



SHARING THE NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 1, June, 2010

This newsletter is for child care providers caring for children in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, a program which helps low-income families pay for regulated child care while participating in work activities.

- Attendance Processing Timeline Changes
- Rounding Refresher for Attendance Forms
- Automated Authorization Reduction for Under-Utilized Authorizations
- Adjustments When a Two-Week Absence Covers 2 Attendance Periods
- Summer Reminders

Attendance Processing Timeline Changes

The new attendance reporting modes (*Daily, Weekly or In and Out*) created for the Subsidy program will require more time for local agencies to process Attendance Reporting Forms (ARFs) and CCPI/Internet reported attendance.

In April, the Department of Children and Families approved allowing local agencies:

1. **10** business days to process Attendance Reporting Forms (ARFs) and online CCPI provider-entered attendance, and
2. **Longer than 10** business days if they have concerns about the attendance accuracy (Ops Memo 10-32 April 9, 2010).

These two changes plus the existing policy that attendance reported more than 3 months old is not automatically approved are being updated in “**A FACT SHEET FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND PARENTS**” DWSW-10971-P (R. 09/2009) as follows:

How Do Providers Bill for Payments?

“Payments are usually issued within ~~45-10~~ business days after receiving the Attendance Reporting Form *that is less than 90 days old*”. Added also is “*The worker may require additional time to process the time sheet if there is a program integrity concern related to a child care provider’s submitted attendance.*”

A copy of “**A FACT SHEET FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND PARENTS**” is available at:
http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications/pdf/dsw_10971_p.pdf

Rounding Refresher for Attendance Forms

In March, we gave you an overview of the new Attendance Reporting screens in CCPI and similar changes to paper Attendance Reporting Forms. We would like to remind you of the rounding rules you must use in Reporting Attendance.

1. If you are reporting on the Weekly Mode, you will:
 - Record the child’s exact time of arrival and departure in your daily attendance **record** (your sign-in/sign-out log).
 - Total the child’s hours and minutes of attendance for each day. For example, a child who arrives at 7:12 a.m. and leaves at 4:25 p.m. has been in care 9 hours and 13 minutes.
 - Round the daily attendance off to the nearest half hour. Round 15 minutes up to the nearest half hour. In the example, 9 hours and 13 minutes would be rounded to 9 hours.
 - Total your daily rounded hours for the week. If the total includes a half hour, round up to the nearest full hour. This represents no change from previous instructions. Report the rounded total.
2. If you are reporting on the Daily Mode, you would record 9 hours and 13 minutes for this day in CCPI or on your ARF. CCPI will add your daily totals and round up to the nearest full hour if your unrounded total includes 15 or more minutes. For example, 40 hours and 18 minutes would become 41 hours in CCPI. 40 hours and 12 minutes would be rounded to 40 hours.
 -
3. If you are reporting on the In/Out Mode, you will record the child’s exact time of arrival and departure. No rounding is required. CCPI will total the hours and minutes for the week and round the up to the nearest full hour if the unrounded total includes 15 or more minutes.

Automated Authorization Reduction for Under-Utilized Authorizations

Providers who received subsidy payments in May got a memo with their provider payments. In case you missed it, here is a summary of the change described for enrollment authorizations. This information applies ONLY to licensed group and family child care centers.

The State Budget, 2009 Wisconsin Act 28, requires the Department of Children and Families to adjust enrollment-based authorizations that are under-utilized by more than 40% over a 6-week period. To implement the law, DCF has re-programmed the attendance and payment system to:

1. Analyze the previous 6 weeks of attendance for each enrollment authorization at the close of each attendance period.
2. If the total attendance falls below 60% of authorized hours, the authorization is reduced to 90% of the highest week of attendance.
3. Weeks with approved absence are not counted in the analysis. A provider can also keep one full week per year of closure for unpaid sick time if they notify their agency.

Example of a reduction:

John has a 50-hour enrollment authorization to ABC Child Care. His attendance during a 6-week period is as follows:

Week 1 - Attended hours = 20

Week 2 - Attended hours = 0

Week 3 - Attendance has not been marked.

Week 4 - Attended hours = 40

Week 5 - Attended hours = 10

Week 6 - Attended hours = 0 with approved absence (Parent Vacation).

In this example, the number of weeks considered as utilized is four (Weeks 1, 2, 4 and 5). Since Week 3 does not have attendance entered, the system ignores that week. Week 6 is ignored because of an approved absence..

Total authorized hours (Wk 1, 2, 4, 5): 200

Total attended hours (Wk 1, 2, 4, 5): 70

Total utilization for the above case will be 70/200 which is less than 60%. The system will adjust the authorized hours to be 90% of the highest attended week. Week 4 has the highest attendance, 40 hours. The new authorization will be 36 hours/week.

For a more complete description of the process, please look at the complete memo on the Internet at <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/ops-memos/2010/pdf/10-38-attachment.pdf> or get a copy from your county or tribal agency. You can also view the letter sent to parents with

enrollment authorizations at

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/pdf/authredactionparentltr.pdf>

Negative Adjustments when a two-week absence covers 2 attendance periods

Sometimes, providers have questions about negative adjustments in their provider payments. If you do not understand the reason for the adjustment, you can contact your county or tribal agency for an explanation.

A fairly common reason for these “mystery” adjustments comes from unapproved absences of two or more weeks.

If the absence begins with the first week of an attendance period, the payment system correctly withholds all payment for the child.

If the absence begins in the second week of the attendance period, the payment system does not “know” that the absence will be two or more weeks when it’s time to issue payment. So, the system pays the provider for both weeks of the attendance period. When the provider reports attendance for the next payment period and the child is absent either the first week of the new attendance period, or both weeks of the new attendance period, the system now “knows” that the first week of the absence should not have been paid. A negative adjustment, equal to one week of payment, is calculated and charged to the provider.

If you see a negative adjustment that you do not understand, this may be the reason.

Summer Reminders

With summer here, your work as a provider may be quite different than during winter months. You may have older children in care. You will certainly be spending more time outdoors. Everyone will be more active. Here are a few reminders:

Water safety is a major concern. Young children can drown in very little water. Playing in larger bodies of water—pools and lakes, requires additional adult supervision and attention. You will certainly have more opportunities for outdoor play and experiences.

The Wisconsin Child Care Information Center can help you with summer safety guidance, curriculum resources, and field trip ideas. You can contact them at 1-800-362-7353.

If you need this information in an alternate format, need it translated to another language, or have questions/suggestions about the content of this newsletter, please e-mail ChildCare@Wisconsin.gov or contact your local child care coordinator or Milwaukee County vendor liaison. For civil rights questions, call (608) 266-5335 or (866) 864-4585 TTY (Toll Free). Previous issues of this newsletter are located at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/newsletter.htm>.