

# Child Care

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## What we'll cover

- ▶ Understanding different types of child care subsidies
- ▶ How to get them
- ▶ How to keep them
- ▶ Resources to have at your fingertips: how to look things up later

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Thanks for making the time to think  
about child care...

▶ <https://vimeo.com/132859000>

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About Resilience



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## Benefits of high quality care Age 0-5

- Pays for itself in 5 years through a parent's increased income
- Children are:
  - 50% more likely to finish high school, never to be suspended, addicted, or arrested
  - 40% more likely to be employed full time or self-employed
- The Return on Investment is 13% per year (7-10% for preschool only)
- Evidence of benefits to the *children* of initial participants in the study

[www.HeckmanEquation.org](http://www.HeckmanEquation.org)

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## Context: New EEC regulations and policies as of 10/1/23



Major improvements-  
highlighted on slides



Very much a work in  
progress, with expected  
inconsistencies



More  
changes/improvements to  
process to come

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## Subsidized Child Care in Massachusetts



- On TAFDC and in an activity or homeless
- TAFDC closed 0-24 months & working or training "TCC"
- On SNAP and in SNAP Path to Work program



- Open Case
- Closed case- up to 24 months



- Income Eligible- includes Homeless, Domestic Violence, Staff of Early Ed & Care Programs
- Teen parents now called "Young Parents," up to age 24

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## Child care subsidies: What you get

- ▶ Voucher or Contract slot (i.e. a spot at a specific provider)
- ▶ Center based or Family based child care provider based ("FCC")
- ▶ Full day (DTA, DCF, Homeless child care and if have 25 hours of "service need") or part day, can be before or afterschool
- ▶ Transportation?
- ▶ No fees or low fees

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## Vouchers versus contract slots

Vouchers	Contract Slots
Provider accepts vouchers	Provider has a contract with EEC
Parent choice of any provider with opening	Specific spot at specific program
Paperwork handled by <b>Child Care Resource and Referral Agency ("CCRRA")</b>	Paperwork handled by provider or provider's network agency

- Many providers handle both, so it depends on the *specific* opening
- Every parent has the right to choice, so if a contract slot does not work, contact legal services.

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## DTA Child Care: TAFDC

- ▶ Always a voucher, full-time unless request part-time
- ▶ TAFDC case open & Work Required- 12 weeks
- ▶ TAFDC Open & Enrolled in a work activity or living in a shelter- 12 months
  - ▶ Can be job search, work, school, training, community service
- ▶ Does not matter how long you are on TAFDC- 1 month is enough!
- ▶ In 2 parent families, both parents need a work activity
- ▶ Child care continues if go off TAFDC or if stop activity
- ▶ No fees while on TAFDC or until 12 months after TAFDC stops

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## TAFDC Child Care: What if the parent isn't on the grant?

- ▶ Parent on SSI- Same rights to child care
- ▶ Parents not on grant due to immigration status:
  - ▶ No immigration papers at all: Can get it for community service only
  - ▶ At least PRUCOL but not eligible for TAFDC: Same rights to child care as parents on TAFDC
  - ▶ Not sure? Consult legal services
- ▶ A caregiver relative e.g. grandparents getting TAFDC for grandchildren only- eligible if working

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## What is the process for DTA TAFDC Child Care?

1. If work required, DTA gives Referral for 12 weeks, then follow steps below to renew for 12 months
2. If not work required, must give documentation from job/program. (DTA should know if family is in shelter)

Fax it or upload it on DTA Connect. Make sure Name & Agency ID is on it.

3. Contact Full Engagement Worker.

Either email [DTA.EmploymentServices@state.ma.us](mailto:DTA.EmploymentServices@state.ma.us) or look up contact for your DTA office at: [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/contact-dtas-employment-staff?\\_gl=1\\*1587qqt\\*\\_ga\\*MjA3MDA5MTMyNy4xNjM3MTgzMDQ2\\*\\_ga\\_MCLPEGW7WM\\*MTcwMDA3OTM3NC41MS4wLjE3MDAwNzkzNzQuMC4wLjA](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/contact-dtas-employment-staff?_gl=1*1587qqt*_ga*MjA3MDA5MTMyNy4xNjM3MTgzMDQ2*_ga_MCLPEGW7WM*MTcwMDA3OTM3NC41MS4wLjE3MDAwNzkzNzQuMC4wLjA).

