

Child care subsidy Procedure

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1. Purpose

High-quality child care can have a positive impact on a child's short and long-term learning and development. It can also make it possible for a family-based carer (carer) or parent to work, study, volunteer, attend training or to take a break.

For children in family-based care, the decision for a child to attend child care for a specified number of hours or days should be agreed between the carer and the Department for Child Protection (DCP) case worker. This agreement should be clearly recorded in the child's case plan.

The Australian Government provides financial assistance to carers and parents to cover the cost of child care through the Child Care Subsidy, Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent) as part of the Child Care Safety Net.

DCP staff can support carers and parents to access the Australian Government financial assistance for which they are eligible.

This procedure aims to support staff to:

- identify carers and parents who may be eligible for the child care subsidies
- assist in ensuring that carers and parents receive the child care subsidies they are eligible for
- identify circumstances when DCP may provide child care related financial assistance
- manage child care related reimbursements.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all DCP staff involved in supporting family based carers, long-term guardian (Specified Person) carers (LTG (Specified Person) carers) and parents to access financial assistance through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) or Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent) for which they may be eligible.

The child care subsidies are not available to children who are in a non-family based placement including, but not limited to, a residential care placement, Placement and Support Package (PaSP) placement or a Family Day Care placement. This is supported by section 43.4 of the Australian Government's [Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy \(child wellbeing\)](#).

The child care subsidies apply to the following child care types (where provider is approved for CCS):

- Centre based care including long day care service
- Family day care
- Outside school hours care including vacation care
- In home care.

Child care subsidies do not apply to government preschool/kindergarten, occasional care provided at non-centre based care locations (ie government preschool/kindergarten) or a nanny (unless the nanny is registered as an in home care educator and in home care requirements have been met).

3. Authority

3.1 Legislative context

Legislation	Relevance
<i>A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999</i> <i>A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999</i> <i>Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017</i> <i>Child Care Subsidy Minister Rules 2017</i>	<p>The Family Assistance law is the basis for the Australian Government child care fee assistance. The Australian Government child care fee assistance includes the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and the Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS).</p> <p>Approval of child care providers to administer child care fee assistance on behalf of families is also provided for in the Family Assistance law.</p>
<i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i>	<p>A child may be considered “at risk” for the purposes of the Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) where DCP has identified a child is “at risk” in accordance with section 18 of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act SA 2017</i>.</p>

3.2 Whole of Government requirements

Not applicable.

3.3 DCP requirements

- Financial Authorisation Register
- Financial Management Compliance Framework
- Invoice/Credit Note Requests
- Online Payment Requests
- Long Term Guardianship (LTG) Finance Agreement.

4. Procedure requirements

For children in family based care or for families involved with DCP, there are three Australian Government child care subsidies which may apply:

1. Child Care Subsidy (CCS) – A payment that provides assistance to families to help with the cost of child care.
 Available to all families who meet eligibility criteria and can cover up to 85% of a child’s child care fees.

2. Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) (ACCS (child wellbeing)) – A top up payment which provides targeted additional child care fee assistance for children who are *at risk*.
 In most cases this will cover all of a child’s child care fees.

3. Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent) (ACCS (grandparent)) – To help grandparents with the cost of child care who are on income support and are the principal carers.
 In most cases this will cover all of a child’s child care fees.

To be eligible for ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent), the carer/parent must be eligible and approved for CCS (as well as meet other ACCS eligibility criteria).

Where a child is in a formal foster care arrangement and the carer has not yet been approved for CCS, a child care provider can enter into a Provider Eligible Arrangement (PEA). A PEA enables child care providers to access immediate ACCS (child wellbeing) payments for up to 13 weeks while a carer is being assessed for CCS. Refer to 4.1.3 Provider Eligible Arrangement for further information.

The **income** or **activity** level of a carer/parent does **not** impact **CCS eligibility**.

This means even if a carer/parent does not get any **CCS entitlement** due to their income or activity level, CCS (and therefore ACCS) can still be approved. Please note, CCS eligibility is not the same as CCS entitlement and a carer may be eligible without being entitled.

This is demonstrated in example 2 in the table below, with CCS eligibility criteria listed at section [4.1 Support and monitor applications for CCS](#) of this procedure.

		Example 1	Example 2
CCS	Does the carer / grandparent / parent meet CCS eligibility criteria?	✓	✓
	Does the carer / grandparent / parent receive any CCS entitlement?	✓	✗
	Can CCS be approved?	✓	✓
ACCS	Can the carer / grandparent / parent qualify for ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent)?* <small>*where all eligibility criteria is met</small>	✓	✓
	Is it likely all of the child care fees will be covered?	✓	✓

This can also be demonstrated by the following scenario:

Sophie has been placed in foster care under a court order because it is no longer safe to live in the family home. Sophie attends an approved child care provider four days a week. Sophie's foster carer, Joe, earns \$500,000 per annum. Joe is eligible for the CCS as he meets eligibility criteria. However, as Joe earns over the entitlement threshold, he will not receive a child care subsidy payment. Joe must still apply for CCS as this will allow ACCS (child wellbeing) to be processed as Sophie meets the definition of "at risk". In most cases ACCS (child wellbeing) will cover the majority of the fees.

It is important to note only one of the ACCS subsidies can be applied at any one time following CCS approval ie either ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent). Refer to section [4.2 Support and monitor applications for ACCS](#) to determine which ACCS subsidy is appropriate.

