Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy

Policy Manual – Chapter 1
Eligibility

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Division of Early Care and Education

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1.1 *Overview: Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program*

1.1.1 Purpose of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program

The purpose of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program is to assist low-income families with a portion of their child care costs while they are working or participating in activities that will lead to work and economic self-sufficiency, including the Wisconsin Works Program (W-2), the FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET), Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF), or an eligible educational activity.

1.1.2 Statutory Authority

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program is regulated under Wisconsin Statutes s.49.155 and Wisconsin Administrative Code DCF Chapter 201. The program is managed through contracts with tribes, county agencies, child care consortia, and other non-profit organizations.

1.1.3 Program Administration

Individuals can apply for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program through their local Child Care Administrative agency or online through ACCESS at https://access.wisconsin.gov/.

Administrative agencies must ensure the establishment of safeguards to prevent employees, consultants, or governing bodies from using their positions for purposes that are, or give the appearance of being, motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others, such as those with whom they have family, business, or other ties

as specified in sections 946.10 and 946.13 of the Wisconsin Statutes (1995-96).
Local Administrative Agency duties for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing a Child Care Coordinator for the county, tribe, or Child Care Consortium.
- Ensuring that each new Child Care Worker and Child Care Coordinator completes the Department's New Worker Training during the first six months of employment.
- Responding to requests for program information.
- Ensuring that eligibility for Wisconsin Shares is accurately determined, including a review of a family's eligibility every six months and whenever a change is reported that may affect eligibility.
- Assessing the family's need for child care under Wisconsin Shares policies.
- Providing information to parents regarding availability of child care providers.

- Providing written authorizations (vouchers) for child care payments.
- Recording attendance in the Department's designated automated system for child care providers who report attendance on paper attendance report forms.
- Monitoring child care provider attendance reports for providers who report attendance online.
- Maintaining child care provider records in the Department's designated automated system.
- Entering child care provider private rates in the Department's designated automated system when the provider submits a written rate change.
- Providing automated system security officer services in the local area for agency staff and providers, including notifying the Department on designated Department forms to end access for individuals who no longer have a business need to access automated systems.
- Representing the Department in fair hearings.
- Monitoring program expenditures.

1.1.4 Confidentiality

All case information is confidential. No person may use or disclose information concerning applicants and participants of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program for any purpose that is not related to the administration of the program. Exceptions to this requirement will only be granted by the Department.

Certain case information is highly confidential and subject to additional safeguarding. Please refer to the Electronic Case File (ECF) Handbook sections 1.7.1 and 1.7.2 for additional information on scanning Restricted Documents.

The laws governing protection of highly confidential information are stricter than the laws governing protection of other confidential information that is obtained to administer the program. The disclosure and use of highly confidential information is limited to others on a bona fide need to know basis only. A person or program in possession of such highly confidential information shall not release it except as authorized by the individual. A person or program who receives such highly confidential information shall not retain the information unless implementation of additional safeguards can and will occur.

When obtaining highly confidential information such as medical diagnosis, the agency worker must obtain a signed release of confidentiality (form DCF-F-369-E Confidential Information Release Authorization).

1.2 *Definitions*

The following terms are used in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program Policy Manual.

Absence A period of time a child is not present during authorized hours of care.

Accreditation An alternative path to a 4 Star or 5 Star rating in YoungStar for accredited providers. For a complete list, please see http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/policy

Acknowledged Father A man whose paternity of a child has been acknowledged under the process of Wisconsin Statutes s. 69.15(3)(b)3.

Adjusted Self-Employment Income The sum of net income as reported to the IRS plus depreciation, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment, and payments on the principal of loans.

Administrative Error An error committed by an agency or the Department in determining benefits issued for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program that results in an overpayment.

Agency An agency that has a contract with the Department to administer the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

Assistance Group (AG) The group within the household that is relevant to child care eligibility.

Apprenticeship A type of unsubsidized employment that is acceptable as long as it is approved by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. To be a valid apprenticeship, there must be an apprenticeship contract signed by the applicant, employer, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Wisconsin Shares child care assistance can be provided for all activities covered under the apprenticeship contract, including classroom training time. Apprenticeship classroom work is exempt from the ~~five-hour-per-week/20-hour-per-month~~ twenty (20) hours per month work requirement because the employer continues to pay a wage during classroom training.

Approved Activity An employment or eligible education or training activity required of individuals caring for a child in order to be eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program. See Section 1.4.8 Participation in Approved Activities.

Attendance Report Form (ARF) The child care provider's paper report of attendance submitted to the Department for reimbursement of child care services for children receiving a Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy.

Authorization A voucher that specifies the terms of reimbursement for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

Break in Employment An interruption in employment, such as a seasonal layoff or short-term illness in which the employee will be returning to the same employer at the end of the interruption.

Business Day A day during the calendar week, excluding federal holidays, Saturday, and Sunday.

Calendar Day Any day on a calendar without regard to holidays and weekends.

CARES See Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support.

CARES Worker Web (CWW) The web-based interface for CARES. CWW is the eligibility workers' primary online system tool.

Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES) The CARES system is a statewide, automated, integrated system that supports the major income maintenance programs of Child Care (CC), Wisconsin Works (W-2), FoodShare (FS), and Health Care (HC), by determining eligibility, issuing benefits, and managing support.

Client Error An unintentional or inadvertent error made by an individual where they reported incorrect information or failed to report information.

Certified Provider - Provisional Child care providers who are certified by a county or tribe, but are not required to be licensed. These include small family child care providers, school-age child care providers, and in-home providers. These providers have not completed the entry level of training required by DCF Chapter 202, but they have completed some required training.

Certified Provider - Regular Child care providers who are certified by a county or tribe, but are not required to be licensed. These include small family child care providers, school-age child care providers, and in-home providers. These providers have completed the entry level of training required by DCF Chapter 202.

Child Care Administrative Agency Any agency that has a contract with the Department to administer child care funds; any agency that has a subcontract to

administer child care funds with an agency that has a contract with the Department; or, in a county having a population of 500,000 or more, the Department or “unit” as defined in Wis. Stat. s.49.825(1)(e). Also referred to as the ‘agency’.

Child Care Consortium A group of agencies that have been approved by the Department to operate as one entity to administer child care funds and process cases for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program .

Child Care Funds Funding for child care purposes under Wis. Stat. s.49.155, excluding subs. (1d) and (1g).

Child Care Provider or Provider A person, business, or organization licensed under Wis. Stat. s.48.65, certified under Wis. Stat. s.48.651, or established or contracted for under Wisconsin Statute s.120.13 (14).

Child Care Provider Information (CCPI) The system the Department, agencies, tribes, and providers use to report child care attendance.

Child Care Provider Price The amount regularly charged by a provider to a parent who pays for the child care services out of his or her personal funds.

Child Care Statewide Administration on the Web (CSAW) The system the Department, agencies, and tribes use to create authorizations for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, retain information on child care providers, and issue subsidy payments.

Child Care Worker A person employed by a child care administrative agency whose duties include determining or re-determining child care subsidy eligibility, authorizing child care funds, making child care payments to providers, or determining and processing the recoupment of child care parent and provider overpayments.

Child Support Agency A county or tribal office, officer, board, department, or agency designated by the county board or elected tribal council to administer the child support, spousal support, and establishment of paternity program on behalf of the department pursuant to Wisconsin Statute s.59.53(5), or a cooperative agreement with the department.

Copayment A system-calculated amount that reduces the initial Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy reimbursement determination based on family size, gross income, and the number of children in child care, as required under DCF Chapter 201.08.

Custodial Parent With respect to a dependent child, a parent who resides with that child and, if there has been a determination of legal custody with respect to the

dependent child, has legal custody of that child. For the purposes of this paragraph, legal custody has the meaning given in Wisconsin Statute s.767.001(2)(a).

Department The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Dependent Child A person who resides with a parent and who is under the age of 18 or, if the person is a full-time student at a secondary school or a vocational or technical equivalent and is reasonably expected to complete the program before attaining the age of 19, is under the age of 19.

Disabled A person physically or mentally incapable of caring for oneself.

Documentation Providing detail to support decisions in a case and identifying the source of the information. Most documentation will be in the form of case comments. Examples include information on transportation required for an authorization or the source of information regarding kinship care.

Effective Dates The beginning and end dates for which child care is authorized or a rate applies in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

Electronic Case File system (ECF) A system that the Department and local agencies use to electronically store verification and other documents.

Eligibility Period The period for which an Assistance Group is eligible for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

Employability Plan (EP) A written agreement developed by either the Wisconsin Works (W-2) Program or the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) Program that details a logical, sequential series of actions to move the participant from dependency to self-sufficiency.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL) The federal government's statistical poverty threshold used in the gross income test to determine the financial eligibility of a child care Assistance Group.

Financial and Employment Planner (FEP) A case manager employed by a Wisconsin Works (W-2) agency who determines W-2 eligibility, assists in the process of determining eligibility, or performs case management functions, such as assessing the individual's need for employment, training, and supportive services, and assisting the individual in obtaining services to achieve self-sufficiency.

FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET) The program established under Wis. Stat. s. 49.79(9) for the purpose of helping FoodShare recipients develop marketable work skills and obtain gainful employment.

Foster Parent A person licensed under Wisconsin Statute s.48.62 (a) or licensed by a tribal social service agency as a tribal placement home.

Gross Receipts from Self-Employment All income to the self-employed person.

Income Money, wages, or salary, adjusted self-employment income, social security, dividends, interest on savings or bonds, income from estates or trusts, net rental income or royalties, public assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), pensions and annuities, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony and other maintenance payments, and veteran pensions.

In−Home Provider A certified child care provider caring for a child in the child's own home.

Individual Self-Sufficiency Plan (ISP) The Tribal TANF equivalent of an Employability Plan.

Intentional Program Violation (IPV) An act in which an individual intentionally makes a false or misleading statement, intentionally misrepresents, conceals, or withholds facts, or intentionally commits any act that constitutes a violation of state or federal law for the purpose of using, presenting, transferring, acquiring, receiving, possessing, or trafficking benefits under Wisconsin Statute s. 49.001(3m) and 49.152(2).

Intentional Program Violation Sanction The penalty period in which an individual will be ineligible for child care as a result of committing a child care intentional program violation (IPV).

Interim Caretaker A caretaker who has been approved to replace a subsidized guardian under Wisconsin Statute s. 48.623 when the subsidized guardian is no longer able to provide care for a specific foster child.

Invalid Self-Employment Expenses for Child Care This includes the specific self-employment expenses that must be added back into an individual's self-employment income when determining financial eligibility for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program. The expenses are depreciation, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment, and payment on the principle of loans. See the definitions of 'Adjusted Self-Employment Income' and Self-Employment Income'.

Kinship Care The program established under Wisconsin Statute s. 48.57(3m) or (3n) which provides monthly payments to children receiving care from relatives.

Learnfare The program established under Wisconsin Statute s. 49.26 which requires that school-age children in a W-2 group be enrolled in school, and that members of certain target groups participate in case management as per s. 49.26 (1) (gm).

Legal Custodian As provided in Wisconsin Statute s. 48.02(11), a person, other than a parent or guardian with guardianship, or an agency to whom legal custody of the child has been transferred by a court, but does not include a person who has only physical custody of the child. For purposes of this definition, 'physical custody' has the same meaning as provided in Wisconsin Statute s. 48.02(14).

