



ChildCareGroup
Child Care Assistance

Relative Child Care Provider Handbook

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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 the state agency that provides 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 and other workforce support funds. Each local board serves a county or a group of counties, and there are 28 local boards established in Texas. Dallas County is one service delivery area, and Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas is the local workforce development board.
- Each local board contracts with community-based agencies to manage the delivery of child care services in their area. These agencies are referred to as the “contractor” or “CCA contractor”. ChildCareGroup is the child care contractor for Dallas County.
- Each CCA 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 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
- Provider Payment staff, who:
 - Process payments for providers,
 - Assist with payment 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 Health and Human Services (HHS) Child Care Regulation 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 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 the staff will let the parent know what their 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 and referral information shows correctly on the enrollment form. If the 2450 information does not match the information given by CCA staff, the provider must contact CCA within 5 days so that the information can be reviewed and corrected if necessary.

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 states that parents must pay part of the cost of their child care if they are earning an income, even when they are getting help from TWC. Parent fees are calculated according to the family's gross monthly income (before taxes). The Eligibility staff will tell providers if parents have to pay a fee and how much the fees are.

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.

ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN

Each relative provider will record attendance for children for the week (Sunday – Saturday) on the form provided by CCA. The attendance forms must be signed, dated, and sent to CCA no later than noon each Monday for the previous week. If child care is not provided on Saturday the provider can send the form on Friday.

When Children Are Absent

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

Absence Policy and Exceptions

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.

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 may request a suspension of care if their child needs to be out of care for a time longer than 2 weeks.

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

Payments are processed (payment calculated and statement prepared) every 2 weeks and released to providers within 5 business days of processing.

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 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, 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 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 portal: cca.childcaregroup.org

Attendance Fax: 214.905.0422

Email for attendance forms: attreport@ccgroup.org

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