4.1 Support and monitor applications for CCS

The CCS allows carers and parents to access financial assistance to help with the cost of child care. The table below provides information on what is required to get the CCS, what factors will influence the amount of financial assistance a carer or parent is entitled to and who needs to apply for the subsidy.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)	
Description	<p>Enables carers and parents to access financial assistance to help with the cost of child care. Carers includes foster carers, kinship carers (including grandparents), specific child only (SCO) carers and LTG (Specified Person) carers.</p> <p>CCS is paid direct to the child care provider as a fee reduction.</p>
Applicant	Carer/parent must claim CCS.
Eligibility criteria	Entitlement
<p>The carer/parent must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> care for a child who is 13 or younger and not attending secondary school (unless an exemption applies as per disability/medical requirements specified in Family Assistance Guidance, section 1.1.C.25) use an approved child care service be responsible for paying the child care fees meet residency requirements ensure the child meets immunisation requirements. 	<p>The amount of financial assistance the carer/parent receives under the CCS depends on the carer or parent's circumstances, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> combined family income the type of child care (eg day care, before school hours care etc) the child's age the number of hours of recognised activity they do (eg work, study or volunteering).

Refer to further information on [eligibility requirements](#) and [factors influencing how much CCS is received](#).
 Reminder: to be eligible for ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent), the carer/parent must be eligible and approved for CCS (as well as meet other ACCS eligibility criteria). It does not matter if the carer/parent receives no entitlement.

When working and communicating with Aboriginal families, in accordance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle elements of Participation and Partnerships, DCP case workers should involve the family whilst being culturally respectful around the language they use when communicating about the CCS, ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent). Where appropriate, have an Aboriginal Family Practitioner or support person involved in the conversation, taking time to build trust and rapport to ensure that Aboriginal families feel culturally safe during these discussions. An interpreter or translator should be used when it is apparent that the English language is a barrier for an Aboriginal person or group in communicating with government. More information is available via the [Department for Premier and Cabinet website](#).

4.1.1 Applying for the CCS

DCP case workers, support workers and business support staff should be familiar with the steps required to claim CCS to support the carer/parent if they require assistance with their CCS claim.

The carer/parent should claim the CCS at the same time as the Family Tax Benefit (FTB). Where possible, this should occur before the child is enrolled at child care to enable CCS to be immediately applied to the child care account.

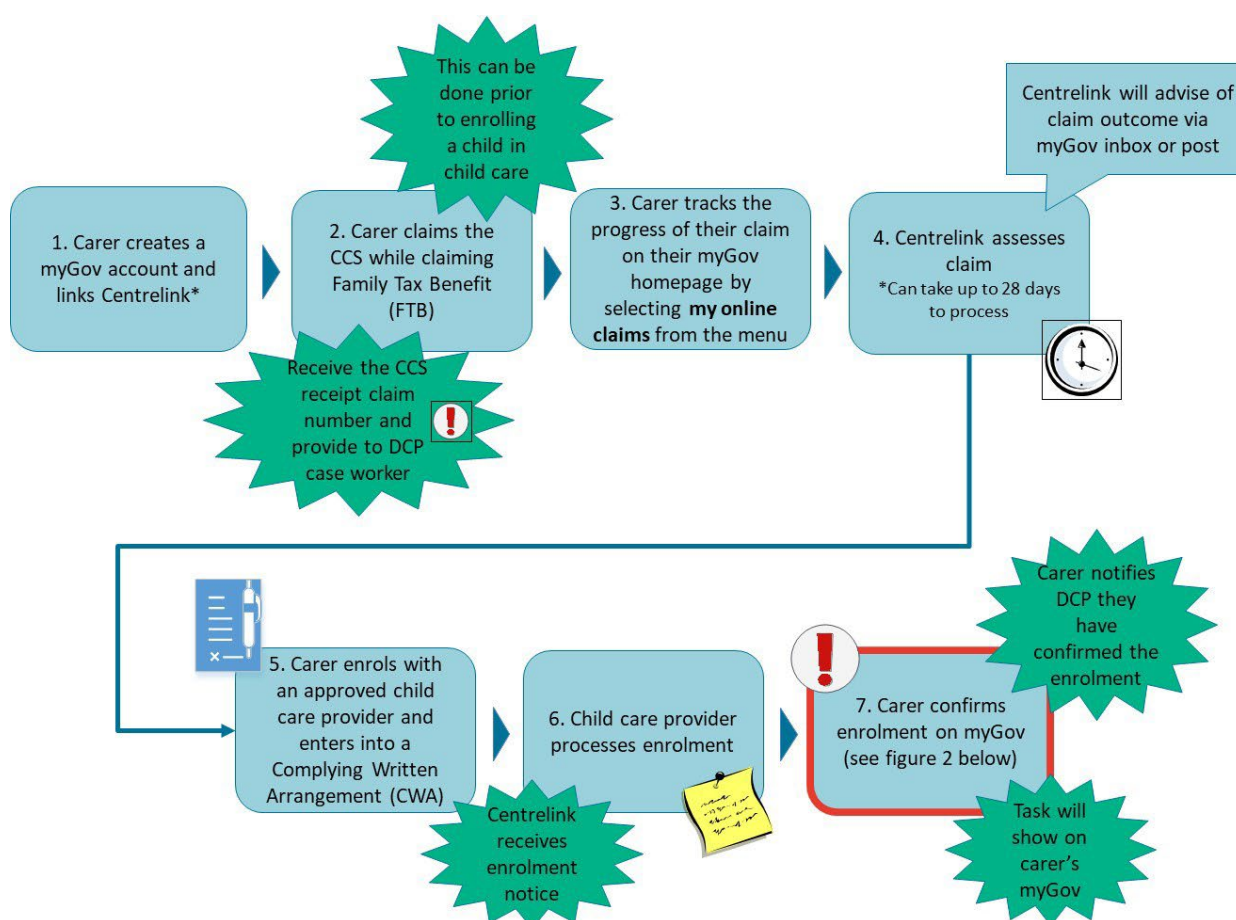
To ensure a smooth and timely CCS claim process, the DCP case worker should ensure that:

- the child's birth has been registered (refer to [Support the child or young person to obtain proof of identity documents](#) in the Manual of Practice for further guidance on registering a child's birth);
- the child's Medicare information has been processed (refer to [Access health services for the child or young person](#) in the Manual of Practice for further guidance on obtaining Medicare information);
- the child's immunisations are up to date (refer to [Access health services for the child or young person](#) in the Manual of Practice for immunisation requirements); and
- the primary carer personally enrolls the child in child care and any invoices are in their name.