Migrant Farmworker Any person who temporarily leaves a principal place of residence outside of this state and comes to this state for not more than 10 months in a year to accept seasonal employment in the planting, cultivating, raising, harvesting, handling, drying, packing, packaging, processing, freezing, grading or storing of any agricultural or horticultural commodity in its unmanufactured state.

Minimum Wage The state minimum hourly wage as stated in Wisconsin Statute Ch. 104.

Minimum Wage Law The provisions of Wisconsin Statute Ch.104 as related to establishing a state minimum wage and citing circumstances and exceptions where a lower wage is legal.

Non-Marital Co-Parent With respect to an individual and a dependent child, a parent who is not married to the individual, resides with the dependent child and is either an adjudicated parent or a parent who has signed and filed a statement acknowledging paternity with the state registrar under Wisconsin Statute s. 69.15(3)(b)3.a.

Non-Placement Parent A parent who does not have responsibility for the physical care of the child during the time for which child care assistance is requested.

Overpayment An amount of money paid by the State of Wisconsin for the care of a child that exceeded Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program requirements.

Parent Notwithstanding Wisconsin Statute s. 49.141(1)(j), 'parent' means a custodial parent, placement parent, foster parent, legal custodian, or person acting in place of a parent. For purposes of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program and this manual, this definition also includes relative caretakers of children who do not have a court order.

Parent Choice The parent's right to choose any regulated provider who is participating in YoungStar.

Parent Share The amount not covered by the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program payment that is owed to the child care provider by the parent. This could include any additional fees charged by the child care provider above the child care provider's rate.

Payment Adjustment An increased or decreased payment made to a provider to correct a previous payment error, often referred to as a positive or negative adjustment.

Person Acting in Place of a Parent An adult who is responsible for and providing care for a child on a 24-hour basis that is not related to him or her, and who is taking the place of a parent when the parent is unavailable because of a physical absence from the home.

Placement Parent The parent who is responsible for the child during the time for which child care is requested when parents do not reside in the same home.

Provider Price The amount that the child care provider reports to the Department as their actual child care rates and is used in the Wisconsin Shares rate calculation.

Qualified Immigrant A person who is not a United States citizen, but who meets one of the following criteria:

- An immigrant lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act
- An immigrant who is granted asylum under section 208 of such Act
- A refugee who is admitted to the United States under section 207 of such Act
- An immigrant who has been certified as a victim of trafficking
- An immigrant who is paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of such Act for a period of at least one year
- An immigrant whose deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) or 241(b)(3) of such Act
- Cuban and Haitian immigrants, as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980
- An Native American Indian born in Canada who is at least 50% American Indian by blood, or an Native American Indian born outside of the United States who is a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe

- An immigrant who has been battered or whose child has been battered, who is no longer residing in the same household with the batterer, and who meets the requirements of 8 USC 1641(c)
- An immigrant who is granted conditional entry pursuant to section 203(a)(7) of such Act as in effect prior to April 1, 1980
- Amerasian immigrants, as defined in section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 1988
- An Immigrant who is lawfully residing and is one of the following:
    - An armed forces veteran who received an honorable discharge that was not on account of alienage and who completed either 24 months of continuous active duty or the full period for which the individual was called, unless the individual received a hardship discharge under 10 USC 1173, early discharge under 10 USC 1171, or a discharge due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. On active duty in the armed forces of the United States, other than active duty for training. The spouse of an individual described in subdivision a. or b., or the un-remarried surviving spouse of an individual described in subdivision a. or b. if the marriage was for one year or more or the individual had a child in common.
    - An immigrant who is lawfully residing in the United States and authorized to work by the immigration and naturalization service
    - A dependent child of an individual who meets one of the above criteria

Rate The maximum amount a child care administrative agency will pay for child care.

Reimbursement The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy payment determination to the child care provider for child care services provided.

Regulated Child Care Child care providers licensed by the state, certified by the county or tribe, or operated by a Wisconsin public school board.

Relative A step-parent, brother, sister, step-brother, step-sister, half-brother, half-sister, first cousin, second cousin, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle, step-uncle, step-aunt, or any grand person of a preceding generation denoted by the prefix of grand, great or great-great, whether by having the same ancestor, direct affinity or legal adoption, or the spouse of any person named in this paragraph, even if the marriage is terminated by death or divorce.

Relative with Court-Ordered Placement and No Kinship Care Payment A case in which a relative is not receiving a Kinship Care payment, but has a legal placement under Wisconsin Statute Chapters 48 or 54.

Relative with Court-Ordered Placement and a Kinship Care Payment A case whereby a relative is receiving Kinship Care payments for a child under Wisconsin Statute s. 48.57(3m) or (3n) and has a legal placement under Wisconsin Statute Chapters 48 or 54.

Relative with Non-Court-Ordered Placement and No Kinship Care Payment A case whereby a relative is caring for a child without a court order and without receiving a Kinship Care payment.

Relative with Non-Court-Ordered Placement and a Kinship Care Payment A case whereby a relative is receiving Kinship Care payments for a child under Wisconsin Statute s. 48.57(3m) or (3n), but has no court order for the child.

Renewal An eligibility assessment that occurs at least annually, includes an interactive interview, and is documented in CWW review mode. This is also called a review. See definition of 'Six Month Report Form (SMRF).

Rental Income The rent received from properties owned or controlled. Rental income may be either earned or unearned income. It is earned only if the owner actively manages the property an average of 20 or more hours per week. It is unearned when the owner reports it to the IRS as other than self-employment income. Use "net" rental income in the eligibility determination. "Net" rental income is the gross rental receipts minus the allowable business expenses.

Residence The address of the physical dwelling where a family lives.

Residency For Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, residency means the state in which a family resides.

Retroactive Copayment The copayment calculation method used for retroactive authorization.

Review An eligibility assessment that occurs at least annually, includes an interactive interview, and is documented in CWW review mode. This is also called a renewal. See definition of 'Six Month Report Form (SMRF).

Royalty Income The income received for granting the use of property owned or controlled, usually a patent or copyrighted material or a natural resource. The right to income is often expressed as a percentage of receipts from using the property or as an

amount per unit produced. Royalty income is always unearned income and does not provide an approved activity for child care.

Satisfactory Progress Achieving a passing grade for all coursework for the term, or if a passing grade is not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

School Bank Hours The authorized hours of care allowed during regular school hours when a school is closed for a short-term period of time, such as snow days, holiday breaks, or teacher conferences.

Self-Employment Income The income the household receives from self-employment and is calculated as net earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) plus depreciation, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment and payments on the principal of loans. This is calculated by subtracting the IRS's allowable expenses from the gross receipts.

Shared Placement The physical placement of a child in more than one residence with more than one parent. This may occur when a child's parents do not live together or when a child lives in more than one residence for another legal reason.

Six Month Report Form (SMRF) A form that is submitted by participant families to ensure that accurate eligibility and authorization information has been provided to the eligibility agency and is completed at least annually by eligible families at alternative 6 (six) month intervals from the annual eligibility renewal.

Sleep Shift Hours The authorized hours of child care for a parent who works third shift to cover the period of time the parent is sleeping during the day.

Special Need The emotional, behavioral, physical, or personal need that makes an individual physically or mentally incapable of caring for oneself, or, for a child, requiring more than the usual amount of care and supervision for the child's age, as documented by a physician, psychologist, special educator, or other qualified licensed professional. A "special need" includes a developmental disability (DCF 201.02(20)).

Subsidized Guardianship A type of guardianship that falls under Wisconsin Statute s. 48.623.

Supervised Independent Living Arrangement A living arrangement for a parent aged 17 or younger that is approved by a licensed or public child welfare, social service, or state corrections agency and supervised by an adult. Such living arrangements for minors may not be in the same location as the minor's parents or guardians, including in the same address, apartment building, or residential structure. The supervising adult

does not have to be living in the home with the teen parent, if the parent is at least 17 years old and the supervising adult is a relative, a former foster parent, a subsidized guardian, an interim caretaker, or a representative from a licensed private or public child welfare, social service, or state corrections agency.

Tribe A Wisconsin Native American Indian tribe recognized by the federal government.

Two-Parent Household A household that includes either two married parents or two non-married co-parents with a child(ren) in common and includes step-parents.

Unregulated Child Care Provider A child care provider who is not licensed by the state, certified by the county/tribe, or operated by a Wisconsin public school board.

Verification Proof from third-party sources.

Voucher An authorization for reimbursement.

Weekly Ceiling The county or tribal weekly reimbursement rate, as determined by a survey of licensed child care providers.

Wisconsin Child Care Regulatory System (WISCCRS) A statewide database of child care providers used by licensing and certification staff.

Work-Study Employment provided by or through an educational institution for its students and as part of its students' financial aid package. The work-study position may be at the educational institution or off campus, so long as it is equals or exceeds Wisconsin's minimum wage. Work-study is not a stand-alone approved activity.

YoungStar Program. The Wisconsin five-star quality rating and improvement system for child care providers based on education, learning environment, business methods, and practices around child health and well-being.

1.3 *The Application Process*

This section applies to all child care cases unless otherwise specified in sections 1.7, 1.8, or 1.9.

1.3.1 Application Process

Child care cases must be managed within the applicant's county of residence unless the applicant's county of residence is within a Child Care Consortium that has been approved by the Department. In that instance, the child care case must be managed within the Child Care Consortium.

1.3.2 Request for Assistance (RFA)

To begin the process of applying for child care assistance, an individual may call the local agency, may apply in person at the local agency, or may apply online through the ACCESS website. The following sections describe the details of the process of applying for child care assistance for each method.

1.3.2.1 Apply by Telephone

On the date the applicant contacts the agency by telephone, the agency must complete 1, 2, or 3 below:

1. Complete Client Registration in CARES Worker Web (CWW) with a signature according to either a. or b. below:
   a. Generate the registration form through CWW and complete one of the following:
      i. Collect a telephonic signature and either mail the printed form to the applicant or leave the form at the front desk for the applicant to pick up; or
      ii. Print the CWW Application/Registration form and either mail it to the applicant to review, sign, and return or leave the form at the front desk for the applicant to review, sign, and return.

      or

   b. Print DCF-F- 2835 form and either mail it to the applicant to complete, sign, and return, or leave it at the front desk for the applicant to complete, sign, and return.

The filing date is the date the agency receives the signed DCF-F-2835 form, signed CWW Application/Registration form, or a telephonic signature.

The agency must schedule the interactive interview to occur no later than five (5) business days after the date the agency receives the signature. The applicant has the

option to reschedule the appointment to a time that better fits his or her schedule, if requested.
If the applicant fails or declines to sign the DCF-F-2835 form or the registration form that is generated by CWW, the agency must still schedule the interview to occur no later than five (5) business days and the filing date will then be established as the date of the interactive interview.

2. Complete the interactive interview immediately and do one of the following:
   a. Collect a telephonic signature and generate a current Application Summary. The worker must mail the Application Summary to the applicant unless the applicant prefers to pick it up at the agency;

      or

   b. Generate and print the Application Summary and mail it to the applicant to review, sign, and return unless the applicant prefers to complete the signature at the agency.

