



ChildCareGroup
Child Care Assistance

Relative Child Care Provider Handbook

*1420 W. Mockingbird, Suite 300
Dallas, TX 75247
tel\214.630.5949
fax\214.688.4436
web\www.childcaregroup.org*

FOREWORD

The ChildCareGroup Child Care Assistance program has developed this Handbook to inform you about its child care services and to explain your role as a child care provider. All rules, policies and procedures in the handbook are based on federal or state laws and Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas policies and procedures.

Please read this handbook carefully. Keep it handy as a reference for questions you may have later. Feel free to call us at 214-630-5949 if you have any questions.

THE CCA SYSTEM

The Texas Workforce Commission

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is one of the state agencies that provide support services to low income families working to become and remain self-sufficient by moving them from the welfare system into the workforce.

The Child Care Assistance System

Most TWC services that help eligible families with child care are combined into one system.

- TWC contracts with local workforce development boards across the State of Texas to administer child care funds. Each local board serves a county or a group of counties that together form a “service delivery area”. Currently there are 28 local boards established in Texas. Dallas County is our service delivery area, and Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas is the local board that provides funding for child care services.
- Each local board contracts with community-based agencies across the state to manage the delivery of child care services in their areas. These agencies are referred to as the “contractor” or “CCA”. ChildCareGroup is the child care contractor for Dallas County.
- Each contractor is responsible to the local board for the operation of the child care system in their area, and the local board is in turn responsible to TWC for administration of funds and the child care system.

Child Care Assistance Staff

- CCA staff that Relative Child Care providers will see or talk to most often are:
Eligibility Staff, who:
Help parents determine if they are eligible for services,
Educate parents on choosing child care that meets their needs,
Enroll CCA children into provider facilities,
Give providers updated information on family eligibility and fees
- Financial Management staff, who:
Process payments for providers,
Assist with billing and payment related questions
- Provider Services staff, who:
Gather information and paperwork from providers,

Update provider information in the CCA system,
Provide technical assistance to providers on the CCA program

GETTING CHILD CARE SERVICES THROUGH THE CCA

Federal law requires that parents be given a choice when selecting child care for their children. Options available to parents are:

Regulated Child Care Providers –The provider will have a permit to operate a:

- Licensed Child Care Center
- Licensed Child Care Home
- Registered Child Care Home

These facilities are regulated by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (TDHHS) Child Care Licensing division.

Relative Child Care Providers - An individual who is at least 18 years of age, and is by marriage, blood relationship, or court decree, one of the following:

- The child's grandparent;
- The child's great-grandparent;
- The child's aunt;
- The child's uncle; or
- The child's sibling

Relative providers may not live in the same household as the child unless:

- The child is a child of a teen parent; or
- CCA determines and documents that other child care provider arrangements are not reasonably available for the family.

An individual appearing on the Texas Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry is not eligible to be a relative child care provider.

When Relative Providers Are Employed Outside the Home

Some relatives care for children in addition to working outside the home. This relative must be available to provide child care during the times needed by the parent. **If the relative's work schedule conflicts with the child care needs and does not allow them to care for the child at all times needed, then they will not be eligible to be the child care provider.** The arrangement for child care is with that individual relative only, and the relative may not have someone else providing child care. If this occurs, the parent will need to make another child care choice.

Child Care Assistance, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, and Texas Workforce Commission staff have access to the State of Texas' wage reporting system. If a relative provider is employed, CCA staff reserve the right to request verification of employment and work schedules to determine if the relative is working during the time child care is to be provided. **If the relative is working at another job instead of providing child care, then the relative will be required to refund any and all payments made for care while they**

were not the actual child care provider. This is considered fraud and is subject to prosecution.

Enrollment & Referral Process

When a parent is eligible for CCA funding and funds are available to pay for their child care, Eligibility Staff will discuss childcare arrangements with the parent. Together they will determine what days and hours the parent will need care, and what the parent's copay fee will be, if any. Once the chosen relative has completed the required paperwork and received orientation on the CCA program, the Eligibility staff will authorize care and will follow up by sending an enrollment form (2450) with days and hours of care, copay amounts, and eligibility dates.