Carers and parents should use myGov to submit their CCS claim. Centrelink will notify the carer or parent of the outcome of the CCS claim through their myGov inbox or in a letter.

The steps on how to claim CCS are included on the [carer website](#). However, a high-level flow chart has also been included below. The same process applies for parents.

Figure 1 CCS Claim Process



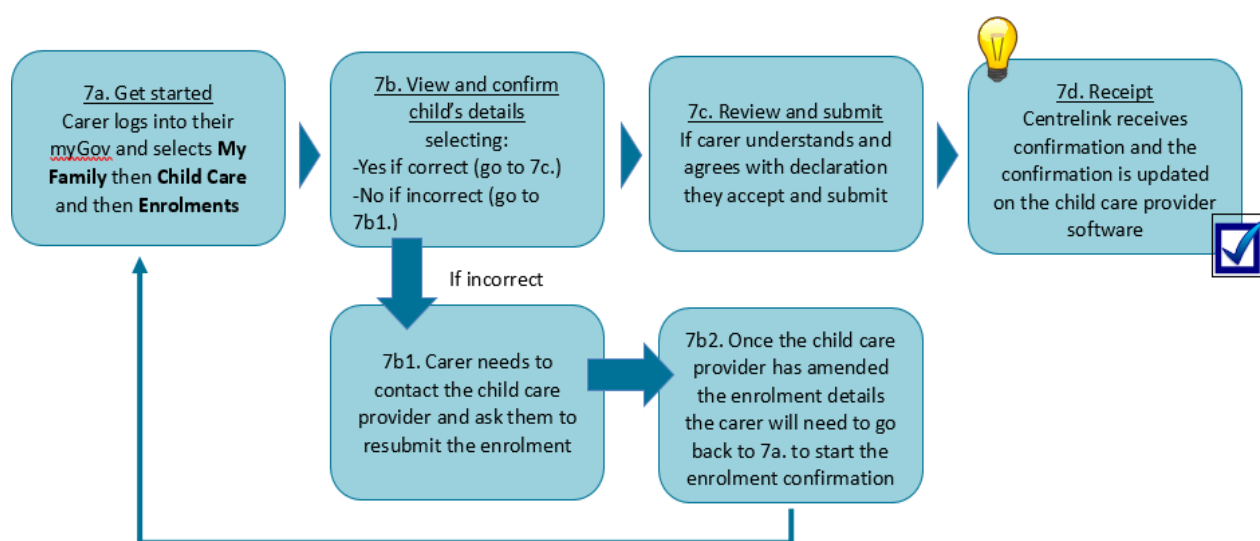
*May require a visit to Services Australia to receive a linking code if the carer does not know their Customer Reference Number (CRN). Once the carer proves their identity a CRN helps identify their Centrelink record and is needed if they wish to claim a payment from Centrelink.

When the carer has claimed the CCS, the DCP case worker should obtain the CCS claim receipt number from the carer (step 2 above) and record this information in the Notes and Documents section of the child's case file in C3MS.

The DCP case worker should also advise the DCP business support officer/support worker the carer has claimed CCS. This enables the DCP business support officer/support worker to monitor CCS claim approvals in a CCS/ACCS tracking spreadsheet.

The steps depicted below describe how a carer performs step "7. Carer confirms enrolment on myGov" in the CCS Claim Process above.

Figure 2 Enrolment confirmation process



4.1.2 CCS Approval

Where CCS is claimed and approved prior to a child being enrolled at child care, CCS can immediately be applied to the child care account and ACCS can be applied to the child care account upon commencement at child care (refer to [section 4.2 Support and monitor applications for ACCS](#) for further information). This is preferable as it means there is likely to be no gap payment when a child starts child care, with CCS and ACCS paid directly to the child care provider to cover the child care fee.

Once CCS has been approved, the child may begin attending child care at any time in the following 12 months. If the child does not attend child care within 12 months of the CCS claim being approved, a new CCS claim must be submitted.

A CCS claim also ends if a child stops attending the child care service or has not attended child care for 14 weeks in a row. The subsidy will cease and the carer/parent will need to re-enrol the child and accept the details online through myGov.

4.1.3 Provider Eligible Arrangement (PEA)

Where a child is considered "at risk" for the purposes of ACCS (child wellbeing), a child care provider can enter into a PEA to receive immediate ACCS (child wellbeing) payments if:

- a child is in a formal foster care arrangement and the carer is not yet approved for CCS; or

- a CCS eligible individual is unable to be identified eg carer does not meet CCS residency requirements.

The table below provides further information on these situations, including PEA duration.

DCP staff should request child care providers enrol a child under a PEA if applicable and provide supporting third party evidence, such as a court order, where requested to support the child being “at risk”.