3. If the applicant prefers to skip the registration signature and process, advise the applicant that the filing date will be the date of the interactive interview. Schedule the interactive interview to occur no later than five (5) business days after this contact. The applicant has the option to reschedule the appointment to a time that better fits his or her schedule, if requested.

1.3.2.2 Apply in Person
When an individual applies in person, the local agency must complete 1, 2, or 3 below:

1. Complete the client registration driver flow in CWW and continue through the interactive interview immediately. Generate and print the Application Summary, provide the Application Summary to the applicant to review and sign, and provide a copy of the signed Application Summary to the applicant.

2. Complete the client registration pages in CWW and schedule the interactive interview. The agency must either:
   a. Print the CWW Application/Registration form, collect the written signature and provide a signed copy of the form to the applicant, and schedule an interactive interview;

      or

   b. Print DCF-F-2835 form and collect the signature on this form, provide a signed copy of the form to the applicant, and schedule an interactive interview.

The filing date is the date the agency receives the signed form DCF-F-2835 or signed CWW Application/Registration form. The agency must schedule the interactive interview to occur no later than five (5) business days after the date the agency receives the signature. The applicant has the option to reschedule the appointment to a time that better fits his or her schedule, if requested.

3. If the applicant prefers to skip the registration signature and instead complete the interactive interview right away only the Application Summary Signature needs to be collected. The filing date and the interview date are the same date.

1.3.2.3 Apply Online Through ACCESS

ACCESS applications for child care are routed to the county of residence and must be processed at the county of residence, with the exception of counties that are in a Child Care Consortium. Child Care Consortia will determine routing rules for their own counties.

When an applicant applies for child care assistance through ACCESS, the agency must schedule the interactive interview to occur no later than five (5) business days after the receipt of the ACCESS application. The filing date for requests that come through ACCESS are set to the date the applicant submits the online form, unless the ACCESS request is submitted after 4:30 p.m. If the ACCESS request is submitted after 4:30 p.m., the filing date is set for the next business day, according to the CARES calendar.

If the applicant contacts the agency to reschedule the interview, it may be rescheduled to the next available appointment time to accommodate the applicant's needs.

1.3.3 gram Add

If an individual has another benefit program open in the automated system and requests child care assistance before an existing program is due for a renewal, the individual must complete the Request for Assistance (RFA) process through ACCESS, phone, or in person as outlined in section 1.3.2 and the interview and signature requirements outlined in 1.3.4 through 1.3.7.

1.3.4 Interactive Application Interview

The agency must schedule an interactive interview for each application, renewal, and when Child Care is added to an existing case.

The interview must be documented in CWW on the Application/Review Interview Details page and an Application Summary must be generated upon completion of the interview. The Application Summary must always be presented to the customer for review. The Application Summary is essential for meeting the legal requirement that the applicant has an opportunity to review the responses that the worker entered on their behalf, as well as receiving information about rights and responsibilities.

Intake interviews may be held face-to-face or by telephone. The agency must hold a face-to-face interview if the applicant requests a face-to-face interview or if the applicant has had a previous Wisconsin Shares Intentional Program Violation.

For telephone interviews, the agency must contact the applicant at the scheduled interview time with the telephone number that was confirmed in the interview appointment notice.

If the first attempt to contact the applicant is unsuccessful, the agency must contact the applicant within fifteen (15) minutes of the first call. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, document in case comments that the applicant was unavailable at the appointment time and indicate when the follow up call was made. The Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI) informs the applicant that the interview was missed and informs the applicant to contact the agency to reschedule the interview. The NOMI letter is generated by CWW when:

- There is a Child Care Request recorded in CWW and the request is less than 30 days old;
- The child care indicator box is checked on the Integrated Client Scheduler (ICS) appointment detail page;
- The status at the end of the appointment date is marked as scheduled, waiting, or abandoned;
- The appointment type is one of the following:
    - EO – Eligibility Review/Office
    - IF – ES Intake Interview/Office
    - IP – ES Intake Interview/Phone
    - IR – ES Intake Interview/2nd
    - MP – ES Intake Interview 2nd Phone
    - RP – ES Eligibility Review/Phone
    - IN – Intake/No Phone

If the ICS is not used to schedule appointments, the agency is strongly encouraged to manually generate this letter.

During the interview, the agency must advise the applicant of the verification items that he or she will need and the change reporting requirements.

At the conclusion of the interview the Good Cause Notice DCF-F-DWSP2018, must be provided to the applicant.

1.3.5 Application/Review Interview Details Page

In CWW, the agency must document on the Application/Review Interview Details Page the interview method that was conducted (telephone or face-to-face). The agency must make sure that an Application Summary was generated and either provided or sent to the applicant following the interview.

1.3.6 Signature Requirements

A signature is required from the applicant for every application, renewal, Child Care program add, and Six Month Report Form (SMRF). The following details the signature requirements for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program:

- The electronic signature that is submitted through ACCESS Apply for Benefits (AFB) satisfies the signature requirement to set the application filing date and also meets the signature requirement at the conclusion of the intake interview.
- A telephonic signature received during the RFA is a valid form of signature for setting the filing date and meets the signature requirement at the conclusion of the interactive interview.
- A telephonic signature is a valid form of signature on the Case Summary following an intake interview or a renewal interview.
- With a new application, if the intake interview occurs simultaneously with the phone request, a telephonic or written signature on the Case Summary meets the signature requirement.
- The electronic signature that is submitted through ACCESS Renew my Benefits (RMB) satisfies the renewal signature requirement that follows the renewal interview, however the interview must be documented in CWW on the Application/Review Interview Details page.
- When a renewal interview is completed, either a telephonic or a written signature is needed on the Case Summary when the child care renewal interview is completed. However, if there has been either an ACCESS AFB or RMB, no additional signature is needed at the conclusion of the interview.
- If a written Request for Assistance (RFA) signature has been collected on form DCF-F-2835 (Wisconsin Shares Child Care Registration form), the signature requirement has been met.

1.3.7 Initial Eligibility Determination

The agency must determine eligibility without delay after the individual's verification requirements are complete. Upon receipt of the required verification from the individual, eligibility may begin on the first of the month of the application filing date.

1.3.8 Child Care Eligibility Closed for a Calendar Month or Longer

If Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy eligibility is closed for one calendar month or longer, the individual must re-apply for child care assistance.

1.4 *Non-Financial Eligibility Requirements*

This section applies to all child care cases unless otherwise specified in sections 1.7, 1.8, or 1.9.

1.4.1 Assistance Groups (AG)

Assistance Groups consist of any of the following individuals who reside in the same household:

- An individual who is a parent caring for a child
- The individual's dependent children
- Any dependent children of the individual's dependent children
- The individual's spouse or any non-marital co-parent
- The spouse's dependent children
- The non-marital co-parent's dependent children

When paternity has been established for a child in the child care Assistance Group, the father is presumed to continue residing in the household, unless a child support referral has been made. Likewise, any parent is presumed to continue to reside in the household unless a child support referral has been made.

If an adult, biological, adoptive, or custodial parent of a child is living in the household, the child care Assistance Group must not include another adult who resides in the same household unless s/he is the spouse of the custodial parent, paternity has been established between the other adult and the child, or the other adult has guardianship of both the child and the biological, adoptive, or custodial parent.

Eighteen (18) year old teen parents can continue to be dependent children in their parent's case as long as they are expected to graduate high school or achieve its equivalent by their nineteenth (19th) birthday.

Examples of individuals to be included in the Assistance Group:

Example: A grandmother, an adult mother, and the adult mother's baby live in the same house. The AG consists of the adult mother and her baby. The applicant is not the grandmother. The grandmother is not in the AG unless the grandparent has guardianship of both the adult mother and her dependent child.

Example: A grandmother has guardianship of her 2-year-old granddaughter. A child welfare worker reunites the 2-year-old with her adult mother in the grandmother's home. Once the adult mother moves into the house, the AG must change because the mother and grandmother cannot be in the same AG, even though the grandmother has court ordered guardianship. Eligibility for the grandmother must end and the mother must apply for child care assistance.

Example: A grandparent or other adult has legal guardianship of the adult parent and the adult parent's dependent child. The AG consists of the grandparent/guardian, the adult parent, and the child. The applicant is the grandparent.

1.4.1.1 arceration

An individual who is in a child care Assistance Group and who is incarcerated for 30 calendar days or less will remain in the child care Assistance Group, unless a child support referral has been made.

An individual who is in a child care Assistance Group and who is incarcerated for more than 30 calendar days is excluded from the Assistance Group. The Assistance Group must cooperate with child support requirements, as necessary.

An individual who is living in the home under a restricted release, such as work release, home monitoring, and other alternative to incarceration, is not incarcerated for Wisconsin Shares purposes. The individual's membership in the AG is determined according to household relationships, and if included in the AG, their income is counted and Approved Activity requirements apply.

1.4.1.2 Shared Placement Cases

Each parent with shared placement has the option to apply for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for the time that the child in common is residing within his or her household. Each custodial/placement parent will have his or her own case number, but the child will be assigned a unique PIN number that will be used in both child care assistance cases.

Examples of cases with shared placement:

Example: Melissa is an adult and has one child who is in her home on a shared placement basis. The child spends part of the week with her father and part of the week with the mother. The AG consists of mom and her child.

Example: Jessica and Mathew have shared placement of Megan, age 11. Mathew lives with Betty and they have one child together. Jessica's AG consists of herself and Megan. Mathew's AG consists of himself, Megan, Betty, and their one child in common.

1.4.2 Applicant Age

Applicants for child care assistance must be at least 18 years of age unless the minor applicant:

- Is living in a group home licensed by the State of Wisconsin or an approved and supervised independent living situation, **and**
- Is a high school student and living in a group home licensed by the State of Wisconsin or an approved and supervised independent living situation and; **or**
- The applicant is married.

1.4.3 Ages of Eligible Children

Applicants will only qualify for child care assistance for children who are:

- Under age 13, or
- Under age 19 if the child has a verified special need and the child is not capable of caring for him or herself physically or mentally.

1.4.4 Wisconsin Residency

Applicants must be residents of Wisconsin and intend to remain in Wisconsin unless they are a migrant farmworker. See section 1.7 regarding migrant farmworkers.

1.4.5 Citizen or Qualified Immigrant

The child care assistance must be for a child who is either a United States citizen or a qualified Immigrant.

Example: Juanita and Carlos work full time, but are not U.S. citizens or qualified immigrants. Juanita has applied for child care for their two school-aged children, who are U.S. citizens. The AG consists of Juanita, Carlos, and the two children.

1.4.6 Social Security Numbers (SSN)

As a condition of eligibility, applicants must provide or apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) for any child for which they want child care assistance. Any child who

does not have an SSN or an SSN Application filed with the Social Security Administration (SSA) will not be eligible for child care assistance.

If the applicant has provided verification of an SSN Application that was filed with the SSA to initially qualify for child care assistance, the SSN must be provided to the agency no later than at the first six-month report.

Parents are not required to provide an SSN for themselves.

1.4.7 Child Support Cooperation

As a condition of eligibility, each parent in the child care assistance group must cooperate with the CSA for all of his or her minor children over the age of sixty (60) days, unless a good cause exception has been granted for a particular child.

