



Wisconsin Shares Child Care Policy and Process

**Handbook – Chapter 2
Authorizations**

March 1, 2019

Division of Early Care and Education

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2.1 Wisconsin Shares Child Care Providers

Wisconsin Shares authorization and subsidy policies are subject to Wisconsin's approved Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) plan, current state and federal law, administrative rules, and departmental policies.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.1.1 Child Care Provider Regulation

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program only issues authorizations to eligible parents who choose regulated child care. Child care providers must be one (1) of the following:

- Licensed;
- Certified; or
- Operated by a Wisconsin public school board and monitored by DCF Bureau of Early Care Regulation.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.1.1.1 Licensed Child Care Providers

Licensing rules create separate requirements for three (3) categories of licensed child care:

- Group Child Care Centers;
- Family Child Care Centers; and
- Day Camps.

Child care licensing is done by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) through its regional licensing offices. When the provider's regulation has been approved, the information is entered into the Wisconsin Child Care Regulatory System (WISCCRS) and populates in CSAW.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.1.1.2 Certified Child Care Providers

There are two (2) levels of certification for family child care providers who meet the requirements:

- Regular Certified; and
- Provisionally Certified.

~~Local administrative agencies are responsible for certifying child care providers in the balance of the state. In Milwaukee, certification is administered by DCF.~~

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) contracts with local administrative agencies and tribes for certifying child care providers. Local agencies may subcontract the activity with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agencies.

In Milwaukee County, certification is administered by DCF's Bureau of Early Care Regulation Southeastern Regional office. The below website provides information on who to contact by county for certification:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/ccregulation/cccertification/certifiers.pdf>

Once the provider's regulation has been approved, the information is entered into the Wisconsin Child Care Regulatory System (WISCCRS) and populates in CSAW.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.1.1.2.1 In-Home Certified Child Care Providers

An in-home child care provider may be either provisionally certified (for up to six (6) months) or regularly certified and travel to the child's home to provide care. Certification group size rules do not apply to in-home care (care provided in the child's home), however, the provider may not bring additional, nonresidential children into the certified location (child's home). See Section 2.4.7.3 for requirements for In-Home Certified Child Care Providers. Once the provider's regulation has been approved, the information is entered into WISCCRS, and populated in CSAW.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.1.1.3 Public School Programs

Child care programs that are operated by public school boards must be recorded in the Wisconsin Child Care Regulatory System (WISCCRS) by Department of Children and Families (DCF) Bureau of Early Care Regulation (BECR) Regional Licensing staff. The subsidy rate for public school programs is calculated by using the monthly maximum rate for licensed group providers for the county/geographical area the child care provider is located within.

Child care programs that are operated by public school boards are monitored by DCF's Bureau of Early Care Regulation on an annual basis for a subset of licensing rules and are otherwise monitored under the authority of the local school board.

There are some child care programs that are located on public school grounds, but are operated by nonprofits or other organizations that are not the school boards. These programs must be licensed or operated under contract with a public school and entered into WISCCRS automated system by BECR staff in order to receive Wisconsin Shares authorizations.

Note: Parochial or Tribal K-12 schools must be regulated in order to be eligible for authorizations under the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.1.1.4 Child Care Provider Regulation Outside of the State

Parents may select a child care provider that is located outside of Wisconsin. Child care providers that are located outside Wisconsin must be regulated in their own state. Child

care programs that are located out-of-state must be recorded in WISCCRS by DCF Central office staff.

The CSAW subsidy rate calculation is based on the parent's county of residence in Wisconsin. The weekly subsidy ceiling is increased by 10% for accredited out-of-state providers if the accreditation is accepted by YoungStar.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.1.2 Mandatory Contracts for Wisconsin Shares Child Care

Child Care providers are required to have the following current, signed contracts in place in order to receive a Wisconsin Shares authorization and subsidy funds:

1. YoungStar Contract or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract; and
2. Fidelity National Information Services (FIS) Contract

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.1.2.1 YoungStar Participation and Contract

All Certified Family providers, Licensed Family providers, Licensed Group Child Care centers, Licensed Day Camps, and public school programs must participate in YoungStar and have a signed YoungStar Contract entered into the YoungStar Case Management system before a Wisconsin Shares authorization can be written to their location. Once the contract is entered into the YoungStar Case Management system, an authorization can be backdated to the date the local YoungStar office received the contract (also known as the contract date).