Scenario	PEA duration
<p>A child is in a formal foster care arrangement</p> <p>(note: reference to “foster care arrangement” means children in the care of a foster carer, guardian, kinship carer or in a similar arrangement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 13 weeks of ACCS (child wellbeing) payments, enabling children to have continued access to child care where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the carer is obtaining all required documentation to make a CCS claim; or ○ a carer’s CCS claim is in the process of being assessed and approved. <p>Note: DCP staff should still work with the carer to provide the required documents to enable the carer to claim CCS within two weeks of the child commencing child care. This will assist in enabling CCS assessment and approval within the 13 week PEA duration.</p> <p>Note: where a child changes carers but remains at the same child care centre, the new carer must claim CCS within two weeks if the child has already exhausted the 13 weeks available under the PEA. Where the child moves to a different child care centre with a new carer, they may be entitled to an additional 13 weeks under a PEA.</p>
<p>Child care provider is unable to identify a CCS eligible individual eg carer does not meet CCS residency requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No time limit as long as the child continues to be considered “at risk” for the purposes of ACCS (child wellbeing) and a CCS eligible individual is still unable to be identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this circumstance, the carer must have attempted to apply for CCS and had CCS rejected by Centrelink, with the child care provider then required to contact the Department of Education, Skills and Employment to confirm a CCS eligible individual does not exist.

4.2 Support and monitor applications for ACCS

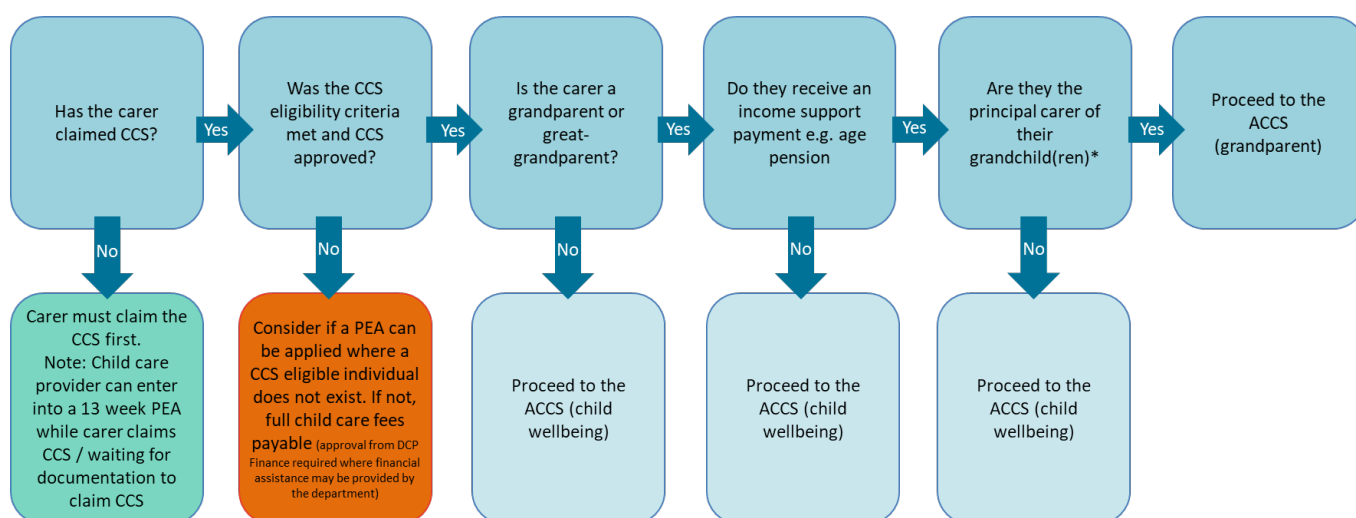
There are two types of ACCS which may be applicable:

- ACCS (grandparent) - available to grandparents who meet the eligibility criteria
- ACCS (child wellbeing) - relevant to all other carers, including grandparents who do not meet the ACCS (grandparent) eligibility criteria, and to parents involved with DCP.

While some grandparent carers may be eligible for ACCS (grandparent) and ACCS (child wellbeing), ACCS (grandparent) is preferred as there is no requirement for DCP to continually provide supporting third party evidence to the child care provider and does not rely on the child care provider applying for the subsidy.

The Figure 3 flow chart will assist in identifying which ACCS subsidy is appropriate.

Figure 3 Identify which ACCS subsidy is appropriate



**A principal carer has 65% or more care of the child(ren), and is responsible for the day-to-day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development*

When working and communicating with Aboriginal families, in accordance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle elements of Participation and Partnerships, DCP case workers should involve the family whilst being culturally respectful around the language they use when communicating about the CCS, ACCS (child wellbeing) or ACCS (grandparent). Where appropriate, have an Aboriginal Family Practitioner or support person involved in the conversation, taking time to build trust and rapport to ensure that Aboriginal families feel culturally safe during these discussions. An interpreter or translator should be used when it is apparent that the English language is a barrier for an Aboriginal person or group in communicating with government. More information is available via the [Department for Premier and Cabinet website](#).

4.2.1 ACCS (grandparent)

ACCS (grandparent) helps grandparents (including great grandparents) with the cost of child care where they are on income support and are the principal carers.

While the DCP case worker, support worker and business support officers can assist the grandparent carer to apply for this subsidy, it is not a requirement for DCP to provide any supporting third party evidence. The grandparent carer can also contact the ACCS (grandparent) Advisor from Centrelink on 1800 245 965 if further assistance to apply for this subsidy is required.

The table below provides information on what is required to receive the ACCS (grandparent), what factors will influence the amount of financial assistance a grandparent is entitled to and who needs to apply for the subsidy.

Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent)	
Description	<p>Assists grandparents including great grandparents with the cost of child care where they are on income support and are the principal carers.</p> <p>ACCS (grandparent) is paid direct to the child care provider as a fee reduction.</p>
Applicant	<p>The grandparent must claim through their myGov account or in person by visiting a Centrelink office with evidence to support their claim eg birth certificates, formal court order or other supporting evidence.</p> <p>The grandparent can claim ACCS (grandparent) at the same time as CCS.</p>
Eligibility criteria	Entitlement
<p>Grandparents who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are eligible for CCS receive an income support payment eg age pension, Dept. of Veteran Affairs age pension are the grandparent of the child* are the principal carer.** <p><i>*A grandparent or great grandparent includes a natural, adoptive or step grandparent or great grandparent of the grandchild or their partner.</i></p> <p><i>**A principal carer has 65% or more care of the child(ren), and is responsible for the day-to-day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development.</i></p>	<p>In most circumstances the ACCS (grandparent) will cover the gap between the CCS and the child care provider fees.</p> <p>No further ACCS (grandparent) financial assistance is available when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> more than 100 hours of care in a fortnight are provided the child care provider is charging more than the hourly rate cap, by more than 20%.

4.2.2 ACCS (child wellbeing)

ACCS (child wellbeing) is a “top up” payment to CCS. It is intended to cover the rest of a child’s child care fees so that nobody is out of pocket for children considered “at risk”.

The [Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017](#) define the circumstances where a child is considered “at risk.” This includes any child who is identified as being “at risk” by a child protection authority, with “at risk” defined in South Australia in section 18 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act SA 2017*.

This is further supported by section 43.1 of the Australian Government [Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy \(child wellbeing\)](#) which states:

“Where a child is in a foster care arrangement¹ because the child was found to be in need of protection, or ‘at risk’ under the relevant state/territory child protection law, the child will be taken to be ‘at risk’ for the purpose of ACCS (child wellbeing).”

¹ A foster care arrangement encompasses any formal arrangement where a child resides that is recognised by a state or territory court or tribunal including a foster carer, a guardian, or a kinship carer or a similar arrangement where the individual undertakes the day-to-day responsibilities of the parent.

The table below provides information on what is required to receive the ACCS (child wellbeing), what factors will influence the amount of financial assistance a carer, grandparent (where ACCS (grandparent) is not applicable) or parent is entitled to and who needs to apply for the subsidy.

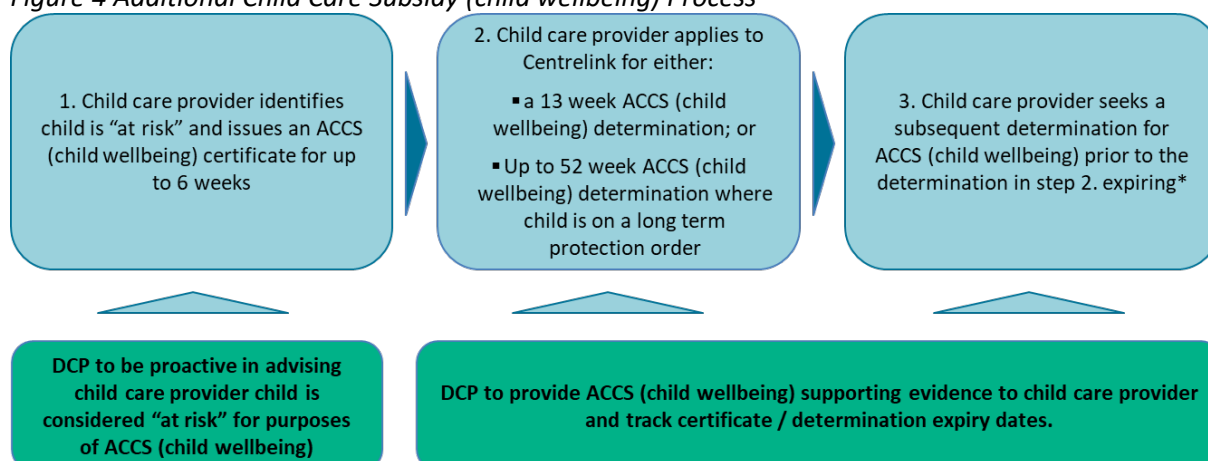
Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)	
Description	<p>A “top up” payment to the CCS. It is meant to cover the rest of a child’s child care fees so that nobody is out of pocket for children considered to be “at risk.”</p> <p>Where eligibility criteria are met, ACCS (child wellbeing) can be accessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster carers • kinship carers (including grandparent/great grandparent where ACCS (grandparent) doesn’t apply) • specific child only (SCO) carers • LTG (Specified Person) carers • parents involved with DCP through either a formal safety plan or an informal arrangement where DCP considers the child “at risk” for the purposes of ACCS (child wellbeing) • parents where the child has been returned to their care. <p>ACCS (child wellbeing) is paid direct to the child care provider as a fee reduction.</p>
Applicant	The child care provider applies for the ACCS (child wellbeing), with supporting third party evidence provided to the child care provider by DCP.
Eligibility criteria	Entitlement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child is considered “at risk” as defined by section 18 of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (ie child placed on an order made by the Youth Court under the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i>, child under a voluntary custody agreement (VCA), children whose families are involved with DCP due to child being in need of protection or “at risk”) • Carer/parent must be approved for CCS. 	<p>In most circumstances the ACCS (child wellbeing) will cover the gap between the CCS and the child care provider fees.</p> <p>No further ACCS (child wellbeing) financial assistance is available when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 100 hours of care in a fortnight are provided • the child care provider is charging more than the hourly rate cap, by more than 20%.