1.4.7.1 Failure to Cooperate with the Child Support Agency

The CSA determines child support cooperation for all individuals. The CSA will notify the Wisconsin Shares administrative agency and the applicable parent if they have determined that the parent is not cooperating, along with their justification for the decision.

Within seven (7) calendar days of the receipt of the notice of non-cooperation from the CSA, the local Child Care agency is required to send a Notice of Action Needed (also known as the Verification Checklist) to the individual informing him or her of the child support non-cooperation determination and informing the individual that he or she has seven (7) business days from the issuance date on the Notice of Action Needed to cooperate with CSA or file a good cause claim. The Notice of Action Needed includes a link to the electronic format of the Good Cause Claim form (DCF-F-DWSP2019).

If, on the eighth (8th) business day, the individual is still not cooperating with the CSA and has not filed a claim for good cause with the local agency, an instance of non-cooperation is recorded and the entire child care assistance group is not eligible for a Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy until cooperation with the CSA occurs or until the individual files a good cause claim.

If an individual fails three (3) or more times to meet the child support cooperation requirements without good cause, the child care assistance group is not eligible for child care assistance for a period of at least six (6) months and until all of the members of the child care assistance group cooperate with the CSA.

CWW has been enhanced to allow the Child Care agency to track instances of non-cooperation.

1.4.7.2 Exemptions to Cooperating with the Child Support Agency

Parents with a child that is younger than sixty (60) days and parents with unborn children are exempt from cooperating with the CSA for that child. Foster parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive a kinship care payment are also exempt from the child support cooperation requirements for the children placed in their care.

1.4.7.3 Good Cause Notice

A Good Cause Notice (DCF-F-DWSP2018) must be provided to all Wisconsin Shares applicants and participants at the following times:

- At application for child care assistance
- When a child is added to the child care assistance group
- When a parent leaves the child care assistance group
- At the annual eligibility review for child care assistance
- When a participant discloses to his or her eligibility or authorization worker circumstances that may meet the good cause criteria

The Good Cause Notice describes the requirement to cooperate with child support, the right to claim good cause as an exception to the cooperation requirement, and the criteria for good cause.

1.4.7.4 Good Cause Criteria

The criteria for good cause are as follows:

- Cooperation is reasonably anticipated to result in either physical or emotional harm to the child, including threats of domestic abuse or child kidnapping
- Cooperation is reasonably anticipated to result in either physical or emotional harm to the parent, including domestic abuse
- Cooperating with the CSA would make it more difficult for the individual to escape domestic abuse or unfairly penalize the individual who is or has been victimized by such abuse, or the individual is at risk of further domestic abuse
- The child was conceived as a result of incest or sexual assault
- The parent is considering whether to terminate parental rights and has sought the assistance of a licensed private social services agency not more than three months ago
- A petition for the adoption of the child has been filed with a court, except this does not apply as a good cause exemption from the responsibility to make payments under an existing court order

1.4.7.5 Good Cause Claim

Good cause claims for not cooperating with the CSA for child care cases are determined by the county and tribal agencies that administer the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

The local county or tribal agency that administers the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program shall provide a Good Cause Claim form (DCF-F-DWSP2019) to any applicant or participant upon request. The Good Cause Claim form describes the good cause criteria and the documentation that will be needed to support a good cause claim.

The form must be returned to the agency within seven (7) business days from the issuance date of the Notice of Action Needed when the applicant or participant has requested the form during a period of non-cooperation with the CSA. When completing the Good Cause Claim form, the applicant or participant must specify the circumstances that meet the good cause criteria for not cooperating.

Upon receipt of the Good Cause Claim form, the local agency must notify the CSA within two (2) days (through an automated process) that no further child support action may be taken until the local agency determines whether good cause exists.

If an individual is cooperating with the local agency in furnishing evidence and information to be used in determining the good cause claim and other eligibility criteria are met, child care benefits shall not be denied, delayed, reduced, or discontinued pending the determination of the good cause claim.

1.4.7.6 Good Cause Claim Documentation and Supporting Evidence

The local agency shall require the individual to submit at least one document or corroborative evidence and a statement specifying the circumstances that the applicant or participant believes provide sufficient good cause for not cooperating. The applicant or participant must submit supporting evidence to the local agency within twenty (20) days from the date the Good Cause Claim form was signed. The local agency must encourage the applicant or participant to submit as many types of supporting evidence as possible, and must inform the individual that if assistance is needed in obtaining evidence, the worker will assist him or her. The worker must make every reasonable effort to obtain specific documents or information that the individual is having difficulty obtaining.

If an applicant or participant does not submit sufficient evidence to substantiate the good cause claim, the local agency shall notify the individual that additional evidence is required and shall outline the types of evidence that may be used.

The good cause claim may be supported with any of the following types of documents:

- Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological, school, or law enforcement records regarding domestic abuse or physical or emotional harm to the parent or child
- Medical records or written statements from a mental health professional that pertain to the emotional health history, present emotional health status, or prognosis of the parent or child
- Birth certificates, medical records, or law enforcement records that indicate that the child may have been conceived as a result of incest or sexual assault
- Court documents or other records that indicate that a petition for the adoption of the child has been filed with a court
- A written statement from a public or private social services agency that the parent is being assisted by the agency in deciding whether to terminate parental rights
- Written and signed statements from others with knowledge of the circumstances on which the good cause claim is based, including, but not limited to, statements from neighbors, friends, family, or clergy;
- Any other supporting or corroborative evidence

1.4.7.7 Good Cause Claim Investigation
The applicant or participant must cooperate with the investigation by the local agency.

The local agency must investigate any good cause claim based on anticipated harm, even when the claim is credible without corroborative evidence and when the agency knows corroborative evidence is not available. Good cause must be found when the individual's statement and the agency's investigation satisfy the agency that good cause exists.

The local agency may investigate any other good cause claim when the individual's statement and the corroborative evidence do not provide sufficient information to make a determination. The individual must cooperate with the investigation by the agency.

The local agency may contact the child support agency during any good cause claim investigation. The agency is not allowed to contact the individual alleged to have committed acts that are the basis of a good cause claim.

1.4.7.8 Good Cause Determination
The local agency must determine if good cause exists within forty-five (45) calendar days of the date the Good Cause Claim form was signed unless an extension has been granted because more time is necessary to obtain evidence. The worker may, with supervisory approval, determine that more time is needed due to difficulty in obtaining

corroborative evidence. If the good cause claim is based on domestic abuse, and no corroborative evidence is currently available, the local agency may permit the applicant or participant to submit evidence to the local agency within sixty (60) days from the date the Good Cause Claim form was signed. If the local agency grants up to sixty (60) calendar days to submit evidence for a claim of domestic abuse, the agency shall determine if good cause exists within eighty-five (85) calendar days from the date the Good Cause Claim form was signed.

The CSA must be given the opportunity to review and comment on the findings of the local agency prior to the final determination on good cause by the agency. The agency must consider any recommendations from the CSA.

1.4.7.9 Determination that Good Cause Does Not Exist
If the local agency determines that the individual does not have good cause for failing to cooperate with child support, the local agency must promptly notify the individual of the determination and the right to a fair hearing based on the agency's decision. The individual then has ten (10) calendar days from the date of the notice that good cause does not exist to withdraw the child care application, request the child care case be closed, or request a fair hearing of the agency decision before the CSA proceeds with child support services.

After the individual has had ten (10) calendar days and if the individual did not request a fair hearing of the agency decision, the agency must notify the CSA that it may proceed with child support services and require the cooperation of the individual.

If the individual requests a fair hearing based on the local agency's decision, the agency shall instruct the CSA to suspend child support services during the fair hearing process.

1.4.7.10 Determination that Good Cause Exists
If the local agency determines that the individual does have good cause for failing to cooperate with the CSA, the agency must promptly notify the individual of the determination and the basis for the determination in writing.

The agency must also either:

1. Direct the CSA to suspend all further case activities if the individual did not request that the CSA proceed without his or her cooperation; **or**
2. Notify the CSA that it may proceed with child support services if the individual requested that the CSA proceed without his or her cooperation.

1.4.7.11 Fair Hearing Request
An individual whose good cause claim was denied or who disputes a decision by the local agency may petition the local agency for a fair hearing.

The CSA must be given reasonable notice and may participate in any fair hearing resulting from a good cause investigation or good cause determination.

In the event that a W-2 fact-finding review and a fair hearing are based on the same issues and facts, the fair hearing decision takes precedence over the fact-finding.

1.4.7.12 Ongoing Agency Review of Good Cause Determinations
The local agency must review good cause determinations that are based on circumstances subject to change at each review of eligibility or upon new evidence. Good cause determinations based on permanent circumstances do not need to be reviewed again. If the local agency determines that good cause for failing to cooperate with the CSA no longer exists, the individual must be allowed ten (10) calendar days before cooperation requirements are imposed to request that the child care case be closed or request a fair hearing.

1.4.8 articipation in Approved Activities
Every parent who is caring for a child in the Child Care Assistance Group must participate in an approved activity in order for the Assistance Group to be eligible for child care assistance.

The following lists all of the acceptable approved activities that qualify an individual for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

1.4.8.1 Learnfare
Participation in the Learnfare school attendance requirements. Within the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, Learnfare includes the teen parent whose parent is enrolled in W-2.

1.4.8.2 High School
Individuals under 20 years of age and enrolled in high school or participating in a course of study meeting the standards established by the state superintendent of public instruction for a high school equivalency.

If the individual is under the age of 18, he or she must meet one of the following requirements:

- Residing with his or her custodial parent
- Residing with a kinship relative who may or may not be receiving the Kinship Care benefit
- Residing in a foster home
- Residing in a subsidized guardianship or interim caretaker home

- Residing in an independent living arrangement that is approved by a licensed or public child welfare agency and is supervised by an adult; the supervised living arrangement must be documented in CWW case comments
- Married

On-line high school equivalency courses are contingent upon the child care authorizing agency's approval. The student's satisfactory progress must be documented by scanning the grade report in ECF and the agency must record case comments in CWW. Satisfactory progress is assumed if the student has passing grades for the term, or if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

Note: The 24-month limit does not apply to participation under this section. The 24-month restriction applies only for high school equivalency students who are age 20 or older.

1.4.8.3 loyment

Participation in an activity which produces income, such as:

- Regular employment
- Self-employment
- Employer-sponsored training
- Apprenticeship
- Sheltered employment
- Participation in an AmeriCorps employment program

1.4.8.3.1 yed by a Child Care Provider

If the employer is a child care provider or a business owned or managed by a provider, each of the following requirements must be met:

- The employer must have a Worker's Compensation insurance policy for its employees unless legally exempt.
- The employer must comply with Wisconsin minimum wage law for all employees.
- The employer must file a Wisconsin New Hire report on the employee within 30 days of the hiring date.
- The employer must report wages to Unemployment Insurance unless exempt.

1.4.8.3.2 Self-Employment

A self-employed individual:

- Carries on a trade or business as a sole proprietor or an independent contractor; or
- Is a member of a partnership that carries on a trade or business; or
- Is otherwise in business for him or herself (including a part-time business).

Parents who operate self-employment businesses must file taxes with the IRS in order to participate in the Wisconsin Shares Program. Filed IRS tax documents for the most recent tax year must be provided for parents who wish to receive child care subsidy while self-employed.