New certified and licensed child care providers that submit a YoungStar Contract receive a pending rating until their first YoungStar rating is complete. The Wisconsin Shares subsidy calculation for a program with a pending rating uses the 2 Star YoungStar adjustment.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.1.2.2 Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract

Out-of-state and Certified In-Home child care providers are exempt from YoungStar participation, but must sign a Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract in order to be eligible for Wisconsin Shares authorizations. Licensed providers who change to Certified In-Home providers must also submit a Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract. ~~Once the contract is entered into CSAW, an authorization can be backdated to the received date (also known as the contract date).~~

Wisconsin Shares Participation Contracts must be submitted to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Early Care and Education (DECE), Bureau of Early Learning and Policy (BELP), Quality Initiatives Section. Wisconsin Shares Participation Contracts can be submitted by mail, fax, or e-mail:

DCF
Attn: YoungStar

March 1, 2019

201 E. Washington Avenue, E200
Madison, WI 53708
Fax: 608-422-7156
E-mail: youngstar@wisconsin.gov

Staff in the Quality Initiatives Section enter this information into CSAW. Once the contract is entered into CSAW, an authorization can be backdated to the received date (also known as the contract date).

~~If a provider changes to a Certified In-Home provider, they must submit a Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract and return it to DCF\DECE\BELP\Quality Initiatives Section.~~

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.1.2.3 YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Contract Renewal and Grace Period

A one-month grace period following the child care program's anniversary date is allowed for child care providers to return their YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract renewals. Parents ~~will be~~ **are** notified when their child care provider is in the grace period and their authorization is at risk of ending if the provider does not complete the renewal.

During the grace period, no new authorizations can be written, but existing authorizations can continue up to the end of the grace period. If the provider returns the YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract prior to the end of the grace period, the provider's new participation period begins and the authorization worker may authorize child care beginning that day. If the contract renewal is not returned by the end of the grace period, all Wisconsin Shares authorizations will end **systematically on the last day of the grace period month.**

If a YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract renewal is returned after the grace period, an authorization can be backdated to the date the contract was received and entered into the YoungStar system.

At the end of the grace period and continuing until the new YoungStar Contract is received by the local YoungStar office, authorizations cannot be written to the child care provider.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.1.2.4 Fidelity National Information Services (FIS) Contract

All child care providers who will accept Wisconsin Shares authorizations must complete a contract with FIS in order to receive Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) payments from parents who are participating in the Wisconsin Shares program. EBT is the only means of disbursing Wisconsin Shares payments.

For detailed information on the FIS contracting process, visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/providers/acceptingwishares>.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.1.2.5 Tax Reporting

All child care providers that receive authorizations for child care under the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program must provide a valid Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), also known as a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or Social Security Number (SSN) to the EBT vendor, Fidelity National Information Services (FIS). FIS will send an IRS Form 1099-MISC on or before January 31 of each year to all child care providers that receive more than \$600 in Wisconsin Shares subsidy in the previous tax year.

If any of the information on the W-9 tax form changes, the child care provider must submit the new information to FIS.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.2 Child Care Provider Prices

Child care providers set their own prices. Licensed providers, public school programs, and out-of-state providers must submit their full-time and part-time weekly prices to the local agency or through the Provider Portal. This is required before authorizations can be written and before the effective date of a price change. If prices already exist and there are current authorizations, the local agency must record the provider's price in CSAW with a begin date set for the first of the following month. If prices exist, the effective date of the new price cannot be a past date. If prices do not exist or there are no current authorizations in place, prices can be entered with a past effective date.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.2.1 Calculating a Full-Time Provider Price

If no full-time price is entered into CSAW, no full-time authorization can be written. If the child care provider does not submit a full-time price, the local agency must work with the provider to choose one (1) of the following options based on the provider's discretion:

- If the child care provider has an hourly price, multiply the hourly price by 35 and enter that amount into CSAW for a full-time price.
- When the child care provider reports a daily price, calculate a weekly price by multiplying the daily price by five (5) to arrive at a full-time price.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.2.2 Calculating a Weekly Part-Time Provider Price

If no weekly part-time price is entered into CSAW, no part-time authorization can be written. If the child care provider does not submit a part-time price, the local agency must work with the provider to choose one (1) of the following options based on the provider's discretion:

- Using the full-time weekly price, divide by 35; then use that amount and multiply by 20; the result is the part-time price that must be entered into CSAW.
- If the provider has an hourly price, multiply that price by 20 and enter that amount in CSAW for a weekly part-time price.
- If the child care provider has a daily price, calculate a weekly price by multiplying the daily price by three (3) to arrive at a part-time price.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.2.3 Certified Child Care Provider Prices

Regularly or provisionally certified providers may or may not submit their prices, but their prices are not a factor in calculating the subsidy amount. The maximum hourly rate for regularly certified providers is set at 75% of the licensed family hourly rate. Hourly rates for provisionally certified providers are 50% of the licensed family hourly rate. Monthly maximum rates are not set for certified providers; however, CSAW will consider the licensed family monthly maximum rate and compare this amount to the beginning reimbursement rate. The payment cannot exceed the licensed family monthly maximum rate.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.2.4 Dually Regulated Child Care Provider Prices

