procedures and requirements, and pay their child care fees on time.

### Related Policies

Orientation for Children Policy  
 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

## Implementation

### Enrolment

- A booking fee of \$50.00 is required when lodging an enrolment form. This is non-refundable if your child does not take a place at our service. This booking fee will be taken as part of your security deposit once your child takes a place at our Service
- Upon enrolment families must pay a security deposit of one week's full fees less any Child Care Subsidy to which families are entitled. Any bond owing when a child leaves the service will be refunded within two weeks.

### Fees

Our child care fees are outlined in our fee schedule which is available from our office/administration area and also displayed on our website. Please note our fees may change from time to time. Fees must be paid on time and:

- on the first morning your child attends the service for the week
- in advance for every day that your child is enrolled at the service. This includes pupil free days, sick days and family holidays but excludes periods when the service is closed

**Child Care Subsidy**

Child Care Subsidy is available to all families who are Australian Residents if the child meets immunisation requirements and parents meet eligibility requirements. Entitlement is determined by an activity test which determines the number of hours of subsidised care to which families are entitled.

<i>Hours of activity per fortnight</i>	<i>Maximum number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
8 hours to 16 hours	36 hours
More than 16 hours to 48 hours	72 hours
More than 48 hours	100 hours

A broad range of activities meet the activity test requirements, including paid work, self-employment, unpaid work in a family business, active job hunting, volunteering or studying. You can also include reasonable travel time to and from a place of activity to the centre. In two parent families, both parents must meet the activity test, and subsidy hours are calculated on the lower number where parents have different levels of activity.

**There are exemptions for parents who legitimately cannot meet the activity test requirements.**

<i>Exemptions</i>	<i>Number of hours of subsidy per fortnight</i>
<i>Families do not meet activity test and have low income eg combined annual income less than \$66,958 2108/2019 year</i>	24 hours
<i>Families do not meet activity test, child attends centre-based service with appropriate preschool program, and will attend school following year</i>	36 hours

The percentage of subsidy a family receives is based on their estimated combined annual income. All families wishing to access Child Care Subsidy need to complete an online Child Care Subsidy assessment through their myGov account. Assessment asks families to provide information about their expected combined family income, activity level of parents and types of child care service being used.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy may be available to help support:

- families needing help to support their children’s safety and wellbeing
- grandparents on income support who are primary child-carers
- families in temporary financial hardship
- families moving to work from income support

Families can claim Child Care Subsidy or Additional Child Care Subsidy online by signing into their myGov and completing a Child Care Subsidy claim. If eligible, the Subsidy will be paid directly to the service on families' behalf and we will reduce the fees owed. This can occur after our service enters families' enrolment information online, and families confirm their enrolment information through their myGov account. Until Child Care Subsidy details are available, families will need to pay full fees. Families are entitled to receive Child Care Subsidy for up to 42 days where their child is absent, for example due to illness, public holidays and parental leave. Evidence to support these absences is not required. Additional absence days may be available if they meet the situations outlined in the Family Assistance Law and there is evidence to support these.

"Child Care Subsidy may not be paid by the Government in certain situations and families will be required to pay full fees for the period involved. These include:

- non-attendance for 14 weeks in a row
- for any days before a child attends the service for the first time.
- for any days in the final attendance period after a child last physically attends the service."

### **Statements of Entitlement**

We will issue fortnightly Statements which include child/children's full name/s, date of care, date of payment, daily and weekly hours of care, absences, hourly fees and hourly and daily fee totals and the number of hours fees were reduced (eg by Child Care Subsidy) and total reduction amount.

(Parents' My Gov accounts will also have how much care families have received and how much Child Care Subsidy has been paid.)

### **Invoices**

Invoices for the amount of fees payable in a period will be issued every two weeks. If families pay more than the fee amount required at the time, change will not be given but will be credited to the family's account.

### **Receipts**

Families will be provided with receipts once invoices have been paid.

### **Late Fees**

Families who do not collect their child before we normally close for the day may be charged a late fee of \$15 for every 15 minutes or part thereof they arrive past our closing time. This fee covers the cost of employing the staff required to supervise a child outside our operating hours. It may be waived at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor.

Should families wish to end a permanent booking at the centre or should management make the decision to terminate their child's permanent position, 2 weeks written notice is required from the

ending/terminating party. **If families do not provide this notice, they will be charged 2 weeks fees.** Children must also be signed in and out by parents/guardians on the last scheduled day of their attendance for the Child Care Subsidy to apply. If this does not occur families are required to pay full fees.

In relation to casual bookings, at least 24 hours notice is required if a child no longer requires a place in the booked session. **If this notice is not provided, families will be charged for the session.** There may be instances where cancellation occurs as a result of an emergency or other special circumstance. The Nominated Supervisor has the discretion to waive the termination fee in these situations.

### **Overdue Fees**

The Nominated Supervisor will issue a **Friendly Fee Reminder** letter to any family who is one week late paying their fees. **If families are having difficulty making fee payments they should immediately speak with the** approved provider or nominated supervisor to discuss fee payment arrangements. Information provided by families will be treated as strictly private and confidential.

In cases of non-payment of fees, where the service is unable to contact families about the debt, or families do not meet agreed arrangements for repayment of the debt and ongoing payment of fees:

- bond payments will be applied to outstanding debt amounts and
- the Nominated Supervisor may immediately suspend or terminate the child's place at the service. Families will be advised of this action in writing.

Where families do not meet agreed payment plans, and an outstanding debt remains, the Nominated Supervisor may use their discretion to engage a third-party agency to recover the outstanding amount. The cost of this action may be added to the debt owed.

## **Sources**

**Bryant, L. (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service : A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney: Community Child Care Co-Operative.**

**Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011**

**Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care) Act 2009**



## Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Review will be conducted by:

- Management,
- Employees,
- Family Members
- Interested parties.
- **Last reviewed:** 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021

**Date for next review:** 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022