Self-employed parents who have not filed taxes because the business has not yet operated in a calendar year and subsequent tax season must provide a Self-Employment Income Report form (SEIRF) (form DCF-F-DWSP2131 or form DHS F-00107) for the last 30 days.

SEIRFs may also be submitted for months when the previous year's filed IRS tax documents do not represent the current income for the business. Additionally, when a new business is six months old, a SEIRF must be provided so that an accurate authorization can be written. See 2.2.8 for information about authorizations for self-employment.

If IRS tax documents or SEIRFs appear questionable or need clarification, local agency staff must follow up with the parent and request additional verification, such as documentation of receipts, contracts, or expenses. Also see section 1.6.5. Any additional verification requirements must be documented in CWW case comments.

~~For purposes of an approved activity for child care, self-employment is expected to be an activity that produces income that supports the child care Assistance Group. Individuals whose businesses are greater than six (6) months old must file taxes with the IRS in order to participate in the Wisconsin Shares Program and must provide the filed IRS tax documents to the local agency. Individuals whose businesses are in the first six (6) months of operation are exempt from the requirement to provide filed IRS tax documents, but must provide Self-Employment Income Report forms (DCF-F-DWSP2131) or DHS F-00107 forms for all months until IRS tax documents are filed.~~

Self-employment as an unregulated child care provider is not allowable as an approved activity for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy eligibility.

1.4.8.3.3 n-Call Employment

Participation in on-call employment may be an approved activity as long as documentation is provided to the agency of employment verification and work schedule.

For periodic episodes of increased work, the parent must contact the agency to request approval of override hours.

1.4.8.4 Participation in a Tribal TANF Program
Participation in a Tribal TANF program based on activities assigned on the Individual Self-Sufficiency Case Plan.

The 24-month education limit does not apply to individuals in a Tribal TANF placement if the education is part of their approved plan.

Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy may be available for study time if it is part of the Tribal TANF Self-Sufficiency Plan.

1.4.8.5 Participation in W-2 Program
Participation in any Wisconsin Works (W-2) placement and/or activity assigned on an Employability Plan (EP).

The 24-month education limit does not apply to individuals in a Wisconsin Works (W-2) placement if the education is part of their approved plan.

Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy may be available for study time if it is part of the W-2 Employability Plan.

1.4.8.5.1 Transform Milwaukee Jobs Program (TMJ) or Transitional Jobs Program
Participation in the TMJ program or the Transitional Jobs program under Wisconsin Statute s. 49.163.

1.4.8.6 FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET)
Participation in the job search or work experience component of the FSET program.

1.4.8.7 Basic Education
Participate in basic education, including English as a second language course; literacy tutoring; high school or a course of study meeting the standards established by the state superintendent of public instruction for the high school equivalency.

Eligibility requirements for Basic Education:

- If the basic education is high school or equivalent and the parent is age 19 or younger (a teen parent), education can be a standalone approved activity. Please see section 1.4.8.2 on High School.

- If the basic education is high school or equivalent and the parent is age 19 or younger (a teen parent), the child care authorization will not count against the

parent's 24-month limit for child care for basic education. Please see section 1.4.8.2 on High School.

- If the basic education is high school or equivalent and the parent is age 20 or older, the parent must be working at least ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month throughout the semester to maintain eligibility for education-related child care and the authorized weeks will count toward the parent's 24-month limit for child care for basic education.

- If the basic education program is English as a second language or literacy tutoring, the parent must be working at least ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month regardless of the parent's age. The authorized weeks of care will count toward the parent's 24-month limit for child care for basic education.

- Local agencies do not have discretion to require more than ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month of employment.
- The child care agency must determine that participation in basic education will facilitate the individual's efforts to maintain employment. The agency must document this decision in CWW case comments.
- Other than a parent age 19 or younger (a teen parent) attending high school or equivalent, participation in basic education under this section is limited to no more than 24 months during the lifetime of the parent. The 24 months need not be consecutive. The 24 months must be recorded in the CSAW system Parent Education Tracking page.
- School and work schedules are required for all individuals.
- The student's satisfactory progress must be documented by scanning the grade report in ECF and updating CWW case comments. Satisfactory progress is assumed if the student has passing grades for the term, or if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

1.4.8.8 Technical College or Course of Study Leading to Employment

Participate in a course of study at a technical college, or educational courses that provide an employment skill, as determined by the agency and would help the individual's efforts to maintain employment. To qualify:

- The child care agency must determine that participation in this activity will facilitate the individual's efforts to maintain employment. The agency must document this decision in CWW case comments.

- The individual must be employed no less than 5 hours per week or working at least twenty (20) hours per month throughout the entire period of education. Work study can be considered to meet the employment requirement.
- Local agencies do not have discretion to require more than ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month of employment.
- Participation in education is limited to no more than 24 months during the lifetime of the parent. The 24 months need not be consecutive. The 24 months must be recorded in the CSAW system Parent Education Tracking page.
- School and work schedules are required for all individuals.
- Field placement, such as unpaid student teaching and unpaid internships, do not meet the employment criteria of this section, but may be included as part of the educational activity if school credits are awarded for completion.
- The student's satisfactory progress must be documented by scanning the grade report in ECF and updating CWW case comments. Satisfactory progress is assumed if the student has passing grades for the term, or if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

1.4.8.9 Online Education

Courses delivered online qualify as part or all of a parent's basic or post-secondary education activity regardless of whether the course requires specific log-in times or is entirely self-paced.

The course credit hours documented by the educational institution and the schedule provided by the parent are only part of the determination of hours eligible for authorization. The worker must also consider any shared placement or child school schedule, and approved activity schedule of a second parent in the Assistance Group. Authorized hours should also reflect any work schedule of the parent who is the online student.

In addition to existing criteria for basic education or technical college education, online education must:

- Be provided by an accredited educational institution
- Provide credit hours for the completed course for either high school or post-secondary purpose
- Course enrollment must be documented by letters or other documents provided by the educational institution.

- Authorizations for self-paced online education are limited to one hour per week per enrolled credit, plus reasonable travel time. Additional hours can be authorized for summer school if the institution documents that the course is delivered over an accelerated period with more hours of instruction provided per week.
- Travel time is the time from the provider location to the location that the parent logs into the course.
- The parent must inform the authorization worker of the location of the computer that will be used for logging into the course. If this is any location but the parent's home, the worker should consider the reasonableness of the location, and must require verification if questionable.
- The parent must provide a planned log-in schedule for the worker's use in establishing an authorization that considers the school schedule as well as factors such as a child's shared placement or the child's school schedule, or a second parent's overlapping approved activity.
- Once child care is authorized for a semester, students must report if a class is cancelled or they withdraw from a class so that authorizations can be adjusted.
- The student's satisfactory progress must be documented by scanning the grade report in ECF and updating CWW case comments. Satisfactory progress is assumed if the student has passing grades for the term, or if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

1.4.8.10 Exception to the Approved Activity Requirement

An adult who is a member of a two-parent or multi-generational Child Care Assistance Group may be exempt from the approved activity requirement if he or she is medically certified by a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist as both:

- Unable to care for children, **and**
- Unable to participate in an approved activity

This exception may be temporary or permanent depending on the medical certification. The child care assistance must be needed so that the other individual(s) in the Child Care Assistance Group can participate in their approved activities.

Example: Mary and John have 6-month-old twins, who need child care assistance so that Mary can keep her employment. John drove a delivery van for UPS but is now temporarily not able to work due to a back injury. His doctor wrote a letter to verify that John's back injury specifically prohibits him from being able to take care of his children due to a lifting restriction and that he cannot work at any job that requires lifting. Mary and John meet the non-financial requirement for participation in approved activities for two-parent families.

Example: Sarah and her husband Jerome, minor teen daughter Fanta, and Fanta's baby live in one household. Fanta attends high school, her father Jerome works full time, second shift. Sarah, Fanta's mother is not employed and has a history of alcohol and drug abuse. If Sarah is not able to work and not able to care for her grandchild, she must obtain a written statement from a doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist that she cannot work and cannot care for the child.

1.5 *Financial Eligibility Requirements*

This section applies to all child care cases unless otherwise specified in sections 1.7, 1.8, or 1.9.

1.5.1 Gross Income

To determine eligibility for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, count all available earned and unearned income for the child care Assistance Group in the child care budget, except as detailed for income under sections 1.5.5 and 1.5.6.

Income is available if the individual has a legal interest in it and has the legal ability to make it available for support and maintenance. Income is presumed to be available, unless proven unavailable.

Income is unavailable if the individual cannot access it for a calendar month or more. The individual must verify that the income is unavailable. The individual may verify that income is unavailable by a letter from an agency or the source stating when the individual will receive the income. Verified unavailable income must not be counted in determining financial eligibility.

1.5.1.1 Maximum Gross Income for Initial Eligibility

The gross income limit for new applicants and Assistance Groups that have closed for more than one calendar month is 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

1.5.1.2 Maximum Gross Income for Ongoing Cases

The maximum gross income for a child care Assistance Group to remain eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

1.5.2 Income that is Included in the Child Care Budget

Income that is counted towards the child care budget includes, but is not limited to:

- Money, wages or salary
- Income from self-employment: the sum of net earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) plus depreciation expenses, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment and payments on the principal of loans
- Dividends
- Interest on savings or bonds
- Income from estates or trusts
- Net rental income or royalties
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Social Security payments (including old age, survivorship, and disability), pensions and annuities
- Unemployment insurance
- Worker's compensation
- Alimony and other maintenance payments, all of the child care Assistance Group's monthly child or family support payments if the amount is greater than $1,250.00 per month
- Veteran pensions
- Educational aid - private loans, grants, or scholarships that are **not** used for tuition and books
- Capital gains income from selling securities and other property, rental income, and royalties
- Any other amounts paid to members of the child care Assistance Group, unless the income is excluded as provided in sections 1.5.3. and 1.5.4

1.5.3 Income that is Not Included in the Child Care Budget

The income types listed below are excluded from the child care budget:

- Repayments that are withheld from Social Security, Unemployment Compensation or other programs that do not base eligibility on income and assets.

- Child Support Payments: Court-ordered child support or family support payments if the aggregate amount paid to the child care Assistance Group members is $1,250.00 or less per month. Note: If the aggregate amount exceeds $1,250 per month, the entire amount is counted as income in the child care budget.
- Earned Income of Minor Dependents.
- Earned Income Credit (EIC), income received under the federal/state EIC, or payments made by an employer under the federal advanced EIC.
- State and federal tax refunds and Homestead Credit Payments.
- Education Programs: Higher Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-329) and the Employment Skills Advancement Program.
- Educational Aid: educational aid received under a state or federal program or scholarship funds used for tuition and books.
- Work Study Income.
- Income received for Foster Care, Kinship Care, Subsidized Guardianship, or Adoption Assistance payments.
- Loans (not including educational aid).
- Reverse Mortgage Loan Proceeds (1993 Wisconsin Act 88).
- Wisconsin Works (W-2) Income including Job Access Loans.
- In-Kind Income: non-cash reimbursements such as meals, clothing, housing, and garden produce.
- Benefits for Students-Aged 18 Years Old.
- Benefits received under W-2 and Wisconsin Shares.
- Reimbursements: money paid to the individual to reimburse actual expenses incurred or paid, or both. May include a per diem allowance for travel, uniforms, transportation, out-of-pocket expenses, medical reimbursements, or reimbursement for a volunteer's out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of his/her work.
- Gifts: Cash gifts, such as for birthdays, graduation and Christmas.
- Earmarked Funds (previously titled "Windfalls"): Any amount received that is earmarked and used for the purpose it was paid, such as back medical bills from an accident or injury, funeral and cemetery costs, and replacement or repairs. For medical services which can be provided only at a future date. Disregard any amount earmarked for those services, provided there is a signed agreement specifying: the source and amount of the settlement; the purpose for which it is earmarked; that the amount is held in its own account;

and that it is agreed to and understood that if all or part of the settlement is used for a purpose other than for what it is earmarked, that amount used will be considered available income and counted when determining eligibility and copayments.