The provider should verify that a child's information shows on the online attendance report within 1-3 days of receiving verbal authorization for care, and the referral information matches the authorization given for days of the week and part or full day care. If the online information does not match the information given by CCA staff, the provider must contact CCA within 5 days. See the attendance reporting section of this handbook for more information about the online referral information and attendance reports.

Termination of Enrollment

CCA may terminate child care services before the eligibility end date due to:

- Permanent loss of work or training and the parent has not resumed activity after 3 months,
- Family income is too high,
- Determination of fraud,
- Failure to pay parent share of cost (copay), or
- Accumulating too many absences.

Units of Child Care Service

CCA pays for child care based upon the daily enrollment, or units of service delivered:

- A unit of service may be a full day or a part day
- A full day unit is 6 to 12 hours of care per day
- A part day unit is less than 6 hours of care per day.

CCA arranges care based on the time needed to support parents' work or training. Many parents are employed part-time or do shift work, so some children will need part day or part week care, or may need care on weekends.

School-age children who need child care Monday-Friday, part day care on school days and full day care on school holidays will have a single referral for the school year and be paid a blended rate for each day of care. The blended rate combines the full day rate with the part day rate as follows:

- Part day rate for 175 days + full day rate for 30 days
- Divided by total number of days during the school session (205)

During the summer months the children will be referred full day and paid at the full day rate if the parent's work or training schedule requires full day care.

COLLECTING PARENT FEES

Who Pays Parent Fees

Federal law and state regulations say that parents, with the exception of a few, must pay part of the cost of their child care, even when they are getting help from TWC. The CCA Contractor figures parent fees according to the family's gross monthly income (before taxes). The Eligibility staff determines which parents have to pay a fee and will calculate the amount of the fees.

Typically parents who are earning an income and not receiving any type of public assistance will have a fee assessed. Those who have no income, are referred by Child Protective Services, or who are attending training through the TWC Choices program will not have a fee to pay.

Collecting Parent Fees

Relative providers **must** collect parent fees. Providers keep the fees they collect, and the amount of the assessed parent fees is deducted from the CCA reimbursement to the provider.

Providers may collect parent fees:

- Once a week,
- Once a month, or
- On a schedule that meets the parent's needs, as long as collection is documented and the fee is collected **before** child care services are provided.

Parents must pay their parent fees even when:

- Children are scheduled to attend but do not attend, and
- The parent takes vacation days.

Reduction of Parent Fees

Parent fees may be lowered temporarily when parents have unusual circumstances. Only the Eligibility staff can lower parent fees. Providers may **not** lower fees, but they can recommend that a parent ask for a fee reduction from CCA. CCA staff will notify providers when parent fees have been reduced and the reimbursement to the provider for that child will be adjusted.

When Parents Do Not Pay Their Fees

If a parent does not pay their fees as scheduled, the provider should notify CCA on the fifth day that the fee is past due on the CCA web portal or by calling the provider information line at 214-630-5949, option 3 for providers.

DETERMINING PAYMENT RATES TO PROVIDERS

Maximum Reimbursement Rates

Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas sets the maximum rates that providers can be reimbursed for services to CCA-referred children according to:

- The type of child care;
- The ages of children served, such as infant (0-17 months), toddler (18-35 months), preschool (3-5 years), and school (6-12 years); and
- Whether full-day or part-day care is provided.

Provider Payment Rates

Provider reimbursement rates are based on the rates that the relative would charge to the public or their relatives for child care, and prorated to a daily rate. The provider determines a single rate for full-day care and a single rate for part-day care for each of the four age categories (0-17 months, 18-35 months, 3-5 years, 6-12 years), for a total of eight rates.

PROVIDERS WILL NOT BE PAID MORE THAN THE CCA MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT RATE EVEN IF THEIR PUBLISHED RATES ARE HIGHER THAN THE CCA MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT RATES.

ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN

Child Care Attendance Automation (CCAA)

Parents have the responsibility of recording attendance of their children daily through the Child Care Attendance Automation System (CCAA). Each parent is issued an attendance card, and the parent or another individual designated by the parent will use the provider's telephone to record the daily attendance by completing the following steps:

- Call the toll free number: 1-866-960-6496
- Enter their 16 digit card number
- Enter their PIN
- Enter the child number
- Choose the action (check-in, check-out, etc.)