Child care providers that are both licensed and certified (dually regulated) meet the health and safety standards of licensing; therefore, CSAW calculations are made using the licensed family rate.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.3 Wisconsin Shares Authorizations

Child care authorizations are written approval for child care subsidy for a specific child to a specific child care provider, location, and duration. Authorizations may begin and end on any day of the week. Once a child care authorization is in place, parents must request a change in child care providers before the next month's benefit load.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.3.1 Parental Choice

Parents have the right and responsibility to choose a regulated child care provider for their child within limits set by Wis. Stat. s. 49.155(4)(a).

However, parents that are employed by a certified child care provider are not eligible for an authorization to the location where the parent is employed. Parents who are child care providers may apply for a waiver to send their child(ren) to another child care provider in some situations per Wis. Admin. Code DCF s. 201.039(7). See Section 4.2.2 for additional information on this waiver.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.3.2 Authorizations for Children Whose Parent is a Child Care Provider

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program will not issue an authorization to a provider for child care services when the provider is the parent of the child. Parents who are child care providers may apply for a waiver to send their child(ren) to another child care provider in some situations per Wis. Admin. Code DCF s. 201.039(7). See Section 4.2.2 for additional information on this waiver.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.3.3 Authorizations for Children Who Live With a Child Care Provider

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program will not issue an authorization to a provider for child care services when the provider lives with the child. Children who live with a provider who is not their parent can attend a different provider without a waiver.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.3.4 In-Home Child Care

Authorizations can be written for child care provided in the child's own home under any one (1) of the following circumstances as long as the in-home child care provider is certified:

- Three (3) or more children receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidy are being cared for;
- Other licensed or certified care is not available within a reasonable geographic area;
- Child care is needed during hours when no other care is available, such as second and third shift hours, and weekend care; or
- A child's special need could only be met in his or her home;

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.3.5 Two-Day Time Frame to Issue Authorization

After eligibility has been confirmed in CWW, the local agency must issue the child care authorization within two (2) business days of completing an authorization assessment, and after the parent has provided the local agency with the child care provider information. Any delay in this time frame must be supported by a CWW case comment indicating the reason for the delay.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.3.6 Authorization Begin Dates **at Initial Eligibility**

~~Once eligibility has been determined~~ At application or renewal, an authorization **may** **must** begin on the **latest** most recent of the following dates if the parent completes the authorization assessment within 30 days of the Request for Assistance (RFA) date (see 1.2.7) or the date the annual eligibility renewal was completed (see 1.8.3):

- ~~The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Request for Assistance (RFA) date~~
- The RFA date or date the annual eligibility renewal was completed

- The date the child began attending a provider;
- The date the provider the child is attending that met both of the following requirements:
 - The child care provider was regulated during that time.
 - The authorization worker may backdate the authorization to the child care provider's certification application date as long as the certification is now complete, but the authorization worker may never backdate the authorization to a licensed provider back to the licensing application date.
 - The child care provider had a YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract in place during that period of time.
- ~~• The date the parent provided all of the necessary authorization assessment information to the local agency. Parents must provide all necessary authorization information to the local agency within 30 days of the RFA date.~~

If the parent does not provide all of the necessary authorization assessment information within 30 days of the RFA date, see Section 2.3.7. ~~the authorization will begin on the first of the month that the parent submitted all of the information to the agency, as long as the other requirements above are met.~~

Process: If the provider does not have a completed contract with Fidelity National Information Services (FIS), the authorization worker will not be able to create an authorization to that provider in CSAW. If the FIS contract is not complete when all other requirements are met, the authorization worker must backdate the authorization to the latest date in the list above once the contract is complete and entered in the FIS system. The FIS contract date is not a factor in determining the authorization Begin Date.

Example 1 (At Application): Phil applies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care on May 15. He completes all of his eligibility requirements and is determined eligible on June 8. Also on June 8²⁴, he provides all required approved activity schedules and information for the authorization assessment and he provides the name of the provider location that his children had started attending prior to May 15. The provider was in compliance with the requirements for Wisconsin Shares Child Care prior to the RFA date. Eligibility will begin May 1 in CWW, but the authorization in CSAW will begin on May 15 ~~June 4~~.

Example 2 (At Application-Closed More than One (1) Calendar Month): Charlotte is receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care for her daughter, Olivia, when she is determined to be in noncooperation with the Child Support Agency. She does not claim good cause, and her Wisconsin Shares Child Care eligibility ends on March 30. On May 8, Charlotte begins cooperating with the Child Support Agency. She reapplies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care on May 9 and is again determined eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care.