- Federally-Funded Benefits: Any income from sources required to be disregarded by federal or state law. Such sources include, but are not limited to: Nutrition Program benefits from National School Lunch Act (PL 79-396), Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 88-525), Child Nutrition Act of 1996 (PL 89-642); Indian Tribal Federal Settlements; Housing Act of 1949 (PL 81-171); Older Americans Act (PL 89-73); Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (PL 91-646); Robert T. Stanford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act (PL 93-288); Housing and Community Development Amendments of 1978 (PL 95-557), however, wages from the act may be counted as income; Low Income Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (PL 97-35); Old Age Assistance Claims Settlement Act (PL 98-500); Workforce Investment Act: WIA for Adults, Rapid Response, and Dislocated Workers, National Emergency Grants, Trade Adjustment Act, unless specifically earmarked for child care expenses; Refugee Resettlement Reception and Placement income for Iraqi and Afghan immigrants who have been granted Special Immigration Visa's (SIV's) under Section 1059 of the NDDA; PL 109-163.

1.5.4 Limited Income Exclusions from the Child Care Budget

The following types of income are excluded as income in the child care budget under the limited circumstances as detailed below:

- AmeriCorps and or VISTA (PL 93-113): Exclude income if the stipend amount divided by the number of hours of activity equals less than minimum wage.
- Operation Fresh Start: Disregard Operation Fresh Start income unless the agency director verifies that participants are receiving the equivalent of minimum wage. If the Operation Fresh Start participant is receiving minimum wage or more, count the income in determining gross income.
- Indian Tribal Judgment Funds Use or Distribution Act (PL 93-134): Disregard per capita shares and income of $2,000 per year or less.
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112): Disregard wages, allowances or reimbursements for transportation or personal assistance services costs paid to reasonably accommodate an employee, such as a vehicle modification made to accommodate a disability or a payment by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to support a rehabilitation plan.

1.5.5 Monthly Income Calculations

Unless otherwise stated in sections 1.5.5.1., 1.5.5.2., 1.5.5.3., or 1.5.5.4., monthly income is budgeted prospectively by making the best estimate of income based upon the information available. When converting income to monthly income:

- Weekly income is multiplied by 4.3 to get a monthly income amount.
- Bi-weekly income is multiplied by 2.15 to get a monthly income amount.
    - Paid every other week (for example every other Thursday with 26 paychecks a year).
- Semi-monthly income is multiplied by 2 to get the monthly income amount.
    - Paid twice a month (for example on the 1st and 15th of the month with 24 paychecks a year).

Example: Convert income received on a weekly basis to a monthly amount. $7.50 X 40 hours = $300 per week. Then, multiply the weekly amount by 4.3 weeks to arrive at an average monthly income. $300 X 4.3 weeks = $1,290 per month.

1.5.5.1 Contractual Income

- Contractual income that is annual income (intended to provide support for the entire year), and is not paid on an hourly or piecework basis, must be prorated over 12 months.

Example: Joe works for a public school as a teacher's aide. Joe has worked there for the last 3 years and receives a 9.5-month contract every August. He earns $13,480.50 annually. He lives off his salary as a teacher's aide for the full year and does not supplement his income during the summer. Average his income over 12 months: $13,480.50 ÷ 12 = $1,123.40 per month.

- Contractual income that is not annual income (intended to provide support for the child care Assistance Group for only a portion of the year), and is not paid on an hourly or piecework basis, must be prorated over the period the income is intended to cover.

Example: Nancy works for the public school as a part time nurse. She receives a contract for 10 months every August. She earns $10,000 per school year. In the summer, she supplements her income as a life guard at the city pool. Average Nancy's school year income of $10,000 by 10 months. $10,000 ÷ 10 = $1,000 per month for the school year. Then for the summer months calculate her income by her summer earnings.

1.5.5.2 Fluctuating Income

- If the amount of regularly received income varies, use an average.

Example: Harold is a salesman and receives a commission payment every quarter. His last commission check was $150. Divide $150 by three (3) months and average it over the three months.

- Income that is normally obtained, but received on an irregular basis, is to be averaged over the period between payments.

Example: Felicia is a salesperson who doesn't always receive a commission check every quarter. She did not receive a commission last quarter. Her last check was $200 and was received six (6) months ago. Divide the $200 by six (6) months and count $33.33 per month as her income until she reports receiving another commission check.

- If neither the amount nor the frequency is consistent or predictable, count it only for the month in which it is received as non-recurring income.

Example: Rau is a salesman and he receives a sales commission check whenever his company determines that their profits will allow them to pay out commissions. Rau has not received a commission check for 9 months although before that he was getting them on a quarterly basis. Rau reports that he received a $175 check this month, but doesn't know when he will receive one again. $175 is this month's income.

1.5.5.3 n-Recurring Income

Income that is received on a one-time basis is to be budgeted in the month that it is received. Examples of this include lottery winnings, a one-time bonus, or a lump sum payment.

1.5.5.4 Self-Employment Income

Self-employment income for child care eligibility is defined in statute as the sum of net earnings reported to the Internal Revenue Service and depreciation expenses, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment, and payments on the principal of loans.

The expenses noted above are invalid expenses for child care and are added to the net income field in CWW during child care eligibility determination.

CARES Worker Web will calculate the monthly self-employment income for the Child Care Assistance Group when the self-employment page is completed. CWW has a field to enter depreciation expenses. Add together net earnings, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment,

and payments on the principal of loans and enter it in the CC Only Invalid Expenses field.

Expenses for depreciation, personal business and entertainment expenses, personal transportation costs, purchases of capital equipment, and payments on the principal of loans are not valid expenses and must be added back to the net income during child care eligibility determination.

CARES Worker Web will calculate the monthly self-employment income for the Child Care Assistance Group when the following fields are completed on the self-employment page: Gross Income, Gross Expenses, Depreciation Amount, and CC Only Invalid Expenses.

Example: John has been a self-employed construction worker for several years. He generally works many hours during the summer months, and very little during the winter. He applies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy in November and provides an IRS tax form for the previous year to verify his yearly income and expenses. His total yearly self-employment income minus his total yearly allowable expenses and excluding the invalid self-employment expenses for child care from his expenses is divided by 12 to determine a monthly income average. Based upon his monthly income he may meet financial eligibility criteria.

John reports on January 7th that he has not worked since December 30th. This is a normal fluctuation in his business so there would be no change in the income budgeted, however, John's eligibility for child care ends due to his non-participation in an approved activity.

1.5.6 Asset Testing

There is no asset testing for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance eligibility determinations.

1.6 *Verification Requirements*

This section applies to all child care cases unless otherwise specified in sections 1.7, 1.8, or 1.9.

1.6.1 Responsibility for Providing Verification

The Wisconsin Shares applicant has the primary responsibility for providing verification and resolving questionable information.

1.6.2 uired Verification

The agency must receive verification for all of the items listed below as specified. The only sources of verification accepted and valid for Wisconsin Shares eligibility are those that are listed here.

1.6.2.1 Non-Financial Eligibility Verification

The following lists the non-financial eligibility items that must be verified and includes a list of document types that satisfy the corresponding requirement.

- **Identity of the applicant and all parents in the Assistance Group:** Driver's license; state-issued ID card; Photo Employee ID card; Photo Student ID card; U.S. Government Photo ID card; Military ID card; Native American ID card issued by a federally recognized tribe; Photo ID issued by USCIS; U.S. Passport , or data exchange with SCHIP-I.
- **Social Security Number (SSN) for children for whom assistance is requested**: Application for SSN on form SS-5; verbal report of SSN by parent if verified by the SOLQ-I data exchange; Social Security card.
- **Date of Birth of each Assistance Group Member**: Certified copy of Birth Certificate; Driver's License; U.S. Passport; state-issued ID card; Certificate of Naturalization; Certificate of Citizenship; Native American ID card issued by a federally recognized tribe; Photo ID issued by USCIS; any unexpired immigration document that has a photo identification; CWW Birth Query (Wisconsin births); Medicaid Birth Record; SOLQ-I data exchange.
- **Eighteen Year Old Teen Parent:** When an 18 year old teen parent will remain a dependent child on their parent's case, the agency must collect written documentation from the high school that states the high school graduation requirements and the progress the teen parent has made and then based on this information the documentation must show that the student is expected to graduate by the 19th birthday.
- **Wisconsin Residency and Residence (home address)**: Lease agreement; Utility bill for water, gas, electricity, or telephone that includes name and address; Mortgage receipt; Subsidized housing program approval document; Weatherization program approval document; Paycheck stub that includes name, address, and employer; current Wisconsin Driver's license; current Wisconsin ID card; *current* motor vehicle registration.

  Note: Homeless individuals and families are exempt from having to provide verification for a home address, but must certify that they reside in Wisconsin and during the interview must certify that they intend to continue to reside in Wisconsin.

- **U.S. Citizenship of children:** Certified copy of Birth Certificate; U.S. Passport; data exchange with SCHIP-I; CARES Birth Query (Wisconsin births only); Native American ID card issued by a federally recognized tribe; Certificate of Naturalization; Certificate of Citizenship; Medicaid Birth as documented by a Wisconsin Hospital.
- **Immigration status of children:** If the applicant is not a U.S. citizen or U.S national he or she must present immigration documentation that the agency will verify through SAVE. Any documents issued by USCIS that contain a photo and are unexpired serve as verification of immigration status. Children of immigrants may have derivative immigration status based on parents' status.
- **Marital status:** Self-declaration is acceptable. If questionable obtain a certified copy of Marriage Certificate or Judgement of Divorce or Legal Separation.
- **Placement of children:**
    - Shared Placement: Legal documents stating child placement; Self-declaration.
    - Out-of-Home Care: When there is a court order detailing the placement of the child in out-of-home care it must be provided to the eligibility agency by the applicant.

1.6.2.2 Financial Eligibility Verification

The following lists the financial eligibility items that must be verified and includes a list of document types that satisfy the corresponding requirement.

- **Earned Income of all adults in the Assistance Group:** Dated pay stubs and pay statements for the immediately preceding thirty (30) days must include the employer and employee name, rate of pay, and hours worked. If the applicant or participant has started a new job in the past thirty (30) days and as a result does not have pay stubs for the entire thirty (30) day period, but has all of the pay stubs for the new job that have been issued then they have met the requirement of providing all the pay stubs for the preceding thirty (30) days.

