

Background

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) govern the ways Child Care Centres manage the collection of fees and discounts that can be provided to families. From 2022 Approved Providers can offer a discount to employees and report the full fee. This will ensure the employee's childcare subsidy entitlement is not affected.

Policy statement

This policy details Sunkids Children's Centres procedures in relation to childcare fees and the application of discounts to enrolled children of Sunkids employees.

Strategies and practices

Families who receive childcare subsidy must make a co-contribution to their child care fees. They do this by paying the difference between the provider's fee and the CCS amount. This is known as the gap fee.

CCS is usually calculated on the actual fee a family is charged, after any discounts are applied. This change allows discounts to be applied for employees after CCS has been applied.

GENERAL FEES

- The Service has a flat fee in which will be provided to each Employee that are choosing to enroll their child at Sunkids. Employees should not accept enrolment at the Service if they are unable to meet their fee obligations.
- Fees are charged for each session of care and vary depending on each family's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy (CCS).
- CCS is paid directly to the Service and is applied as a fee reduction which is visible on each family's Statement of Entitlement.
- Employees are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount known as the 'gap' amount.

ADDITIONAL DISCOUNT FOR EMPLOYEES OF SUNKIDS CHILDREN'S CENTRES

- All employees of Sunkids Children's Centres will receive a 60% discount off the gap fee effective from Monday 7th February 2022.
- The Statement of Entitlement will include details of the sessions of care booked for the current week and the resulting fee reduction amounts in accordance with each family's CCS entitlements.
- The Statement of Entitlement is generated using our CCS software (QikKids/Xplor) which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law Legislation.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

- Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment made by the Australian Government of Human Services to families to assist with the cost of child care fees. Families using Sunkids Children's Centres can claim CCS as the centres are approved by the Australian Government of Human Services.
- The Service's Nominated Supervisor has access to ample family assistance law resources including the CCS Provider Handbook.
- Centrelink will assess your income based on information provided by you; a re-assessment can be requested if family circumstances change. You must apply to be assessed for CCS before

commencing care or full fees will apply. All claims can be made by phoning Centrelink on 13 61 50.

- Attendance records will be cross checked at the Service each week to ensure all bookings and CCS submissions are accurate.

IMPORTANT: The child MUST be signed in and out of the centre daily using the electronic system (QikKdis/Xplor). The Service cannot claim child care subsidy for any child not signed in or out. Should this occur the family will be charged full fees for that day.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF FEES FALL BEHIND?

- You will receive a reminder letter if fees fall 1 week in arrears. You must attend to your account immediately. If the account continues to be in arrears, the employee discount will be removed and full fees charged.
- The Service reserves the right to charge a late fee should your account fall further than 2 weeks in arrears.

WHAT IF YOU BELIEVE AN ERROR HAS OCCURRED WITH YOUR ACCOUNT?

- The Nominated Supervisor should be advised so the account can be reviewed.

CHANGES TO FEES

- The Approved Provider of an education and care service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the Service are notified at least 14 days before making any changes that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected. Sunkids will endeavor to make minimal fee changes, generally once a year. Families will be advised in writing of any changes to fees.
- Sunkids reserves the right to make changes to the employee discount being offered, as and when required. The above-mentioned notice period will apply to this decision also.

FEE AGREEMENT

As part of the Employee Discount Policy, as an employee of "Sunkids Children's Centre" you will be required to sign a fee agreement, the details are as follows: -

I understand and agree to the following fee requirements:

- (a) When completing the continuation of enrolment documentation, I understand my child's bookings and charges for bookings continue unless notice is given to terminate care or change days.*
- (b) I understand my child's booking is permanent and all absent days and extended leave periods are paid to secure bookings.*
- (c) I understand if I choose to withdraw my child for an extended period I will not be guaranteed the same booked days on my return.*
- (d) I understand if I choose to not secure booked days I will need to go back on the waitlist for availability.*
- (e) All booked days will be charged for. This includes public holidays, sick days, holidays, and other absences.*
- (f) Two weeks written notice is required when changing a child's booked days or leaving the Service.*
- (g) Child must attend their first and last day of attendance or CCS will not be paid by Centrelink.*

Sunkids Employee Discount Policy

- (h) *Employee discount will cease if employment is terminated by either party.*
- (i) *Failure to meet fee requirements may lead to cancellation of enrolment and employee discount.*

Responsibilities of Sunkids Employee

- To ensure fees are kept up to date.
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in attendance e.g. family holidays, other absences.
- To respond promptly to communications from the Family Assistance Office to maintain CCS eligibility.

Procedure and forms

- Employee Discount Application Form

Links to other policies

- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

Reg	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
	172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
QA	6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
	7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Department of Education and Training (Australian Government). (2019) Child Care Package. https://www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood/announcements/child-care-discount-early-childhood-workforce?utm_source=QK+All+Centres&utm_campaign=1c7cbdaffe-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_09_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_60abdd6dd3-1c7cbdaffe-206870014 accessed 24 June 2025
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018

Further reading and useful websites

- Department of Education and Training – <http://education.gov.au/> accessed 24 June 2025
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. New Child Care Package - information resources for families. <https://www.education.gov.au/new-child-care-package-information-resources-families> accessed 24 June 2025

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	08 February 2022	Kaylene Harper	Policy Developed	February 2023
2	24 June 2025	Gen Mahaki	Annual review update including revised sources and websites	June 2026