



Transition arrangements for the end of the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package

Information for families

What is the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package?

The Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package (the Relief Package) started on 6 April 2020 and will finish on 12 July 2020.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the early childhood education and care sector reported significant decreases in attendance and enrolments in early March 2020. To ensure services remain open, and families who need it can access care, under the Relief Package the Australian Government is paying child care services directly so that families can access free child care. Many services can also access the JobKeeper payment during the Relief Package.

The Relief Package payments are made in lieu of any Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) entitlements.

When will Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy return?

From 13 July 2020, CCS and ACCS will return, along with new transition measures to support the sector and parents as they move back to the subsidies.

In recognition that there will be a transition period from the Relief Package, all approved early childhood education and care services will receive a Transition Payment, instead of JobKeeper, for the period 13 July 2020 to 27 September 2020.

What does this mean for families?

Getting and keeping Child Care Subsidy

When the regular CCS arrangements resume from 13 July 2020, families will again need to pay the gap fee (the child care fee after Government subsidies).

Families who were getting CCS before 6 April 2020 won't need to do anything for their subsidy to start again, as long as they have remained eligible and enrolled. Their CCS will start again automatically on 13 July 2020.

If a family's circumstances have changed (for example income level or contact information), they should update their details with Centrelink as soon as possible. This can be done through their [Centrelink online account](#) through [myGov](#) or the [Express Plus Centrelink mobile app](#).

If a family was not previously accessing child care they should put in a claim for CCS as soon as possible. If families continue using child care from 13 July 2020 but aren't receiving CCS, they will need to pay full fees. Claims for CCS can only be backdated for up to 28 days from the day the claim is lodged.

Families who received CCS for 2018-19 and still haven't confirmed their income for that financial year must do so by 30 June 2020. If they don't, their CCS and **Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)** will not start again on 13 July 2020.

Parents and their partners confirm their income with Centrelink by either:

- lodging their tax returns with the Australian Taxation Office
- completing an 'Advise non-lodgement of tax return' with Centrelink, if they don't need to lodge a tax return. This can be done through the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app.

It's important to know that if a family's CCS and ACCS stops they will not be back paid for the period between when it stops and when they confirm their income. Families will need to pay full fees during this time. There's more information about [time limits for confirming income](#) for CCS on the Services Australia website.

Where families have trouble meeting these requirements, they can contact Services Australia to discuss.

How much CCS a family can get is based on their individual circumstances. You can find information about eligibility and how much CCS families can get on the [Services Australia](#) website.

Families will not get CCS unless they confirm their 2018–19 income

Families who received CCS in 2018–19 and haven't confirmed their income for that financial year must do so by 30 June 2020. If they don't, their CCS will not start again on 13 July 2020.

Parents and their partners can confirm their income with Centrelink by either:

- lodging their tax returns with the Australian Taxation Office or
- completing an 'Advise non-lodgement of tax return' with Centrelink, if they don't need to lodge a tax return.

It's important to know that if a family's CCS stops, they will not be back paid for the period between when it stops and when they confirm their income.

This information was last updated on 17 June 2020. Please regularly check dese.gov.au/covid-19/childcare to help ensure that you are using the latest version of this information sheet.

Fee freeze

During the transition period, up to 27 September 2020, child care services that receive Transition Payments will be required to maintain their fees at the level they were in the reference period (17 February to 1 March 2020).

Indexation of the Child Care Subsidy rates

At the start of each financial year the Child Care Subsidy rates are increased by the Consumer Price Index. This year the new rates will apply from 13 July 2020.

The CCS hourly rate cap will increase to

- **\$12.20** for Centre Based Day Care
- **\$11.30** for Family Day Care
- **\$33.17** for In Home Care, and
- **\$10.67** for Outside School Hours Care.

The hourly rate caps are the maximum hourly rate used to calculate families' CCS for each service type. For more information on the new Child Care Subsidy rates, see the [Child Care Subsidy rates from 13 July 2020](#) fact sheet.

Activity test

Temporary changes to the Activity Test have been made to help families impacted by COVID-19 to get back into their workforce participation activities, for up to 12 weeks from 13 July 2020 to 4 October 2020.

During this period, families can access up to 100 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight where they now have a reduced number of hours of work, training, study or other recognised activity, compared to their activity level prior to COVID-19.

For example, prior to COVID-19, a single person worked 30 hours per fortnight, entitling them 72 hours per fortnight, but now works 15 hours per fortnight entitling them to 36 hours per fortnight. From 13 July, this person can apply to Services Australia through their [Centrelink online account](#) through [myGov](#) or the [Express Plus Centrelink mobile app](#) and be entitled to 100 hours of subsidised care per fortnight.

This is also available for two-parent families, where one or both parents have reduced activity compared to their activity level prior to COVID-19, and both parents are still engaging in at least 8 hours of recognised activity per fortnight.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

ACCS is a top up payment to CCS that provides extra support for families. There are four types of ACCS payments.

ACCS Type	Who is it for and what happens when the system returns to normal?	How to apply?
Child Wellbeing	<p>Children at risk of serious abuse or neglect. Further information can be found in the Fact Sheet.</p> <p>To ensure child wellbeing payments continue to flow, if a family's ACCS (child wellbeing) determination expires before 12 July 2020, the child care service will need to apply for a new determination.</p>	A provider applies for ACCS (child wellbeing). Families should discuss eligibility and access to the payment directly with their child care service.
Grandparent	<p>Grandparent principal carers on income support. Further information can be found in the Fact Sheet.</p> <p>If the family's current ACCS (grandparent) eligibility continues past 12 July 2020, they will return to their ACCS entitlement from 13 July 2020.</p>	Families can apply through their Centrelink online account through myGov or the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app .
Transition to Work	<p>Parents transitioning to work from income support. Further information can be found in the Fact Sheet.</p> <p>If a person's ACCS (transition to work) eligibility expires before 12 July 2020 or the person requested to cease the payment, they will need to apply and be assessed as current for ACCS (transition to work), to recommence on 13 July 2020.</p>	Families can apply through their Centrelink online account through myGov or the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app .
Temporary Financial Hardship	<p>Families experiencing temporary financial hardship. Further information can be found in the Fact Sheet. Families experiencing financial hardship can apply now for additional support from 13 July 2020. ACCS (temporary financial hardship) is available for up to 13 weeks per event. Families who applied before the relief package, and are still experiencing financial hardship can re-apply and may be able to access the balance of the 13 weeks.</p>	Families can apply through their Centrelink online account through myGov or the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app .

Families experiencing financial hardship

The ACCS (temporary financial hardship) is available to support families experiencing financial hardship that impacts their ability to pay child care fees. This payment is available for up to 13 weeks and covers the entire cost of care (up to 120% of the hourly rate cap) for up to 100 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight.

To receive the subsidy, families need to apply within six months from the date of the event. Evidence will be required to support the application and may include, but is not limited to, a letter from an employer (for loss of job), statutory declaration outlining the nature of the temporary hardship,

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medical certificate or death certificate. Further detail can be found in the [ACCS \(temporary financial hardship\) Fact Sheet](#).

Families can apply through their [Centrelink online account](#) through [myGov](#) or the [Express Plus Centrelink mobile app](#).