  Applicants and participants with ongoing employment must provide pay stubs for the entire preceding thirty (30) days.

  Employer Verification of Earnings (EVF-E) form with the employer's signature, number of hours of work per week, company name, and rate of pay; a letter from the employer bearing the employer's legible name, contact information and signature and includes the employee's name, rate of pay, and hours of work; earned income verification through The Work Number; or Equifax verification through the Federal Data Services Hub (FDSH) wage match (so long as the data is correct and reports on the approved activity income within the past thirty (30) days).

As a last resort, collateral contact with the employer is a valid form of employment verification when the agency worker is assisting the client to obtain earned income and employment verification. The worker must document the phone conversation in CWW case comments including the date and time, and name and phone number of the person that was contacted. This form of verification may be coded as Collateral Contact in CWW.

If any form of employment verification appears questionable or the worker is suspicious of falsification of the documentation, the worker must document this in case comments and request a second form of verification.

Parents who operate self-employment businesses must file taxes with the IRS in order to participate in the Wisconsin Shares Program. Filed IRS tax documents for the most recent tax year must be provided for parents who wish to receive child care subsidy while self-employed.

Self-employed parents who have not filed taxes because the business has not yet operated in a calendar year and subsequent tax season must provide a Self-Employment Income Report form (SEIRF) (form DCF-F-DWSP2131 or form DHS F-00107) for the last 30 days.

SEIRFs may also be submitted for months when the previous year's filed IRS tax documents do not represent the current income for the business. Additionally, when a new business is six months old, a SEIRF must be provided so that an accurate authorization can be written. See 2.2.8 for information about authorizations for self-employment.

If IRS tax documents or SEIRFs appear questionable or need clarification, local agency staff must follow up with the parent and request additional verification, such as documentation of receipts, contracts, or expenses. Also see section 1.6.5. Any additional verification requirements must be documented in CWW case comments.

~~For self-employment businesses in operation greater than six (6) months, filed IRS tax documents for the previous year must be provided. If IRS quarterly estimated tax document worksheets were filed for the current year, the most recent quarter's documents must be provided as well. A participant that has a self-employment business that is greater than six (6) months must provide Self-Employment Income Report forms (DCF-F-DWSP2131) or DHS F-00107 forms with the required filed IRS tax documents if the previous year's filed IRS tax documents do not represent the current income for the business. New businesses are exempt from the requirement to provide IRS tax documents for the first six (6) months of the business, but must provide Self-Employment~~

Income Report forms (DCF-F-DWSP2131) or DHS F-00107 forms for all months until IRS tax documents are filed.

If IRS tax documents or SEIRF forms appears questionable or need clarification, local agency staff must follow up with the participant and request additional verification, such as documentation of receipts, contracts, or expenses. Any additional verification requirements must be documented in CWW case comments.

- **Unearned Income for all Assistance Group members:** Unemployment Compensation award letter unless auto-populated by UI database; divorce documents showing financial settlement, maintenance, family support, or child support; documentation of court-awarded settlement; Social Security award letter; Veteran's Administration award letter; compensation award letter; Financial Aid award letter; rental income documentation; self-employment business tax records for unearned rental income; other tax records showing unearned income, and documentation from any other source of income. Proof of a Kinship Care payment, Foster Care payment, or Subsidized Guardian payment or Interim Caretaker payment may be provided by verbal or written confirmation from the Child Protective Services (CPS) agency.
- **Proof of Natural or Adoptive Parent Income:** The eligibility worker must obtain the natural or adoptive parent income at the time the child was removed from the home. This information is available from the local Child Protective Services agency. This income information shall be noted in case comments and recorded on the Manual Eligibility page.

1.6.2.3 Approved Activity Verification

The following lists the approved activity eligibility items that must be verified and includes a list of document types that satisfy the corresponding requirement. All parents in the assistance group must be in a verified approved activity.

Acceptable Sources of Verification for Approved Activity Types:

Employment: Dated pay stubs and pay statements for the immediately preceding thirty (30) days must include the employer and employee name, rate of pay, and hours worked. If the applicant or participant has recently started a job and has received only 3 pay stubs in the preceding 30 days and submits all 3 pay stubs for verification then they have met the requirement of providing all the pay stubs for the preceding 30 days.

Applicants and participants with ongoing employment must provide pay stubs for the entire preceding thirty (30) days.

Employer Verification Form – Earnings (EVF-E) with the employer's signature, number of hours of work per week, company name, and rate of pay; a letter from the employer

bearing the employer’s legible name, contact information and signature and includes the

employee's name, rate of pay, and hours of work; employment verification obtained through The Work Number, and Equifax verification through the Federal Data Services Hub (FDSH) wage match(so long as the data is correct and reports on the approved activity income within the past thirty (30) days).

Collateral contact with the employer is a valid form of approved activity verification when the agency worker is assisting the client to obtain earned income and employment verification. The worker must document the phone conversation in CWW case comments including the date and time, and name and phone number of the person that was contacted.

Apprenticeships: A copy of the signed apprenticeship contract between the applicant, employer, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

Self-Employment: Parents who operate self-employment businesses must file taxes with the IRS in order to participate in the Wisconsin Shares Program. Filed IRS tax documents for the most recent tax year must be provided for parents who wish to receive child care subsidy while self-employed.

Self-employed parents who have not filed taxes because the business has not yet operated in a calendar year and subsequent tax season must provide a Self-Employment Income Report form (SEIRF) (form DCF-F-DWSP2131 or form DHS F-00107) for the last 30 days.

SEIRFs may also be submitted for months when the previous year's filed IRS tax documents do not represent the current income for the business. Additionally, when a new business is six months old, a SEIRF must be provided so that an accurate authorization can be written. See 2.2.8 for information about authorizations for self-employment.

If IRS tax documents or SEIRFs appear questionable or need clarification, local agency staff must follow up with the parent and request additional verification, such as documentation of receipts, contracts, or expenses. Also see section 1.6.5. Any additional verification requirements must be documented in CWW case comments.

If the validity of the self-employment is questionable, seven or more of the following conditions must be met by the individual:

1. The individual holds or has applied for an identification number with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
2. The individual has filed business or self-employment tax returns with the IRS based on such services in the previous year or, in the case of a new

business, in the year in which such services were first performed, or has paid quarterly estimated taxes.

3. The individual maintains a separate business with his or her own office, equipment, materials, and other facilities.
4. The individual operates under contracts to perform specific services for specific amounts of money and under which the individual controls the means and methods of performing such services.
5. The individual incurs the main expenses related to the services that he or she performs under contract.
6. The individual is responsible for the satisfactory completion of services that he or she contracts to perform and is liable for a failure to satisfactorily complete the services.
7. The individual receives compensation for services performed under a contract on a commission or per-job basis and not on any other basis.
8. The individual may realize a profit or suffer a loss under contracts to perform such services.
9. The individual has recurring business liabilities or obligations.
10. The success or failure of the individual's business depends on the relationship of business receipts to expenditures.

If the parent does not meet at least seven of the 10 conditions above, it is not self-employment for child care eligibility purposes. If this is the case, agency workers could explore whether the activity is not an approved activity or if it might be regular employment. Workers should use the acceptable sources of verification for employment noted in this section.

~~For self-employment businesses in operation greater than six (6) months, filed IRS tax documents for the previous year must be provided. If IRS quarterly estimated tax document worksheets were filed for the current year, the most recent quarter's documents must be provided as well. A participant that has a self-employment business that is greater than six (6) months must provide Self-Employment Income Report forms (DCF-F-DWSP2131) or DHS F-00107 forms with the required filed IRS tax documents if the previous years filed IRS tax documents do not represent the current income for the business. New businesses are exempt from the requirement to provide IRS tax documents for the first six (6) months of the business, but must provide Self-Employment Income Report forms (DCF-F-DWSP2131) or DHS F-00107 forms for all months until IRS tax documents are filed. If IRS tax documents or SEIRF forms appears questionable or need clarification, local agency staff must follow up with the participant~~

and request additional verification, such as documentation of receipts, contracts, or expenses. Any additional verification requirements must be documented in CWW case comments.

Wisconsin Works: Verified by the W-2 Employability Plan in CARES.

Tribal TANF: Verified by the Individual Self-Sufficiency Plan, the applicant will be able to provide a printed copy.

Transform Milwaukee Jobs or Transitional Jobs Program: Verified by the Employability Plan in CARES.

FoodShare Employment & Training: Verified by the FSET Employability Plan in CARES.

Learnfare: Verified by the Learnfare Case Management Plan in CARES.

HSED, GED, High School: Enrollment letter from school. The most current grade report for the student must be obtained to review for satisfactory progress; if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work. If a teen parent will remain a dependent child on their parent's case, the agency must collect written documentation from education institution which identifies the high school graduation or high school equivalency requirements and the progress the teen parent has made; and based on this information the documentation must show that the student is expected to achieve graduation or its equivalent by their nineteenth (19th) birthday.

Basic Education and Employment: Proof of school enrollment and class schedule and employment verification of at least ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month. The most current grade report for the student must be obtained to review for satisfactory progress; if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

Technical College and Employment: Proof of school enrollment and class schedule and employment verification of at least ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month. The most current grade report for the student must be obtained to review for satisfactory progress; if passing grades are not achieved there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work. Work-study is verified by the educational aid package or a letter from the school.

Online Education: Proof of school enrollment and class schedule and employment verification of at least ~~5 hours per week or~~ twenty (20) hours per month. The most current grade report for the student must be obtained to review for satisfactory progress

or if passing grades are not achieved, there must be documentation that the student took part in the required classes and performed the required work.

1.6.3 Verify Only Once

The items that are verified only once per lifetime are:

- Identity
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Citizenship

Verify “only once” means once per lifetime in CWW. To assure that these items are only verified once, the agency must scan copies of documents used to verify these items in the Electronic Case File (ECF), except when the information has been verified via data exchange.

If the information was auto-populated by data exchange, the item is verified. If the worker entered the verification code, the worker will need to confirm that the underlying data exchange actually occurred

1.6.4 erify Again If Questionable or Has Changed

- A change of residence address.
- A change in mailing address.
- A change in marital status.
- A change in employment.
- A change in monthly income, either because of a change in rate of pay or a change in the number of hours worked which increases monthly income by $250.00 or decreases the monthly income by $100.00 or any increase in income that raises the child care Assistance Group’s monthly gross income above 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- A change in child support and/or a change in family support that increases the aggregate amount of the support received for all household members to greater than $1,250.00 per month.
- A change in work schedule.
- A change in school schedule.
- A change in the need for child care.
- A change in an individual’s approved activity status (starting or ending an activity).
- Any other required verification that is questionable.

The agency must scan copies of documents used to verify these items in the Electronic Case File (ECF).

1.6.5 Authority to Request Information

The agency may request any additional information that is necessary and appropriate in order to make a correct eligibility decision. The agency does not need to verify an item that is not required or is not questionable.

A release of information in not required when the agency worker is assisting the client to obtain employment verification through collateral contact.

1.6.6 Notice of Verification Required

The applicant must be informed in writing of the verification items that are needed along with a due date.