4.2.3 Applying for ACCS (child wellbeing)

The high level process below describes the key steps involved in applying for ACCS (child wellbeing) where eligibility requirements are met (ie child considered to be “at risk”, CCS approved).

Note: where CCS has been claimed by the carer but was not approved, refer to [4.1.3 Provider Eligible Arrangement](#) above to determine whether a PEA can be entered into.

Figure 4 Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing) Process



*Depending on ACCS (child wellbeing) determination duration, child care provider may need to apply for another certificate prior to submitting a subsequent determination i.e. where ACCS (child wellbeing) determination is 52 weeks

While the child care provider is responsible for identifying a child is “at risk” (step 1 above), the DCP case worker should be proactive in advising the child care provider the child is considered “at risk” for the purposes of the ACCS (child wellbeing) (refer to “at risk” definition in section 18 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*).

Further information on each step is provided below, including the provision of supporting third party evidence to child care providers by DCP for ACCS (child wellbeing) determinations.

Step 1: Child care provider identifies child is “at risk” and issues an ACCS (child wellbeing) certificate for up to 6 weeks.

Where a child care provider considers a child to be “at risk”, they can issue a certificate for ACCS (child wellbeing) to be applied to the child care account. This certificate can be applied for up to six weeks, with there likely to be no child care fee gap while the certificate is in place.

While the child care provider is responsible for identifying a child is “at risk”, the DCP case worker should be proactive in advising the child care provider that the child is considered “at risk” for the purposes of ACCS (child wellbeing) ie child is placed on an order made by the Youth Court under the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, safety plan agreement is in place etc.

Note: Child care providers are required to issue a new six week certificate where a child has received ACCS (child wellbeing) for a continuous 12 month period. Therefore, it is important to note when ACCS (child wellbeing) starts and to expect a new six week certificate every 12 months for the purposes of monitoring ACCS (child wellbeing) applications.

Step 2: Child care provider applies to Centrelink for either:

- a 13 week ACCS (child wellbeing) determination; or
- up to 52 week ACCS (child wellbeing) determination where child is on a long-term protection order.

(note: a determination for ACCS (child wellbeing) can be applied for immediately after a certificate is issued; the six week certificate duration does not need to expire first).

a. Child care provider seeks a determination

After issuing the ACCS (child wellbeing) certificate, the child care provider can seek a determination from Centrelink for ACCS (child wellbeing) to be applied for an additional 13-week period or up to 52 weeks where the child is on a long-term protection order. To support the determination, child care providers must provide Centrelink with supporting third party evidence.

b. DCP business support officer/support worker provides supporting third party evidence

To provide this supporting evidence from a third party, the DCP business support officer/support worker should complete the applicable letter template to support the determination and email this letter to the child care provider in pdf format.

The DCP business support officer/support worker should monitor when ACCS supporting third party evidence letters have been provided to child care providers in a CCS/ACCS tracking spreadsheet and follow up with child care providers to confirm ACCS has been applied to the account.

Note: a determination for ACCS (child wellbeing) can be applied for immediately after a certificate is issued; the six week certificate duration does not need to expire first. This will reduce the likelihood of there being any time period between the certificate issuance and the determination approval where ACCS (child wellbeing) will not be applied.

Step 3: Child care provider seeks a subsequent determination for ACCS (child wellbeing) prior to the determination in step 2 expiring.

a. Child care provider seeks subsequent determination

The child care provider will be notified by Centrelink that the determination is due to expire in 28 days and will request the child care provider to confirm if the child continues to be “at risk.” Current third party evidence will need to be provided to support this subsequent determination *before* the current determination expires.

b. DCP business support officer/support worker provides supporting third party evidence to child care provider

To provide this supporting third party evidence, the DCP business support officer/support worker should complete the subsequent letter template to support the subsequent determination and email this letter to the child care provider in pdf format.

While the child care provider will be notified by Centrelink that the determination is due to expire, DCP should not rely on the child care provider requesting updated supporting third party evidence from DCP. It is expected the DCP business support officer/support worker will be proactive in providing this supporting third party evidence and the DCP business support officer/support worker will keep a record of when ACCS (child wellbeing) determinations are due to expire in a CCS/ACCS tracking spreadsheet and follow up with child care providers.

Note: there is no limit to the number of determinations that can be made for a child as long as the child continues to be “at risk” and the carer/parent continues to be eligible.

4.2.4 Provide supporting third party evidence for an ACCS (child wellbeing) application

The following letter templates should be used to provide child care providers with supporting third party evidence to apply for the ACCS (child wellbeing) determination. These templates have been approved by DCP Legal and therefore should not be changed. Where there are other circumstances not covered by these templates, please email [DCP:Finance Child Care Queries](mailto:DCP:Finance.Child.Care.Queries) with the relevant information.

An Instrument of authorisation in accordance with Section 164(4) of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and Regulation 42(1) of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Regulations 2017* has been executed which authorises department staff to disclose information to approved child care providers to support access to the ACCS (child wellbeing).

Template	When to use this template	Additional supporting evidence to be supplied with letter
ACCS (child wellbeing): Court Order/Voluntary Custody Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial/subsequent determination where there is a Guardianship/Custody order or Voluntary Custody Agreement in place. 	Court order
ACCS (child wellbeing): Interim Order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination where there is an Interim order in place. 	Court order/s
ACCS (child wellbeing) where DCP involved with the family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial/subsequent 13 week determination where the child is "at risk". Includes where on a safety plan, reunification or attending early intervention programs. 	No additional evidence required

Note: other children's names included on the court order should be redacted where the ACCS (child wellbeing) determination does not relate to them.