4. DTA will send a child care "referral" to Child Care Resource & Referral Agency electronically
5. Contact the Child Care Resource & Referral Agency and ask to start the process  
To find your CCR&R: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/ChildCareSearch/CCRR.aspx>
6. Look for a provider- Don't wait

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## What is the process for DTA SNAP Child Care?

- ▶ Only available if in a DTA Pathways to Work Program
- ▶ <https://www.snappathtowork.org/>
- ▶ Does not generally help people who are already working unless they can also do a SNAP Path to Work program
- ▶ No fees
- ▶ Referral sent electronically to Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. Reach out to do voucher paperwork

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## What is the process to renew DTA Child Care?

- ▶ Make sure DTA has proof of activity
- ▶ Ask Full Engagement Worker or SNAP ET Worker for a new DTA Referral
  - ▶ Changing in next 1-2 years?
  - ▶ CCRRA is *supposed* to reach out to DTA for a new referral. DTA is looking at improving their messaging around the logistics.

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## Transitional DTA Child Care after TAFDC closes

- ▶ When TAFDC case has closed 0-24 months ago
- ▶ Give DTA proof working or in Education & Training or in shelter. Don't call old worker.
- ▶ No fees for 1st 12 months after TAFDC case closes
- ▶ At end of Transitional Child Care, can switch over to income eligible child care without going on the waitlist

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## Putting it together: Meet Maria

- ▶ Maria is on TAFDC and wants to go to college. Can she get child care?
- ▶ What steps should Maria take?
- ▶ What if Maria's child is not on the TAFDC grant because they get SSI?
- ▶ If Maria starts working and stops getting TAFDC, can she keep the child care DTA authorized while she was on TAFDC?
- ▶ What happens after that?
- ▶ What if Maria was never on TAFDC but was on SNAP?

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## Subsidized Child Care in Massachusetts

YOU ARE HERE



**dta**

- On TAFDC and in an activity or homeless
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**dcf**

- Open Case
- Closed case- up to 24 months



**eec**

- Income Eligible- includes Homeless, Domestic Violence, Staff of Early Ed & Care programs

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## DCF Child Care

- ▶ Judgment of the DCF worker and supervisor
- ▶ While DCF Case is open
- ▶ Up to 24 months after DCF Case closes
  - ▶ Fees start in 13<sup>th</sup> month after DCF Case closes
- ▶ Some DCF Area offices have staff who specialize in child care. Suggest calling and asking. To find DCF Area Office info:
  - ▶ <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-children-families/locations>

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## Subsidized Child Care in Massachusetts



		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On TAFDC and in an activity</li> <li>• TAFDC closed 0-24 months &amp; working or training "TCC"</li> <li>• On SNAP and in SNAP Path to Work program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Case</li> <li>• Closed case- up to 24 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income Eligible- includes Homeless, Domestic Violence, Staff of Early Ed &amp; Care programs</li> <li>• Teen parents now called "Young Parents," up to age 24</li> </ul>

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## General EEC Eligibility Rules

- ▶ Live in Massachusetts
- ▶ Generally, below 50% State Median Income at initial eligibility
  - ▶ UPDATE: EEC no longer counts all income! Child support, TAFDC, SSI are among the types of income that no longer count
- ▶ Have a "Service Need"
- ▶ Child up to age 13, or 16 if child has a disability
- ▶ Child needing care is a citizen or has a qualifying immigration status
- ▶ Need to get on the waitlist to get into system. Advise do so by calling Mass 211.