The system will check the following:

- Does the child have an active referral through CCA?
- Is this the correct provider?
- Is care authorized for this day?
- Is the transaction coming from the provider's phone number?
- Does the entry make sense? (Example - on a check-in, is the child already checked in?)

If any of these checks fail, the entry is rejected and the parent will know immediately.

Note: The provider may not record attendance information in the CCAA system for the parent, and the provider cannot be an additional attendance card holder. Violation of this rule can result in termination of child care services for the parent, and termination from the program for the provider.

When Children Are Absent

CCA does not pay for care on days when CCA-referred children are not in care with their relative provider.

The CCAA system has an “absence” transaction, just like the check in. Absences work like attendance, except:

- They require an absence reason (illness, court ordered visit, general absence)
- Parents can call in the absence to 1-866-960-6496 from any phone, anywhere
- Absences can be reported up to 3 days in advance

Absence Policy and Exceptions

Days not recorded with an attendance card are automatically counted as absences in addition to days that are recorded as absences. Children may not have more than 40 days of absence within their 12 month eligibility period. When a child’s absence is due to chronic illness in excess of 40 days or other circumstance parents can not control, CCA may approve the child to stay in care if the parent can provide documentation to support the reason for absence.

Exceptions. What if...

- *The parent forgets to record attendance?* At the next entry, the system warns the parent that there is an incomplete day or missing transaction. The parent can go back 7 calendar days to fill in any missing transactions (today + 6 days back).
- *The parent is not available to record an absence at the provider’s home?* Absence reporting can be done by phone from anywhere. The parent can also go back 7 calendar days (today + 6 days back) to report the absence once they have returned to care, and can report future absences up to 3 days in advance
- *The parent takes their school age child to school, then the provider picks them up in the afternoon. How does the check in get entered?* When the parent picks the child up at the end of the day, they will enter a previous check in for that afternoon, then enter a check out.
- *The parent is not available to record attendance due to the provider giving home transportation services?* If the provider gives transportation to and from home, the parent or one of their designated card holders will have to come by the provider’s home at least weekly to record attendance
- *There is a problem with the CCAA phone system?* The provider should call the Help Desk to report the problem. When it is fixed, the parent can go back 7 calendar days (today + 6 days back) to fill in any missing transactions.

Reviewing Attendance Information

The CCAA system has a provider website that will allow providers to view:

- Provider name, address, contact information, and billing cycle
- Referral information for all CCA children enrolled in the home
- Activity for attendance recording by child

- Transactions (check-in, check-out, etc.) for all children
- Daily recorded attendance and missing attendance information for all children

The website can be found at: www.workforcesolutionschildcare.com

Relative providers will log in with their TDHHS listing number. The password for the first visit to the site will be the provider's zip code. After the initial log in the system will have the provider set up a new password. Please refer to the User Manual posted on the CCAA website for additional information on reports in the system.

All attendance information for the week should be recorded in the CCAA system by the parent by the end of each week.

All CCA providers are required to review attendance information entered by the parents at least every 5 calendar days to ensure attendance is recorded. If a parent fails to report attendance or absences in the CCAA system, the provider must report the attendance information to CCA within 5 calendar days of the missing report of attendance in order to be paid. The provider should contact Financial Management staff for directions on how to submit attendance information. If the provider does not report days of missing attendance recording and the parent does not enter the information in the system, the provider will not be paid for those days

Suspension of Enrollment

Sometimes a child must be absent from care for more than two weeks in a row. This can happen when:

- The child must spend time with a parent on a court-ordered visit.
- A teen parent does not have transportation to bring a child to care during school breaks lasting more than two weeks in a row, or
- A parent lives too far away to bring a child to care during breaks in employment that last more than two weeks.

A parent should notify CCA when a child will be absent for this length of time, and request a suspension of care.

CCA staff will:

- Document the child's suspension,
- Terminate the child's enrollment with the provider, and
- Place the child on suspended enrollment.

The provider is not paid for the period of time the child is on suspended enrollment. When the suspension period is over, the parent's eligibility will be determined, then the child will be placed with the original provider if space is available, or with another provider.