4.3 Backdating applications for CCS/ACCS

CCS claims can only be backdated a maximum of 28 days from the date CCS was claimed. However in prescribed exceptional circumstances, including where a child is on a long-term protection order, ACCS (child wellbeing) certificates and determinations can be backdated up to 13 weeks. Child care providers will be required to provide evidence, such as a court order, to support the backdating application.

Where a child is not on a long-term protection order, ACCS (child wellbeing) can only be backdated a maximum of 28 days from the date of the ACCS claim.

As CCS is assessed as a fortnightly entitlement, this impacts the number of days the claim will be backdated within the 28 day time period meaning it is unlikely the CCS will backdate the full 28 days. Therefore, it is important carers/parents claim and have CCS established prior to the child attending child care where possible, with a CCS claim remaining active for up to 12 months without the child attending child care.

For example: A child was placed with the carer on Friday 15 July and started child care on the 17 July. The carer claimed CCS on the 29 July. The CCS entitlement will only be back dated to the 27 July (start of the CCS fortnight) as for the purpose of the CCS it was considered there was no CCS entitlement on the 13 July (start of the prior CCS fortnight) as the child was not placed in the carer's care

Figure 5 Backdating CCS/ACCS example

Jul-20						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
CCS fortnight	29	30	1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9		11	12
CCS fortnight	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CCS fortnight	27	28	29	30	31	1

Example YP with carer (15 July)
 Child care (17 July)
 Submits CCS claim (29 July)

4.4 DCP financial assistance, additional fees and reimbursements

4.4.1 Providing financial assistance for carers

DCP is not legally liable for child care fees as it is the responsibility of the carer to enter into a complying written arrangement with the child care provider, rendering the carer legally liable for child care fees.

For DCP to provide financial assistance, the carer needs to comply with the following requirements:

- be an approved carer or in the process of being assessed to become an approved carer (while providing care in a temporary placement)
- obtain prior approval from their DCP case worker to enrol the child in child care, noting this needs to occur before the child is enrolled in child care
- claim CCS within two weeks of the child commencing child care (and preferably before the child is enrolled in child care) and provide the CCS claim receipt number to the DCP case worker as evidence they have claimed CCS
- ensure the child care invoices are in the name of the carer
- where there is an outstanding balance, provide the invoice to DCP within 14 days, enabling DCP to monitor whether CCS and ACCS have been applied to the account
- where a PEA is not applicable, pay the child care fees upfront while waiting for CCS to be approved and then seek reimbursement from DCP where financial capacity allows, noting reimbursement is at DCP's discretion
- repay DCP any back payment received from Centrelink once the subsidies have been approved, where DCP have paid for the child care
- advise Centrelink of any changes to income or activity levels within 14 days
- comply with all taxation obligations.

Where the carer is a LTG (Specified Person) carer, DCP is not able to provide child care fee financial assistance unless this is included as part of the child's [LTG Finance Agreement](#). The LTG Finance Agreement is completed by the DCP case worker and signed by the LTG (Specified Person) carer(s), Supervisor and Manager.

The LTG (Specified Person) carer needs to also comply with the same requirements as a carer (as specified above in section 4.4.1) for DCP to provide any child care fee financial assistance.

The table below lists circumstances when DCP may provide financial assistance and how the financial assistance should be administered. This also applies to LTG (Specified Person) carers.

Note: General financial authorisation limits apply provided fee type falls within restraints of this procedure.

Circumstances when DCP may provide financial assistance to carers	Method of administering financial assistance
During the period of time between a CCS claim being made and being approved by Centrelink	Where a PEA is not applicable, carers need to pay the child care fees direct to the child care provider and then requests reimbursement from DCP.
During the period of time between ACCS (child wellbeing)/ACCS (grandparent) being applied for and being approved by Centrelink (with CCS having already been approved)	DCP can make this payment direct to the child care provider.
If there is a gap payment after ACCS has been applied	DCP can make this payment direct to the child care provider.
An emergency placement of a 7 day duration ²	DCP can make this payment direct to the child care provider.
Exceptional circumstances exist which have been approved by DCP Finance. Please contact DCP:Finance Child Care Queries email inbox for approval.	Assessed on a case by case basis. Payment approval form completed by DCP office should acknowledge in notes section that "Approval obtained from Finance for DCP to provide financial assistance for <<insert circumstance>>".

DCP will not provide financial assistance where the carer fails to comply with their taxation obligations. If the carer does not lodge their tax return after one year, CCS payment will be ceased by Centrelink. The carer is liable to pay the full child care charge. CCS will restart after the carer's family combined income is confirmed by lodging their tax return.

If the carer does not lodge their tax return in two years, their CCS entitlement will be cancelled and any CCS paid for that financial year is required to be paid back to Centrelink. The carer will need to reclaim CCS after the debt is paid back or payment schedule is dealt with. DCP's financial assistance will resume only after a new CCS entitlement has been assessed by Centrelink and all above requirements are met.

² Where an emergency placement evolves into a placement greater than 7 days, the carer needs to claim CCS within 2 weeks

4.4.2 Financial assistance for parents

DCP may provide child care fee financial assistance for parents involved with DCP as discussed as part of the safety plan agreement.

DCP staff should still provide all families involved with DCP information about the child care subsidies available, how to apply and provide supporting third party evidence to child care providers for ACCS (child wellbeing) where DCP consider the child “at risk” for the purposes of ACCS (child wellbeing)³.

