

Eligibility for Child Care Assistance

You may be eligible for child care assistance if:

- ✓ You are working at least 80 hours per month and are within the Division of Child Care Services' income guidelines.
- ✓ You receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and are in an approved work activity or in school.
- ✓ You are a college or vocational student enrolled in 12 credit hours, or your class hours and/or work equal a minimum of 80 hours per month.
- ✓ You are a high school or GED student.
- ✓ You are a foster care family who works or attends school.

NOTE: The Division of Child Care Services will not pay for child care for anyone pursuing education beyond a bachelor's degree.



Searching for Child Care

Visit www.dss.sd.gov/childcare then click "Search for Child Care" on the right side of the page to search for registered and licensed child care providers by type, name, city and zip code.

Openings by age of child, days and hours of operation, email and web addresses are available.

In addition, individual provider information can be saved and/or downloaded to make the task of searching for child care easier.

Child Care Assistance Program



Helping working families afford quality child care.

DSS 
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Child Care Assistance

Depending on your income, you may be eligible for assistance from the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Division of Child Care Services to help pay child care costs while you work or go to school. If eligible, you can receive child care assistance for children under age 13, up to age 18 if your child has a special need or age 19 if your child has a special need and is enrolled in school. Quality child care that is affordable and accessible is one of the most important elements of balancing work and family. If your child care arrangement is unstable, your child may be at risk and your ability to work or attend school may be affected.

Eligibility

The amount of child care assistance you can receive is determined using a formula based on household size and gross income (before taxes). This amount is paid directly to your provider on a bimonthly or monthly basis. DSS offers a higher reimbursement rate to providers who care for children with special needs.

Co-Payment

Depending on your family income, you may be responsible for a co-payment or additional expenses not covered by the program, such as registration or transportation fees. This co-payment will remain the same no matter how many children you have in care, the number of hours they are in care, or the amount your provider charges.



Child Care Hours

The number of child care hours covered each month is calculated based on your work and/or school schedules and your child care need. The maximum hours allowed per month is 210 per child. A certificate is issued for the number of hours per month for which your child(ren) are eligible. You are responsible for additional child care costs after you reach the maximum number of hours on your certificate.



Selecting a Provider

If you receive child care assistance, you must select a provider who is at least 18 years old and meets certain other criteria. Several types of providers are allowed under the Division of Child Care Services' guidelines. You can use more than one type of provider, but each must meet the basic requirements listed below.

- ✓ Regulated Providers are licensed or registered with the Division of Child Care Services. They include family day cares, group family day cares, day care centers and out-of school time programs.
- ✓ In-Process Providers are in the process of becoming licensed or registered and have submitted a signed application to a Division of Child Care Services' licensing worker.

- ✓ Relatives must be an aunt/uncle, grandparent or great-grandparent and can reside in the child's home. A sibling of the child may also provide care, but must maintain a separate residence.
- ✓ In-Home Providers come into your home and provide care for only your children.
- ✓ Informal Care is a family friend or neighbor who provides care for only your children. If your child care provider would like to become licensed or registered with the Department of Social Services' Division of Child Care Services, have them contact their local office or call 1.800.227.3020.



Applying for Assistance

To apply for child care assistance, you must submit a completed and signed application to the Division of Child Care Services.

If you are eligible for assistance, the Division of Child Care Services will issue you a certificate for up to six months. In most cases, you will be required to reapply every 12 months.