Olivia's authorization can begin on May 9, if Olivia was attending the child care program on this date and the provider met the requirements listed above.

Example 3 (Ongoing Eligibility-Reopening Within One (1) Calendar Month):

Anthony's case was due for a Wisconsin Shares Child Care renewal on May 31. The renewal interview was completed on June 30, along with a signature and all required verification. Eligibility re-opened effective June 1 in CWW and Anthony completed his authorization assessment on July 10. Anthony's worker can backdate the authorization only to June 30 as long as Anthony chooses a provider that is already in compliance with all of the Wisconsin Shares requirements.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.3.6.1 Authorizations at Initial Eligibility for Relatives with Court-Ordered Placement and Kinship Payment

This section applies to relatives with court-ordered placement under Wis. Stat. Chapters 48 or 938, or a substantially similar Wisconsin tribal law, who also receive the Kinship Care payment (see Glossary for "Receiving a Kinship Care Payment").

Once eligibility has been determined, if the relative provided the necessary authorization information within 30 calendar days of the Request for Assistance (RFA) date, the agency worker must create the authorization beginning on the most recent of the following dates:

- The first of the month of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care RFA date;
- The date of the child's placement;
- The date the child began attending the provider
- The date the provider the child is attending met both of the following requirements:
 - The child care provider was regulated during that time.
 - The authorization worker may backdate the authorization to the child care provider's certification application date as long as the certification is now complete, but the authorization worker may never backdate the authorization to a licensed provider back to the licensing application date.
 - The child care provider had a YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract in place during that time.

If the relative did not provide the necessary authorization information within 30 calendar days of the RFA date, see 2.3.7.

Example: Imani has a nephew, Tyler. Tyler was removed from his parents' home through a Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) order, and placed with Imani on March 10. Imani applies for Wisconsin Shares on April 15. Wisconsin Shares Child Care eligibility is confirmed open for Tyler on April 17. Tyler has been attending the same child care provider since he was removed from his parents' home on March 10. The authorization worker creates an authorization for Tyler with a begin date of April 1.

Note: The Fidelity National Information Services (FIS) contract date is not a factor in determining the authorization Begin Date. For Process related to the FIS contract date, see 2.3.6.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.3.7 Authorization Begin Dates During Ongoing Eligibility

Ongoing eligibility begins the month following the completion of the Request for Assistance (RFA) in accordance with Section 1.2.2, and the month following the completion of an annual eligibility renewal in accordance with Section 1.8.3.

If an authorization assessment is completed more than 30 days from the RFA date or date the renewal was completed, an authorization for a case with ongoing eligibility may be backdated to the first of the month that the authorization assessment was completed ~~request was made and the authorization assessment information was provided~~, as long as:

- The child was attending a the provider ~~who has met the following requirements:~~
- The provider the child is attending meets both of the following requirements:
 - The child care provider was licensed or certified during that time:
 - The worker may backdate the authorization to the child care provider's certification application date as long as the certification is now complete, but the worker may never backdate the authorization to a licensed provider back to the licensing application date.
 - The child care provider had a YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract in place during the backdated period of time.

If these requirements are not met as of the first of the month, the authorization **Begin Date** must **begin on the date that all requirements were met** ~~be the later of the provider regulation date or the YoungStar or Wisconsin Shares Participation Contract date.~~

Process: If the provider does not have a completed contract with Fidelity National Information Services (FIS), the worker will not be able to create an authorization to that provider in CSAW. If the FIS contract is not complete when all other requirements are met, the worker must backdate the authorization to the latest date in the list above once the contract is complete and entered in the FIS system. The FIS contract date is not a factor in determining the authorization Begin Date.

Example 1: Bonnie's case was due for a Wisconsin Shares Child Care renewal on May 31. The annual eligibility renewal was completed and eligibility was confirmed on June 30. Eligibility re-opened effective June 1 in CWW. Bonnie completed the authorization assessment on August 30. The authorization may only go back to August 1 as long as Bonnie chooses a provider that was already in compliance with all of the Wisconsin Shares requirements. If the provider is not in compliance, the authorization can only begin on the date the provider is in compliance.