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## Child Care through EEC: Income Eligible Child Care

- ▶ There is a waitlist. It is long.
- ▶ Some priorities are higher than others. Current top priorities include:
  - ▶ Homeless Child Care
  - ▶ Child Care due to Domestic Violence
  - ▶ Child Care for Staff of Early Education and Care programs
  - ▶ Young Parents (now means under age 24)
  - ▶ Ending one type of care and transitioning to another, called "Continuity of Care"
- ▶ BUT due to lack of funding, need someone to give up funding for someone else to get it.

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## EEC "Service Needs"

- ▶ Working, includes Self-Employment
- ▶ Education or Training
- ▶ Parent with a Disability
- ▶ Homeless
- ▶ Domestic Violence
- ▶ Parenting Leave
- ▶ Seeking Approved Activity (12 weeks only, renewable once)

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## What does "homeless" mean?

- ▶ McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act definition of homelessness:
  - ▶ Live in a shelter or transitional housing program
  - ▶ Share the housing of others due to economic hardship
  - ▶ Live in a motel or trailer park due to economic hardship, or
  - ▶ Live in a car, park or other place not meant for human habitation

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## How do you prove homelessness?

Need something in writing:

- ▶ a written referral from an emergency shelter, transitional shelter, or other legal, medical or social service agency
  - ▶ a written referral from a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth
  - ▶ a written referral or other supporting documentation from a Head Start Program
  - ▶ a signed self-attestation that the family is homeless
- ▶ Have up to 6 months to provide the rest of the documentation.

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### NEW: Child Care Due to Domestic Violence

- ▶ Current or past Domestic Violence
- ▶ Top priority but still subject to waitlist.
- ▶ Wide range of acceptable documentation. If no records exist, a parent may "self-attest" to domestic violence and need for child care.

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## What is the definition of domestic violence?

- ▶ Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological actions or threats of actions or other patterns of coercive behavior that influence another person within an intimate partner relationship. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

606 CMR 10.02

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## How do you prove you qualify due to Domestic Violence?

- ▶ Court, medical, psychological, criminal, child protective services (DCF), social service, school or police records;
- ▶ Documents that show that the applicant parent has obtained an order of protection or has taken other legal steps to end the domestic violence;
- ▶ Evidence of seeking a safe place such as a shelter or other refuge;
- ▶ A letter reflecting that the parent participates or participated in domestic violence counseling services, including support groups or
- ▶ If the family does not have the documents listed above, a parent may provide a signed self-declaration.

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## Young Parent Child Care

- ▶ Up to age 24
- ▶ Have to prove your age
- ▶ Will have to be enrolled in high school program or if done with high school, in another E&T activity or working
- ▶ Work thru DCF or DTA if already working with them; otherwise contact Child Care Resource & Referral Agency

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## NEW: Work for an Early Education and Care Program

- ▶ Any position in an early education and care program
- ▶ Income up to 85% SMI instead of 50% SMI
- ▶ Use 4 weeks of pay stubs or employer letter to prove
- ▶ If just started, show hire letter and EEC will give 12 weeks to give time to provide 4 weeks of pay stubs, then will extend voucher another 12 months
- ▶ Has to be through a voucher, not a contract slot.

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## Child Care due to a Parent's Disability

- ▶ Unfortunately, doesn't get you off the waitlist
- ▶ Requires documentation from medical provider that care needed due to health condition
- ▶ Improvements to written policy, but not rolled out yet
- ▶ Contact Sarah if problems

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## What is the process?

1. Get into the system by adding your name to the waitlist for child care. Advise calling Mass 2-1-1. (Online portal has had problems.)
2. Respond to mail from the CCRRA to make sure you don't get removed from the waitlist
3. The CCRRA or contracted provider will contact the family when funding becomes available....
4. At that point, the authorization process would begin.

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## Other common issues for immigrant and LEP Families

- ▶ Parent may not be required to give SSN or immigration status for themselves. No info shared with Immigration. Not considered for public charge
- ▶ Interpreters and translation must be provided to the family
- ▶ Expired id now acceptable
- ▶ Documents other than birth certificates ok to prove relationship, age.
- ▶ Cases of denials due to immigration status must be raised to EEC before actually denying the family

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## Other Improvements to existing policy

- ▶ Much more flexible documentation requirements
  - ▶ Including elimination of rule that had said family needed to prove where the father lives if there was a child under age 3.
- ▶ Full time care if service need averages 25 hours per week.
  - ▶ Used to be 30. If can document 20 hours, travel time of 5 hours per week can be added, meaning most people will qualify for full time.

