

August 2020

Dear Wisconsin Shares Families:

The Department of Children and Families understands that making decisions about child care during the 2020-21 school year can be overwhelming and confusing during this health emergency. To help you with these decisions, we've put together some information about child care and school days. If you have additional questions, please contact your local Income Maintenance agency for assistance.

Do you need child care for virtual school?

For the 2020-2021 school year, you can receive child care subsidy for times when:

- Your child attends virtual school, and you need child care so you can work or participate in another approved activity.
- You choose to have your child attend virtually, if you have the option for your child to attend school in person or virtually and you need child care so you can work or participate in your approved activity.

You cannot receive child care subsidy for times when your child attends school in person.

Is your provider eligible to receive Wisconsin Shares subsidy payments?

To receive Wisconsin Shares payments, providers must be:

- Licensed or Certified,
- Participating in the YoungStar quality rating and improvement program, and
- Have a contract with our Electronic Balance Transfer (EBT) card vendor.

If you're not sure if your provider is eligible, or if you need to find a child care provider, you can use the Child Care finder at <https://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov>.

What should you do if your child care needs change?

You must report if your child was attending school virtually and starts attending school in person because you cannot receive subsidy funds for times when your child attends school in person. Your authorized hours will be reduced to not include the time when your child attends school in person.

You can receive subsidy funds for any before or after school care you need on days when your child attends in person. If your school offers in-person and virtual instruction and you are not sure if you will send your child in person, your worker can create an authorization for only before and after school care. If you later decide to have your child attend virtually at the child care provider location so that you can participate in your approved activity, you can contact your local agency to request additional hours for those days or to have your regular authorization increased.

Is your school closed?

You may be able to receive additional subsidy funds if school is closed, according to the school calendar, for reasons like teacher in-service days, conferences, or early release. You may also receive additional subsidy funds if school is closed due to inclement weather. If you need to send your child to the child care provider on those days to participate in your approved activity, you can request additional hours for the month. You must make this request within 10 calendar days of the closure in order to receive additional subsidy. If you know you will need additional hours whenever school is closed, you can request these hours ahead of time when your worker creates your authorization for the school year.

Did you know you can request authorization changes through the Parent Portal?

The Parent Portal is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is mobile-friendly. You can log in to the Parent Portal at <https://mywchildcareparents.wisconsin.gov> using your Access ID and password. You can use the Parent Portal to do the following and much more:

- View your child care authorizations
- Request changes to your authorizations
- Check the balance on your MyWIChildCare EBT card and track payments you make to your provider.
- View school closed days and hours through the Authorizations button.
- View messages from your worker
- Sign up for text messages to alert you about a new message from your worker

Learn more about the Parent Portal and how to use it at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/parent-portal/info>.

Thank you,

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