Example 2: Gabriel was determined to be in noncooperation with the Child Support Agency on April 10. She did not request good cause within seven (7) business days, and her Wisconsin Shares eligibility ended April 30. On May 10, Gabriel begins cooperating with the Child Support Agency and the noncooperation is ended. Because Gabriel is within one (1) calendar month of Wisconsin Shares eligibility ending, Gabriel's Wisconsin Shares eligibility will reopen as of May 1 without the need to complete the application and interview process. Gabriel's case would be considered ongoing, and the authorization could be backdated to May 1.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.3.8 Authorization End Dates

All authorizations must span to the next renewal date or to the next expected change, whichever is earlier. Shorter authorizations are temporarily allowable if needed in order to collect sufficient schedule information from a parent with a new and varying schedule (see 2.4.3), in situations outlined in Section 2.4.4, or as discussed in Section 2.3.10.

Expected changes include, but are not limited to:

- A change in the school year that results in a higher or lower child care need for a school-aged child for summer or fall.
- At the end date of an approved activity, such as:
 - W-2 or FSET employability plan reviews; or
 - The end of a parent's school term.
- At the end of the 24-month education time limit for eligible parents who are in Technical College or a Course of Study Leading to Employment (see 1.3.8.8).
- A change in a child care provider.
- A parent's plan to move out of state.

If there are multiple expected changes, the authorization must end on the earliest date.

If the parent indicates that they do not need an authorization, there may be an allowable gap in authorizations of a month or more during the eligibility period, as illustrated in the example below. If the parent requests a new authorization during the eligibility period

after there has been a gap in authorizations, the authorization worker may need to complete an authorization assessment (see 2.4.2).

Example: In September, Alanna completes her annual renewal. Alanna's worker writes an authorization for the school year, and asks Alanna about her child care needs for the following summer. Alanna indicates that her child, Josepha, does not need an authorization after June 15 because she will be visiting her grandparents in Florida for the summer. Alanna's worker does not write an authorization for the summer months.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.3.9 Consecutive Authorization Periods

Authorizations must be written consecutively without any gaps during the 12-month eligibility period. This includes time periods shorter than a calendar month where a child may not be attending the child care provider, but is still enrolled, such as holidays and weekends.

Example 1: Allan has an authorization for his school age child, Jolene. Spring break is the week of March 15 – March 20. Jolene does not need child care the week of March 15 – 20 because Allan will be taking time off to spend with her. The authorization should continue through March with no gaps. The worker should not end the authorization on the Friday of the last day of school and re-start the authorization on the Monday that school starts again.

There are limited exceptions when the authorizations may not be continuous. This includes when there are periods of time of a month or more during which child care is not needed and a parent requests not to have an authorization.

Example 2: Caroline has an authorization for her school age child, Raphael, until the end of the school year on May 18. Caroline requests and needs more hours for the summer for Raphael starting July 15 after he returns from a summer stay with his grandparents in Florida. These authorizations do not need to have consecutive dates because the parent's request is an exception.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.3.10 Short-Term Authorizations

If a parent needs an authorization to cover a short period of time, the local agency should write the authorization for no less than seven (7) consecutive calendar days. This will allow subsidy amounts to remain stabilized across all of the authorizations written for the month. Short-term authorizations do not need to be from Sunday to Saturday; however, they do need to end on or before the last day of the month. When a 7-day authorization is written at the end of the month, the last day must not cross over into the next month. A second short-term authorization will need to be written for the additional days that overlap into the next month. The second short-term authorization must still be at least seven (7) days long.

Example 1: Sharee called to report that her provider would be closed for spring break, April 1 through April 12. Sharee needs child care for her 4-year-old daughter on Monday April 2, Tuesday April 3, and Friday April 6 to a different provider. The authorization should be written for April 2 through April 8. The Child Care Need schedule in CSAW should reflect that care is only needed on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

Example 2: Mike called to report that his provider is going on vacation August 30 through September 8. Mike needs a new authorization for child care at a second child care provider for Thursday August 30, Friday August 31, Monday September 3, and Tuesday September 4. Two (2) authorizations would need to be written to the second provider to meet Mike's needs. One (1) authorization would be written for August 25 through August 31. The second authorization would be written from September 1 through September 7. The Child Care Need schedule in CSAW should reflect that care is only needed for the days of August 30 and 31 on the first authorization. The Child Care Need schedule in CSAW should reflect that care is only needed for the days of September 3 and September 4 on the second authorization.

Example 3: Josh has a zero (0) hour authorization in place for his 6-year-old son Tony from September 1 through December 31 to cover school closed hours. When entering the school closed hours for Tony's authorization, the child reaches the school closed cap for September. No funds were loaded onto the card for October. Because of that, on Thursday October 4, Josh called to report that the elementary school his son attends recently had a pipe burst and the school is going to be closed October 5 to October 12. Josh needs care for his son while he is at work on Friday October 5, Monday October 8, and Thursday October 11. He is using the same provider as his zero (0) hour authorization. The current zero (0) hour authorization should be ended on October 4. A short-term authorization should be written for October 5 through October 11. The Child Care Need schedule in CSAW should reflect that care is only needed for the days of October 5, October 8, and October 11. If Josh needs additional school closed hours for October, another short-term authorization can be written. A new zero (0) hour authorization can be entered as of November 1 when school closed allotments restart (refer to page 48 in the CSAW Authorizations User Guide).

