

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES CIRCULAR

Date: January 4, 2022

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID-19 2022-01

To: Early Learning and Child Care Facilities

Subject: Parent Fee Support Grant for Licensed Centres and Child Care Homes

Type: Policy

Procedure

Effective Date: Immediately

As we enter the new year, Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) continues to follow the directives and guidance of public health to help keep children and families protected as we navigate this new wave of the pandemic.

The department recognizes that the current wave of COVID-19 virus has resulted in high staff absenteeism throughout the ELCC sector. This resulted in the update of [Circular 2021-09 ELCC Prioritization of Critical Services Workers](#) to assist boards and owner/operators in making enrolment policies to support the current provincial experience while addressing staffing challenges due to the current effects of the pandemic.

In response to these challenges and to support enrolment policies prioritizing critical service workers, all licensed child care facilities will be able to apply for the Parent Fee Support Grant effective January 10, 2022. This funding is intended to offset the loss of parent fees due to:

- closures or reductions in service in child care facilities as a result of staffing shortages caused by high absenteeism because of illness, COVID symptoms and isolation
- limiting service for kindergarten and school age children to only those who continue to attend school during remote learning periods (i.e., children of critical service workers, high-risk students, and students with special learning needs)

The Parent Fee Support Grant will be available to facilities until February 28, 2022.

All funded facilities will continue to receive their regular operating funding and can apply for the Parent Fee Support Grant for any loss in parent fee revenues based on their current enrolment.

Eligibility

All licensed centres and family/group child care homes. To be eligible for the Parent Fee Support Grant, facilities cannot charge parent fees to families impacted by the closure or service reduction.

Application

Facilities must send an invoice to ELCCFinance@gov.mb.ca identifying the spaces where parent fees were lost and at what rate (actuals). This information will be compared against the number of licensed spaces in the facility. In addition, each facility must sign the attached declaration form to certify that:

- The information provided is true and accurate for the facilities spaces, taking into consideration their utilization.
- The facility has not received parent fees and if they have, that they have reimbursed the parent fees for the period for which they are applying for additional funding support.

Please note that the declaration includes a provision that states that any information to be found untrue will result in a recovery of the funding support.

In order to provide the most recent information for families on available spaces, facilities are encouraged to update their information on the Manitoba Child Care Search tool at: www.eswchildcare.ca

For the latest provincial public health information on COVID-19, visit: www.manitoba.ca/covid19

The Early Learning and Child Care Program continues to monitor and update resources related to COVID-19 and child care in Manitoba. For operational updates and directives, visit: Manitoba Families COVID-19 Notices and Circulars: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/covid-circulars.html>.

As we continue to deal with new and evolving challenges of the pandemic, we greatly appreciate the ongoing commitment of the child care sector to providing quality care, while also ensuring that precautions are taken to maintain the health and safety of children, families and staff.

If you have any questions, please email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca or call 204-945-0776 or 1-888-213-4754.

Thank you.
Early Learning and Child Care Program

Attachments (2)

Early Learning Child Care
3-777 Portage Ave
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N3

**Declaration of Child Care Services
for the Parent Fee Reimbursement Payment**

The Department of Families is offering a child care parent fee reimbursement payment for loss of parent fee revenue during the suspension of school services.

Re: Facility Name:

I certify the following information to be true and accurate:

- Has been available to provide child care services for school age children during the suspension of school services in my community (no earlier than **January 10, 2022**)
- Reimbursement requested is based on the actual child attendance for revenue not received (actual utilization)
- Information provided on the attached invoice is true and accurate
- Did not charge parent fees to families not receiving services during this time period
- Will return any parent fees charged to families wherever services was not provided

Printed Name of Authorized signing representative: _____

Signature of Authorized signing representative: _____

Date: _____

Email to ELCCFinance@gov.mb.ca

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES - EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE
FUNDING SUPPORT FOR PARENT FEES (January 2022)
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

GENERAL

Q: What is the purpose of the Parent Fee Support Grant?

- The funding is to support all licensed early learning and child care facilities and their families impacted by the loss of parent fees due to staffing challenges and necessary service reductions or closures as a result of COVID-19. As well, facilities that limit service for kindergarten and school age children to only those who are continuing to attend school during remote learning periods are also eligible for funding support.
- The Department of Families will provide licensed facilities with a grant equal to the parent fees for the children whose child care services are not available due to suspensions, closures or reductions in child care facilities' services. The grant is for the period of January 10, 2022 up to and including February 28, 2022. Grants will reflect an amount based on current enrolment.
- Without the grant, parents would be paying for spaces that they are not using. If parent fees were waived, facilities would suffer a loss of revenue that they depend on to deliver early learning and child care services.

FOR PROVIDERS

Q: How much is the grant? As a child care provider, how do I apply for the grant?

- To apply for the grant, facilities must send an invoice to the ELCC program, identifying the spaces that parent fees were lost and at what rate – up to the regulated maximum. The department will verify the information and the facility will be asked to sign a declaration form to certify that the information provided was true, and that the facility has not charged or received parent fees for the period of time noted.
- If parent fees have been collected in advance of the service being provided, supporting documentation demonstrating the parent fees collected have been returned will result in eligibility for the grant funding. The declaration will state that any information that is found to be untrue will result in a recovery of the grant.

Q: Will child care facilities still receive their full operating grants, even if the number of children accessing services drops?

- All child care facilities will continue to receive their full operating grants as they have throughout the pandemic period. This will not change.

Q: Will child care facilities still receive subsidy payments for kindergarten and school-age children that are not accessing child care services during the closure?

- Child care subsidies are considered the same as parent fees and will be covered by the grant. This will replace the subsidy payments for the children not receiving their regular child care service. This should be noted on submitted attendance reports.

- The Department of Families will provide facilities with a grant equal to the parent fees for the children who are not prioritized to attend child care at their before and after school programs as a result of the suspension of school services for kindergarten and school age children.

Q: Can child care centres take more kindergarten and school-aged children than for what they are licensed?

- At the onset of COVID-19 to assist families, a condition was placed on every child care centre licence. This condition allows all licensed centres to enroll any age of child even if they are not licensed to care for them.
- Staffing ratios would need to be maintained, but ELCC is exempting some of the staff qualification regulations.
- For example, a school age centre may now care for a mixture of up to four infants, preschool and school-age children as long as they do not exceed their licensed spaces or the number of children allowed as per the health orders.

FOR PARENTS

Q: My child attends Nursery School within a school division, can they attend a child care facility?

- Nursery Schools operated by a school division are part of the school system and will follow the directives laid out for this sector.

Q: Will I still need to pay my child care facility for a space that I am not using during this closure?

- The Department of Families will provide facilities with a parent fee support grant equal to the parent fees for the children whose child care services are not available up to and including February 28, 2022.
- The department will also provide facilities with a parent fee support grant equal to the parent fees for children where staffing challenges has resulted in a reduction of a facility's child care services or a temporary closure.
- Facilities will apply directly to the Department of Families for these grants.

Q: My child will continue to attend school. How do I find a school-aged child care space?

- Manitoba families and licensed child care facilities are encouraged to use the Manitoba Child Care Search tool to locate services for school age children.
- The Manitoba Child Care Search provides the flexibility and support for direct contact between families and child care facilities, and lists up-to-date information about licensed child care vacancies, hours and locations. The tool encourages direct connections with families to facilities to discuss needs and plan for enrolment. To find and locate licensed child care providers, visit: www.eswchildcare.ca