1.6.7 Verification Due Date

The applicant has seven (7) business days from the date the “Notice of Verification Needed” was mailed to submit the needed verification to the agency. If verification has not been received from the applicant within seven (7) business days, the agency should run eligibility to generate a Denial Notice alerting the applicant the Child Care request is denied.

If the applicant requests more time to provide the verification, the agency may extend the verification due date to not more than 30 calendar days from the application filing date. The need for more time may be an indication to the agency worker that the applicant requires assistance. See section 1.6.8.

1.6.8 Required Agency Assistance

If the applicant has made a reasonable effort and cannot obtain the information, the agency must assist the applicant in obtaining the verification. No signed release of information is needed when assisting the client to obtain this information.

If neither the applicant nor the agency can get the required verification by the 30th day from the application, eligibility must be denied.

1.6.9 Applicant Refusal to Produce Verification

If the applicant is able to produce the verification, but refuses or fails to do so, eligibility does not exist.

1.6.10 Contradictory Information

When an agency receives contradictory information regarding any of the eligibility criteria, the agency should request documentation to substantiate the applicant’s claim and allow the applicant 7 business days to obtain such documentation.

Questionable verification or reporting supplied at application, including Program Add, must be resolved or referred for Front End Verification according to the agency's fraud plan. Contradictory information provided at review or other times must be resolved or referred to the Fraud Investigation Unit.

1.6.11 Documentation

Each item used in the Wisconsin Shares child care eligibility determination process must be documented. Photocopies of verification items should be marked with the date the document was obtained along with the initials of the agency staff person who obtained the documents.

If the document that was used to validate eligibility is scanned into the Electronic Case File (ECF), or if the validations occurred through a CARES data exchange, Cares Worker Web (CWW) case comments to document how the eligibility criteria was verified are not necessary. However when there is no original or copy of the document such as when there is a collateral contact, worker observation, a home visit, or a verbal statement, a CWW case comment must contain enough information to describe the nature and source of the information.

1.6.12 Vital Records

Vital records are maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and are official records of births, deaths, marriages and divorce. These documents are referred to as Birth Certificates, Death Certificates, Marriage Certificates, and Divorce Certificates. Every time an official vital record is used in the eligibility process, it must be marked "Administrative Use Only" per Wisconsin Statute s. 69.30 (2).

When these documents are scanned at the local agency, the agency must photocopy the original document, stamp it with "Administrative Use Only" and then scan the document into ECF. Originals must be returned to the applicant.

Certificates of Naturalization and Certificates of Citizenship are not considered vital records, but must also be treated as vital records because they are also official documents.

1.6.13 Verifying Employment that Ended Prior to Application Date

If an applicant's employment or income ended prior to the application date, the local agency worker must determine whether the information related to that employment or income is needed.

If employment or income ended in a month prior to the month for which eligibility is requested, the agency does not need to require verification that the employment or

income ended unless there is a documented reason why the information is questionable (i.e. the agency reasonably believes the applicant continues to be employed).

Example: An application for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy is submitted in February 2015. The applicant states that she left her job at Shopko in December and started working at Target in January. She is requesting child care assistance starting in February. The applicant received their last check from Shopko in January. Verification is not necessary that employment ended at Shopko because the income was received in the month prior to the eligibility period. Verification of her employment at Target is required.

Employment and income ending must be verified if it ended recently and it is reasonable to believe income will be received in a month for which eligibility is being determined.

Example: An application for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy is submitted on February 13. The applicant states her employment ended January 30 and her last paycheck will be received February 15. The applicant started a new job on February1. Because the income from the ended employment is needed to determine eligibility for month one of the application period, verification is required of the income and that the employment ended as well as verification from the new employment.

1.7 *Migrant Farmworker Families*

Unless otherwise specified in this section, all requirements for these individuals remain as stated in sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, and 1.9.

1.7.1 Child Care Applications for Migrant Farmworker Families

Migrant farmworker families may apply for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy through the local agencies in their county or tribe of residence. They may also apply for child care through a Department-contracted non-profit organization that provides child care services to migrant families.

1.7.2 Initial Income Eligibility Determination for Migrant Farmworker Families

Families employed in migrant agricultural work that are applying for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program through the local agency must meet all of the requirements under section 1.5., without exception.

Migrant farmworker families that apply for child care assistance through a Department-contracted non-profit organization that provides child care services to migrant families will have their income calculated based on an average of the previous twelve months' income. With the exception of this financial eligibility variation, the migrant farmworker families must meet all other requirements as provided under section 1.5.

1.8 *Foster Care, Subsidized Guardianship, Interim Caretaker, and Relatives with Court-Ordered Placement who Receive Kinship Care*

Unless otherwise specified in this section, all requirements for these individuals remain as stated in sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, and 1.9.

1.8.1 Financial Eligibility

The financial eligibility test for foster care, subsidized guardianship, interim caretaker, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive a Kinship Care payment is based upon the child's biological or adoptive parents' income tested at 200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) at the time the child was removed from the home. This income information is available from the CPS agency that is involved in the case. When determining the group size and income for the biological or adoptive family, include all parents and children in the home the day before the child was removed and all household income the day before the child was removed.

Being on the Kinship Care payment waitlist does not qualify as receipt of a Kinship Care payment.

If the biological or adoptive parents' income exceeds 200% FPL, the eligibility worker must fail eligibility on the Manual Eligibility page in CWW and the financial eligibility test is then based on this caregiver household income and is tested at 185% FPL. With the exception of this financial eligibility variation, all other requirements under section 1.5 must be met for foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care. If the caregivers' household income exceeds 185% FPL there is no eligibility for child care subsidy.

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care that need child care for their own children must meet all requirements as provided under section 1.5 there is no financial eligibility exception for their own children.

1.8.2 Exemption from Cooperation with Child Support

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care are not required to cooperate with child support for their foster care child, subsidized guardianship child, interim caretaker child, or child for whom they have court-ordered placement and receive Kinship Care as a condition of eligibility. With the exception of this non-financial eligibility variation, all other requirements under section 1.4 must be met for foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care.

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care must cooperate with the child support agency for their own children under section 1.4.

1.8.3 Exemption from Providing Verification within 7 Days

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, and interim caretakers are exempt from the non-financial requirement to provide verification within 7 business days as detailed under section 1.6. However, verification remains required within 30 days. Outside of this exception, all other requirements under section 1.6 still apply to foster care parents, subsidized guardians, and interim caretakers.

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, and interim caretakers are not exempt from the requirement to provide verification within 7 business days when they are applying for child care assistance for their own children.

Relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care are not exempt from the requirement to provide verification within 7 business days as provided under section 1.6.

Foster care parents, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers and relatives with court-ordered placement who receive Kinship Care are always required to provide income verification as detailed in section 1.6.2.2.

1.9 *Ongoing Eligibility*

This section applies to all child care cases unless otherwise specified in sections 1.7 and 1.8.

Eligibility information will be reviewed at every six-month report, 12-month review, and when a change is being processed on the case.

1.9.1 Reporting Requirements

Individuals receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy must report any changes in circumstances to the child care agency within 10 calendar days of the change if the changes may affect eligibility or the amount of child care needed.

Reporting changes on ACCESS meets program requirements for reporting changes if timelines are met.

Participants of the Wisconsin Shares program are required to report the following changes by the 10th day after the change has occurred:

- A change of residence address.
- A change in mailing address.
- A change in the household composition (someone moves into or out of the home).
- A change in marital status.
- A change in employment.
- A change in monthly income, either because of a change in rate of pay or a change in the number of hours worked which increases monthly income by $250.00 or decreases the monthly income by $100.00 or any increase in income that raises the child care Assistance Group's monthly gross income above 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- A change in child support and/or a change in family support that increases the aggregate amount of the support received for all household members to greater than $1,250.00 per month.
- A change in work schedule.
- A change in school schedule.
- A change in the need for child care.
- A change in child care providers.
- A change in an individual's approved activity status (starting or ending an activity).
- A change in the shared placement schedule of a child.
- A change in the relationship with a child in the household (i.e. adoption, paternity establishment or legal parentage, foster care, subsidized guardianship, interim caretaker, or kinship care).

1.9.2 Eligibility Redetermination

Agencies must redetermine eligibility at least every six months with the Six Month Report Form (SMRF) or the Annual Review and following a reported change.

1.9.3 Six Month Report Forms (SMRF)

The six-month report of eligibility for child care may be completed by Wisconsin Shares participants online through MyACCESS, or by returning the Six Month Report Form (SMRF) to the Central Document Processing Unit (CDPU) or Milwaukee Document Processing Unit (MDPU) or tribal agency. The SMRF must be signed electronically or by written signature by the individual.

Whether the SMRF is completed online or by mail, the agency must review the SMRF for completeness. This includes all sections of the SMRF. If any part of the SMRF is missing information, the agency must contact the individual to obtain the missing information. If the SMRF does not have a signature, the agency may either hold the form for the individual to come in and sign or the agency may mail the form to the individual. If the agency is unable to make contact with the individual, the incomplete SMRF, along with the incomplete letter, must be mailed to the individual.

A child care authorization will not be written until all information has been completed on the SMRF and all necessary verification has been obtained. See section 1.6.

The applicant has seven (7) business days from the date the "Notice of Verification Needed" was mailed to submit the needed verification to the agency. If verification has not been received from the applicant within seven (7) business days, run eligibility to generate a Denial Notice alerting the applicant the Child Care eligibility has ended.

If the applicant requests more time to provide the verification, the agency may extend the verification due date to not more than one (1) month after the six month report form (SMRF) is due. The need for more time may be an indication to the agency worker that the applicant requires assistance. See section 1.6.8.

The agency will remain responsible for the accuracy of the information on the SMRF for ongoing eligibility determination.

1.9.4 Annual Reviews

Every 12 months a full eligibility review must be completed. Individuals receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy may initiate their annual review by contacting their agency or through MyACCESS. The interview may be completed in person or by telephone. The 12-month review must be completed in the county of residence, tribe, or within an approved child care consortium.

To complete the annual review, an interactive interview must be completed. The local agency worker must generate an updated Application Summary and provide it to the participant for their review and signature. If a telephonic signature is collected, the Application Summary must be provided to the participant following the interview. If the request for review was completed through ACCESS the electronic signature obtained in ACCESS meets the signature requirement. The worker must document a summary of the eligibility review in CWW case comments. See sections 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.8, and 1.6 detailing the interview, signature, and verification requirements.

The applicant has seven (7) business days from the date the "Notice of Verification Needed" was mailed to submit the needed verification to the agency. If verification has

not been received from the applicant within seven (7) business days, run eligibility to generate a Denial Notice alerting the applicant the Child Care eligibility has ended.

If the applicant requests more time to provide the verification, the agency may extend the verification due date to not more than one (1) month from the renewal date. The need for more time may be an indication to the agency worker that the applicant requires assistance. See section 1.6.8.

Upon completion of the review and verification requirements, a new authorization for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy may be written.

1.9.5 Case Transfers

Case transfers within the WREA and Northern child care consortia do not require an eligibility review at transfer. All other case transfers require an eligibility review by the county/tribe receiving the case. The eligibility review must occur before a new child care authorization can be written in the Child Care Statewide Administration Web (CSAW) system. The automated systems enforce this policy by automatically ending the existing authorization two (2) weeks after the county transfer occurs in CWW.