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.3.11 Retro Authorizations

Retro authorizations are those that are backdated further than allowed in Sections 2.3.6 and 2.3.7. Retro authorizations may be written by Child Care Coordinators with additional security privileges attached to their login ID.

Child Care Coordinators may write retro authorizations only in the following circumstances:

- Fair Hearing determinations;
- System issues that delay the request for an authorization; or
- Agency errors.

To determine the authorization Begin Date (if not specified by the Fair Hearing), see Sections 2.3.6 or 2.3.7 as applicable.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4 Authorization Assessment

Authorization workers are responsible for gathering enough information to create an authorization that meets the child care needs that will allow parents to engage in their approved activities based on the policy guidance contained in this manual. Parents are required to provide their work or other activity schedule, including specific days and times they are or will be participating in work or another activity. This information must be entered into CSAW. Authorization workers are responsible for reviewing the system-calculated authorization hours. Child care authorizations are based on an assessment of:

- The number of hours of care each child in the assistance group needs per week to enable the parent(s) to participate in their approved activities, including lunch and break times;
- Travel time between the approved activity and the child care location;
- Overlapping schedules of two-parent families;
- The length of time child care is needed (up to 12 months);
- The copayment type;
- The child's school schedule;
- Shared placement schedules;
- Scheduled school closed hours for school-age children (3 years or older);
- Inclement weather hours during the winter months (November through March); and
- Any other factor that affects the family's child care need.

W-2 Financial and Employment Planners (FEPs) do not determine the child care needs for W-2 families; however, a W-2 placement is an approved activity and the authorization worker must consider the activities assigned in the W-2 Employability Plan (EP) in assessing child care needs. If the EP does not indicate the scheduled times for an activity, the parent may self-declare the time that child care is needed.

Past non-participation in W-2 activities must not factor into the number of child care hours to be authorized.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.1 Authorization Comments

CSAW provides comments boxes on several of the authorization related pages and offers a case comments summary page where all CSAW case comments are displayed. During the authorization assessment, authorization workers are encouraged to use the

CSAW comments fields to describe relevant information regarding the authorization, such as:

- An explanation for the length of an authorization, if less than 12 months (why it is only 6 weeks long, is it because it is a school-age child, W-2 activity is ending, etc.).
- Information regarding the child's school schedule (short days on Mondays, or hours of a 4K or a Head Start program, etc.).
- Notes regarding gaps between activities or sleep time that are covered, (a summary of the justification for the inclusion of these hours).
- Notes about shared placement schedules (describe the schedule).
- Notes about unexpected school closure hours that are added after the fact.
- Notes about the parent's work or other activity schedule.
- Notes about the approved activity schedule, including any discrepancy between the approved activity verification and the reported schedule.
- Notes regarding a parent's reported change in need of authorized hours during the 12-month eligibility period.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.2 When to do an Authorization Assessment

Authorization assessments ensure that the authorization is written to meet the child care needs that will allow a parent to engage in their approved activity. Authorization workers must write authorizations for the longest period possible: up to the next renewal or the next expected change (see 2.3.8). Longer authorizations reduce fluctuations in the monthly subsidy amount and copayment calculation.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.2.1 Mandatory Authorization Assessments

Authorization assessments must be completed at the following times; the authorization must be based on the assessment results:

- Initial eligibility
- Annual Renewal

In addition, an authorization assessment must be completed at the following times; and the authorization must be based on the assessment results:

- When the parent selects a new provider;
- When school-age children transition from summer break to the fall school year;
- When an eligible adult or minor teen parent is added to the case;
- When there is a calendar month gap or more between the end of one authorization and the start of another authorization;
- At the end of the 24-month education time limit (see 1.3.8.7 and 1.3.8.8);

- When the need for child care has changed and no longer aligns with the provider's hours of operation.

Example 1: Jessie has two (2) school-aged children. The first authorizations for both children begin on January 1 and end on May 31. Jessie does not need child care during the month of June because the children will visit their grandmother that month. However, Jessie needs child care authorizations beginning on July 15. Jessie's worker must complete a new authorization assessment and the authorization must be based on this assessment because more than a calendar month has passed since the previous authorizations ended.

Example 2: From July 15 through August 31, Arturo's school-aged children need full-time child care. When school starts in September, the child care need will change based on the school day, a new authorization assessment is required. The authorization must be based on the assessment results because the children are transitioning from summer break to the fall school year.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.2.2 Optional Authorization Assessments

During the 12-month period between annual eligibility renewals, an authorization assessment may be completed, but is not required, when an authorization was written to an expected change (see 2.3.8) or when certain changes are reported.