PAYMENTS FOR CHILD CARE AND RECORD KEEPING

Payment Processing

Attendance is tracked through the CCAA system for each child each day, then transmitted to CCA for payment processing on a weekly basis. Payments are processed (payment calculated and statement prepared) every 2 weeks and typically released to providers within 5 business days of processing.

There are many steps that take place between the time the attendance information is received and the time the provider receives payment for the services. The following chart shows the process:

All payments to providers are made by direct deposit to a checking or savings account, or to a debit card issued to the provider. No paper checks are issued. CCA publishes a schedule for payment processing and estimated payment release dates.

Payment Summary

Providers should be sure to review the Payment Summary for each period as soon as possible after receiving it. If an error is found, the provider should call the Financial Management unit within 15 days of receiving the payment summary.

Providers will be required to refund any payments that they are not entitled to, including:

- Overpayments,
- Duplicate payments, or
- Payments made in error.

Record Keeping Requirements

Providers must keep records while a CCA-referred child is in their care. It is recommended that they also keep the records after care has ended as well. **All payments received from CCA are considered to be income and must be reported. The provider is responsible for paying any applicable taxes.**

Monitoring and Access to Records

CCA conducts random visits to relative providers to ensure that care is being provided by the relative on file and that attendance records are being kept daily. Staff will randomly pull a list of providers to be monitored, then make visits during the days and times that care is authorized for the children in the care of selected providers. All child care providers listed with CCA are expected to be present and caring for the children during the times and days child care is authorized.

All representatives conducting the visits will be carrying identification badges and are required to show ID's prior to entering the home. As a child care provider receiving state and federal funds, cooperation with the staff conducting the monitoring visits and providing the requested documentation and information is required. **Failure to cooperate can result in termination of child care.** The representatives are there to verify that child care services are being provided, and that the person we have on file as the provider is there with the children. If at any point during the visit a provider has questions or wants to verify that the staff is indeed

there on behalf of CCA, they are welcome to call our customer service line at 214-630-5949, and choose option 3 for providers.

Representatives conducting the visits will ask the relative provider for the following:

1. Picture identification to verify that they are the child care provider on record with CCA
2. The attendance documentation that is kept and used to record the child(ren)'s daily attendance
3. The names and ages of the child(ren) present at the time of the visit

Visits will be made to the address on file with CCA. **If the location that child care is provided changes, or if the provider moves to another address, they must let CCA know immediately so that records can be updated.** If the relative provider is not at home when the monitoring staff visit, they will leave a notice to let the provider know they have been there and will return for another visit. If they are unable to conduct the monitoring after 3 trips to the provider's home and/or the child's home (whichever location we have on file), then CCA staff will contact the parent of the child(ren) to make other child care arrangements.

Reporting Income and Fees Collected

Relative Care providers are not employees of ChildCareGroup CCA, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, or the Texas Workforce Commission. They are considered to be independent contractors and are therefore not eligible to file unemployment claims against CCG, Workforce Solutions, or TWC if a parent's child care ends.

If filing for unemployment, the provider should list themselves as self employed during the time they were providing child care. CCA does not deduct taxes from payments. Each provider is responsible for reporting all payments as income and paying all appropriate taxes. Each provider that is reimbursed for more than \$600 during a calendar year will receive IRS form 1099 reporting the amount the provider was paid by CCA as reimbursement for child care services provided. All 1099 forms are mailed by January 31 for the previous year. This form should be used when filing income taxes.

Since parents are responsible for paying copay fees directly to their provider, each provider is responsible for giving the parent a yearly statement showing the amount of fees collected during the year. The statement should include the parent's name, child(ren)'s name(s), total amount paid, time period covered, the provider's name, and the provider's EIN or Social Security number. Parents will need this information for filing their own tax return. It is recommended that the provider give a receipt to the parent each time the parent pays their copay fee. The receipt serves as a record of payment for both the parent and the provider.

Important Contact Information

Child Care Assistance: 214.630.5949

Web: cca.childcaregroup.org

Fax: 214.688.4436

CCAA System Provider Help Line: 1.866.320.8720

CCAA Website: www.workforcesolutionschildcare.com

ChildCareGroup CCA
1420 W. Mockingbird, Suite 300
Dallas, TX 75247
tel\214.630.5949
fax\214.688.4436
web\www.childcaregroup.org