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## EEC Documentation Rules for subsidy administrator to follow

- ▶ On TAFDC or SNAP or DCF Referral: Only need parent id and only 1st time
- ▶ Income Eligible
  1. Parent id (1st time only)
  2. Service need
  3. Income
  4. Where you live (1st time only or if changes)
  5. Age, relationship & Citizenship or immigration status only of children who need care (1st time only)

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## What will the family have to pay?

- ▶ NOTHING if:
  - ▶ DTA Child Care if on TAFDC until 12 months after TAFDC closes
  - ▶ DCF Child Care until 12 months after DCF case closes
  - ▶ Homeless Child Care
  - ▶ Young Parent Child Care
- ▶ EVERYONE ELSE- Based on income and family size
  - ▶ Some income doesn't count (Child support, TAFDC, SSI, rental assistance, tax credits, a few others)

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## What will the family have to pay?

- ▶ Look only at countable income that is above the Federal Poverty Line
  - ▶ Then, fee is a percentage of that income Fee discounted for siblings:
    - ▶ Fee for 2<sup>nd</sup> child is 50% of original fee
    - ▶ Fee for 3<sup>rd</sup> and additional children is 25% of original fee
- ▶ How much does this come to?
  - ▶ Fee calculator:  
<https://c2acr388.caspio.com/dp/6a9e900054d4669ad2284f75b613>
  - ▶ Can be charged late fees, fees for bounced checks, optional things (e.g., class pictures)
- ▶ Can be lowered during the year if income drops or family size increases. Cannot be increased until reauthorization

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## What does this look like?

Mom of 2, income of \$2975/mo

- EEC deducts the Federal Poverty Limit for the Household size : \$2072  $\$2975 - \$2072 = \$903$
- Then applies a percentage (here 5.35%) of the income that's left  $\$903 \times .0535 = \$48.31$
- Fee is \$48.31 for 1st child, \$24.15 for 2nd child

OLD FEE SCALE- In place 2001- 2021	NEW FEE SCALE- Post litigation
\$476 per month	\$72 per month
16% of total income	0.2% of total income

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## How do you find a child care provider?

- ▶ <https://childcare.mass.gov/findchildcare>

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## Renewals called "Reauthorization"

- ▶ 60 days before subsidy ends, administrator contacts family, then...
- ▶ DTA
- ▶ DCF
- ▶ Income Eligible
- ▶ Change in circumstances?
  - ▶ "Continuity of care"
  - ▶ Service need of 12 weeks if "looking for an activity" with option for another 12 weeks

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## What if Income Eligible Child Care is denied?

There are appeal rights. There are 2 levels of appeals. 1st level is paper review

Appeals at Reauthorization- Family must get notice before care ends. If appeal before the end, care must continue pending review. Problems getting notice in time. Contact EEC Legal or GBLS

Can submit new info and documents

2nd level is an EEC hearing

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## How does Head Start fit into all this?

- ▶ Free Federal program designed to get kids ready for kindergarten; More integrated services built into the model
- ▶ Generally, Income below Federal Poverty Line, or getting TAFDC, SSI, homeless or in foster care.
  - ▶ No "service need" or work activity required
- ▶ For 3 & 4 year olds. "Early Head Start" programs start earlier, sometimes for infants
- ▶ Part day but some programs will take a voucher to make it full day
- ▶ Apply through each program
  - ▶ Find programs: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/center-locator>

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## Where can I find all this?

- ▶ **EEC Rules** <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/hub-for-child-care-financial-assistance-programs-changes>
- ▶ **DTA Rules 106 CMR 707.210 and DTA Online Guide**  
under: [Home](#) > [Pathways to Work](#) > [Support Services](#) > [Child Care](#)

Looking ahead....

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# THANKS!



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