Examples of changes that fall into this category includes any items not listed in Section 2.4.2.1 and the following, but not limited to:

- A change in the number of child care hours needed to allow the parent(s) to participate in approved activities, including travel between the child care provider and the location of the activity and breaks;
- A change in the overlapping activity schedules of two-parent families;
- When school age children transition from the end of the school year to the summer break;
- A change in children's shared placement schedules;
- Any other change that results in a change in child care need.

It is essential for the authorization worker to gather enough information from the parent to determine the next steps. If it is clear that the change will not affect the authorized hours, no assessment is needed. When no assessment is needed, the authorization worker may extend the existing authorization up to the renewal date or to the next expected change, or use the previously existing authorization assessment information to write a new authorization.

Example 1: Olivia is enrolled in W-2; the child care authorization for her baby was written to the end of her W-2 Employability Plan (EP). Olivia's next EP extended her existing activities for another 6 months. Olivia does not anticipate changing child care providers or making any other changes. No authorization assessment is needed and the authorization worker may extend the current authorization to the end of next EP (or next expected change, or the next Wisconsin Shares eligibility redetermination, whichever comes first).

If the authorization worker completes an assessment but finds that it results in fewer hours, the parent may choose the reduction or may maintain the original number of authorized hours. If the parent chooses the reduced hour authorization, the authorization worker must record a comment in CSAW documenting the conversation and the parent's choice for a reduced authorization.

If the new authorization assessment indicates a reduced number of authorized hours and the parent chooses to keep the hours from the previous authorization, the authorization worker must use the "Copy From Prior Authorization" button in CSAW. For more information about the "Copy From Prior Authorization" button, see the CSAW Authorizations User Guide.

If the assessment indicates an increase to the child care hours, the agency worker must verify information related to the increase of approved activity hours before increasing the authorized hours.

Note: It is important for authorization workers to explain to parents that having the appropriate number of authorized hours will help to avoid overpaying the provider or underutilizing Wisconsin Shares subsidies.

Example 2: Annabelle works at Main Street Café from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. She has an authorization for 30 hours per week including travel time. In June, she reports that her work hours will change to 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Annabelle is not planning to change child care providers. The worker completes an authorization assessment and finds that the assessment results in 25 hours per week, including travel time. The worker asks Annabelle if she would like to keep her original authorized hours or if she would like to decrease to 25 hours per week. Annabelle chooses the reduction. The worker documents this conversation and the decision in CSAW authorization comments and completes the authorization.

Example 3: Cassie works at Plastics Manufacturing from 7 a.m. to noon. She has an authorization for her baby, Renee, for 27 hours per week, including breaks and travel time. In January, she reports that her work hours are changing to 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. The worker completes an authorization assessment and finds that the assessment results in 22 hours per week, including breaks and travel time. The worker asks Cassie if she would like to stay with the 27 hour authorization or if she would like to decrease to the 22 hour authorization. Cassie indicates that she would like to stay with the 27 hour

authorization. The worker uses the “Copy From Prior Authorization” button and completes the authorization.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.3 Approved Activity Schedules

The authorization worker must obtain the parent’s approved activity schedule, including the days and times of the schedule. The parent can self-declare the schedule; verification is not required for the purposes of authorization assessment. If the parent is not requesting authorization hours for a particular activity, the authorization worker does not need to collect the schedule for that particular activity for the authorization assessment; however, if the parent is requesting authorization hours for any part of a particular approved activity, the entire schedule for that approved activity must be collected (see Example).

Example: Gwen works two (2) jobs and goes to two (2) classes; these are all considered approved activities.

Job A: Gwen works Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. She asks for authorization hours for all three (3) days.

Job B: Gwen works on Sundays, but does not ask for authorization hours.

Class A: Gwen attends school on Thursday, and asks for authorization hours.

Class B: Gwen attends school on Thursday and Saturday. She asks for authorization hours for Thursday, but not Saturday.

The worker must collect and enter the entire schedules for Job A, Class A and Class B (both Thursday and Saturday). The worker does not need to collect the schedule for Job B.

Note: CSAW will calculate the monthly authorized hours based on the parent’s approved activity schedule and the child care need schedule that is entered into CSAW. The system analyzes the overlap between the parent’s schedule and the child care need to determine an average weekly amount. The average weekly amount is then multiplied by 4.348125 to get the final monthly authorization. In this way, most fluctuations over the authorization period are accounted for in the final subsidy amount.