For DCP to provide this financial assistance where child care attendance has been discussed as part of the safety plan agreement, the parent needs to comply with the following requirements:

- have discussed child care attendance in the safety plan agreement
- claim CCS within two weeks of the child commencing child care (and preferably before the child is enrolled in child care) and provide the CCS claim receipt number to the DCP case worker as evidence they have claimed CCS
- ensure the child care invoices are in the name of the parent
- where there is an outstanding balance, provide the invoice to DCP within 14 days, enabling DCP to monitor whether CCS and ACCS have been applied to the account
- pay the child care fees upfront while waiting for CCS to be approved and then seek reimbursement from DCP where financial capacity allows, noting reimbursement is at DCP’s discretion
- repay DCP any back payment received from Centrelink once the subsidies have been approved, where DCP have paid for the child care
- advise Centrelink of any changes to income or activity levels within 14 days
- comply with all taxation obligations.

The circumstances when DCP may provide financial assistance (including additional fees specified in [section 4.4.3 below](#)) to parents where child care attendance is discussed as part of the safety plan agreement are the same as those specified for carers.

Note: as part of the safety plan agreement, if a temporary private care arrangement is in place where the child is placed with a carer other than the parents and child care attendance has been agreed with DCP, DCP may pay the child care fees.

4.4.3 Managing additional fees

Where there are other fees charged by the child care provider outside of the child care fee covered by the child care subsidies, the table below depicts whether the carer or DCP may pay the fee.

Note: General financial authorisation limits apply provided fee type falls within restraints of this procedure.

³ Refer to “at risk” definition in section 18 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*

Fee Type	Who is responsible for this fee?
Child care fees (daily charge) where the child is absent for more than the allowable 42 days and no additional days are granted, resulting in CCS ceasing (or other reasons resulting in CCS ceasing)	The carer is responsible unless they seek permission from DCP for DCP to fund additional days, eg extenuating circumstances or when DCP approves overseas holidays etc.
Waiting list/enrolment fee	DCP may provide financial assistance where the requirements listed in section 4.4 have been met, and if the carer will not be reimbursed this fee at a later stage by the child care provider.
Bond/Deposit (paid before child care commences and returned to the carer when the child no longer attends child care)	The carer is responsible for paying the bond or deposit.
Administrative/Maintenance fees	DCP may provide financial assistance where the requirements listed in section 4.4 have been met.
Late pick up charge	The carer is responsible for paying the late pick up charge.
Carer removes the child from child care but does not provide the required notice period	Where this is out of the carer's control, DCP may provide financial assistance where the requirements listed in section 4.4 have been met (ie the child is no longer being cared for by the carer). Where this is within the carer's control, the carer is responsible.
Child care photos	The carer is responsible but DCP may provide financial assistance for additional child care photos for birth parents, extended family members or the child's file.
Breakfast fee/hat purchase/t-shirt purchase/ excursions/incursions/additional charges such as for nappies	The carer is responsible for the purchase of these items.
Late booking fee	Where this is out of the carer's control, DCP may provide financial assistance where the requirements listed in section 4.4 have been met (eg the child only recently entered carer's care). Where this is within the carer's control, the carer is responsible.

4.4.4 Managing reimbursements

4.4.4.1 Centrelink refunds paid directly to the carer or child care centre

Where a carer receives a refund from Centrelink which relates to child care payments DCP has paid direct to the child care provider/reimbursed the carer, the carer must repay this money back to DCP. To arrange a repayment, the business unit via the DCP business support officer/support worker should raise an invoice by completing the invoice/credit note request form with the required information and email DCPSSSARRequests@sa.gov.au for processing. Refer [here](#) for more information.

The repayment should be allocated to the following General Ledger Chart of Accounts codes:

- the relevant project code (eg 668 – general foster care, 632 - kinship care etc)
- object code being 61934 CHILDREN'S PAYMENTS RECOUPS
- applicable cost centre.

Where a carer's child care account is in credit due to funds paid directly to the child care centre from Centrelink, DCP must be repaid this amount. The child care provider must repay the carer, and the carer must then repay DCP using the same process as above.

4.4.4.2 Carer debt to Centrelink

In instances where a carer owes Centrelink money related to the child care subsidies and child care attendance was approved by the DCP case worker over this time period, DCP may reimburse the carer where it has been identified in section [4.4.1 Providing financial assistance for carers](#) that DCP may provide financial assistance. Carers can present the appropriate documentation (eg a letter from Centrelink) to DCP to seek approval for reimbursement.

4.4.4.3 Reimbursement for child care fees paid by the carer

To reimburse a carer for child care fees, an online payment request (OPR) should be raised in Basware NG. Appropriate supporting documentation will need to be attached before it can be finalised by Shared Services SA for processing. For steps on how to raise an OPR, log into Basware NG and follow the Quick Reference Guide - OPR01 Creating an Online Payment Request.

5. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation

As part of the Policy Governance Framework, this procedure will be reviewed and updated by Finance and Corporate Services in accordance with the review date shown at 'Document Control'.

6. Related documents

Related documents, forms and templates
Australian Government Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)
Email for DCP staff to send to child care providers following a child care enrolment
Email for DCP staff to send to providers regarding Provider Eligible Arrangement
Australian Government child care assistance for carers factsheet
Child care assistance fact sheet for staff

Document control

Reference No./ File No.			
Document Owner	Lead Writer (position)		
Directorate/Unit: Finance and Corporate Services	Business Analyst, Finance and Corporate Services		
Accountable Director: Chief Financial Officer			
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Risk Assessment Matrix	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

REVISION RECORD		
Approval Date	Version	Revision description
5/03/2021	V1.0	First published procedure.
5/11/2021	V2.0	Changes to incorporate amendments to the Family Assistance Legislation (Improving Assistance for Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Families). Inclusion of LTG (Specified Person) carer placements
26/11/2021	V2.1	Minor edits
30/08/2022	V2.2	Minor updates to roles and responsibilities