

CCEH Children in Shelters Childcare Assistance Fund Program Guidelines

The Children in Shelters Childcare Assistance Fund shall be used to provide temporary financial assistance to families in need of childcare. Families receiving assistance through this program must be residing in an emergency shelter or participating in the CT-Rapid Rehousing Program. Financial assistance will take the form of a childcare subsidy paid directly to licensed childcare providers, and transportation assistance in the form of gas cards or bus tokens.

General Guidelines

- Payment is contingent on application approval and availability of funds.
- Acceptance into the program is made on a first come, first served basis.
- No payment will be made to families in the program; payment is made directly to the childcare provider and/or transportation provider (for bus passes and gas cards).
- All childcare services must be provided by providers licensed by the State of CT Office of Early Childhood.
- The shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program provider serves as a liaison between CCEH, the childcare provider and the family. All application materials, payment requests and communications go through the service provider.
- Families participating in the program, childcare providers providing daycare and service providers must adhere to these Program Guidelines and to the Program Agreement.
- All written program materials, including applications, payment requests and invoices will be faxed to CCEH at 860-257-1148 attention Joanne Vitarelli. **Emailing of materials is a violation of CT HMIS policy and procedure and will not be accepted.**

Program Eligibility

To be eligible for Children in Shelters, families must meet the following criteria:

- Have a child(ren) under the age of 12 in need of childcare.
- Reside in an emergency shelter in Connecticut or participating in the CT-Rapid Rehousing Program.
- The parents must be working with a case manager/program coordinator/social worker within the shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program.
- Have custodial rights of the child(ren) in need of childcare.
- If working, the family must submit an application for the State of CT's Care 4 Kids program. A copy of the application must remain on file with the homeless shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program.
- The custodial parent(s) must be working or actively seeking employment and childcare must be used to support this.
- Eligibility for the program ends when the family exits emergency shelter or is no longer receiving services through CT-Rapid Rehousing Program. The service provider is responsible for notifying CCEH within 3 business days of program exit, if the family exits while receiving a childcare subsidy.
- Families may access the fund once per program year (July 1 to June 30) even if they have multiple episodes of homelessness during that year.

Application Procedures

A family may access Children in Shelters through staff in an emergency shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program to cover costs of licensed childcare while working or seeking employment. Application is made through the shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program staff, in accordance with the following:

- The service provider completes and submits to CCEH via fax at 860-257-1148 attention Joanne Vitarelli:
 1. Application Form which is signed by the parent(s), childcare provider and service provider.
 2. Childcare provider Form W-9.
- If working, the family must complete a Care 4 Kids Application. A copy of this application is to be kept on file at the shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program (does not need to be sent to CCEH).
- CCEH staff will review submitted application materials within 3 business days of receipt. If an application is found to be incomplete, the service provider will be notified of the missing items and given 3 business days to submit missing documents. If not submitted within 3 days, the application will be returned as not approved.
- CCEH staff will verify the license number of the childcare provider with CT Office of Early Childhood.
- CCEH staff will verify program eligibility and approve or deny the application.
- If approved, the service provider is sent, via fax, an approval letter indicating the date the family was approved, start and end date for childcare assistance coverage, the names of the children approved for coverage and the childcare providers to be paid.
- The service provider is responsible for providing a printed copy of the Program Guidelines, Program Agreement and Approval Letter to the family and childcare provider and maintain a copy of the Guidelines in the families' file at the shelter or CT-Rapid Rehousing Program.

Eligible Childcare and Transportation Costs

The following costs may be covered by the Children in Shelters Childcare Assistance Fund:

- Payment for up to 8 weeks of childcare, afterschool or summer camp for eligible children under the age of 12 receiving care from a licensed childcare provider.
- Children in Shelters funds **may not** be used for slots that are already paid for by other state or federal funding, including the Office of Early Childhood Day Care center based programs, School Readiness, or Head Start slots.
- Payment for gas cards or bus passes to be used solely for transporting the family to work or childcare, for up to 8 weeks while the family is receiving childcare assistance. Families may receive one \$50 gas card every 2 weeks for use in their own personal vehicle.
- CCEH will only pay expenses for the dates indicated on the Program Approval Letter and for dates in which the child was in care of the licensed provider.

Payment Procedures

- Payment will be made directly to the childcare provider via check. No funds will be provided directly to families participating in the program.
- Payment will not be made until after an approval letter has been sent to the service provider and a W9 is on file for **each** vendor/payee.
- **In order to receive payment for childcare services:**
- Childcare providers are responsible for submitting invoices to the service provider.
- The service provider submits the invoice with a Payment Request Form via fax to CCEH at 860-257-1148. No Payment Request Forms will be accepted without an invoice covering the dates indicated on the form.
- In order to receive a check for a bus pass or gas card, the service provider must submit a Payment Request Form.
- Payment requests will be paid within 5 business days of receipt.
- Payment for bus passes will be made to the transportation provider and mailed to the service provider, so that the service provider may purchase the cards and provide them to the family.
- Payment for gas cards will be made to the local store or gas station and mailed to the service provider so that the service provider may purchase the cards and provide them to the family.

All payments are contingent upon the approval of the families' application and availability of funds.

Questions about CCEH's Children in Shelters Childcare Assistance Fund may be directed to Joanne Vitarelli, Special Projects Coordinator at jvitarelli@cceh.org or 860- 721-7876 x 105 or Mary Ann Haley, Deputy Director at mhaley@cceh.org or 860-721-7876 x 113