The authorization worker must determine which approved activity schedule type is most appropriate to be entered into CSAW. For purposes of calculating the authorized hours, approved activity schedules are categorized into five (5) basic types.

1. **Regular:** The schedule is known in advance and is the same every week. The authorization worker must collect and enter one (1) week of schedule.
2. **Alternating:** The schedule is known in advance. It repeats in this pattern: week one (1), then week two (2), then week one (1), then week two (2), etc. The authorization worker must collect and enter two (2) weeks of schedule.

3. **Rotating:** The schedule is known in advance, and is predictable, but may not fit into a four-week pattern. The authorization worker must collect and enter four (4) weeks of schedule.
 - Examples of Rotating schedules: The schedule repeats in three-week (or greater than four-week) blocks or the schedule creates an asymmetrical pattern (example: five (5) days on/two (2) days off, then five (5) days on/three (3) days off).
4. **Varying:** The schedule is known in advance, but is different every week and there is no repeating pattern OR the anticipated work hours may change unpredictably. For example, the parent is a food service worker and has a regular schedule, but may be sent home early or asked to work late unpredictably. The authorization worker must collect and enter four (4) weeks of schedule.
5. **On-Call:** The schedule is not known in advance, and the parent may be asked to work with little advance notice. The authorization worker must collect four (4) weeks of schedule. The schedule must not include times when the parent is waiting to be called, only times when the parent actually worked.

CSAW provides three (3) options for entering approved activity schedules:

- **One-week schedule:** Use this option to enter a regular schedule.
- **Two-week schedule:** Use this option to enter an alternating schedule.
- **Four-week schedule:** Use this option to enter a rotating schedule, a varying schedule, or an on-call schedule.

Process: If the parent has a three-week rotating schedule, the authorization worker must use the week with the most scheduled hours as the fourth week. For example, if week one (1) of the schedule is 20 hours, week two (2) is 45 hours, and week three (3) is 25 hours, enter the week two (2) schedule again as week four (4).

The parent may provide either their anticipated, or the recent past schedule of hours and days worked, and must provide the appropriate number of weeks for the schedule type. If the parent cannot provide the full number of weeks, the authorization can be written for a shorter period of time during which the parent will collect their actual schedule for the full number of weeks needed in order for CSAW to most accurately determine the monthly authorization.

Note: It is important that the child care authorization include enough hours to ensure that the parent is not at risk of job loss if subsidized child care is not available.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.3.1 Correlation Between Approved Activity Verification and Schedule

Verification is not required for the approved activity schedule, but the schedule must correlate to the hours on the approved activity verification, such as pay stubs or an Employability Plan. The authorization worker will determine whether the schedule that

the parent provides and the verification correlate when completing the authorization assessment, as required in Section 2.4.2.1 and 2.4.2.2.

In considering the stated schedule and the approved activity verification, the authorization worker must consider the following issues in the resolution process:

- Unpaid Lunch Breaks: one (1) hour per eight-hour shift is acceptable
- Other Unpaid Breaks: 30 minutes total per eight-hour shift is acceptable
- Unusual circumstances that may not be reflected in pay stubs:
 - Child was ill, and the parent missed work;
 - Parent was ill and had fewer work hours;
 - Parent or child had medical/dental appointment and missed work;
 - Vacation;
 - The employer closed the business due to a holiday, weather, or unsafe conditions within the employer's facility;
 - Parent was sent home early due to low workload; or
 - Parent was called into work due to increased workload.

After considering the items on the list along with travel time, if the remaining discrepancy is 10 hours or less per week, the authorization worker shall accept the parent's stated schedule and enter it into the Parent Activity Schedule. The questions and answers used to resolve the discrepancy must be documented in CSAW comments at the Parent Activity Schedule page. If after considering each of these items, the discrepancy cannot be resolved or reduced to 10 or fewer hours, the authorization worker shall request further guidance from the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance Staff at childcare@wisconsin.gov.

Example: The parent's work schedule is 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (9.5 hours per day/47.5 hours per week) Monday through Friday; however, the EVFE or paystubs indicate that the parent works 40 hours per week. The authorization worker asks the parent about the discrepancy. The parent explains that they have a one-hour unpaid lunch every day ($40 + 5 = 45$ hours) and two (2) unpaid 15 minute breaks each day ($.25 \times 10 = 2.5$ hours). $40 + 5 + 2.5 = 47.5$ hours. The worker should accept the parent's schedule and proceed with the authorization process.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.3.2 Authorizing for Gaps Between Approved Activities

When a gap between approved activities occurs on the same day (for example, a gap between two (2) jobs, work and school, or a gap between classes), and the gap in activities is two (2) hours or less, the gap must be included in the authorized hours.

If the gap is two (2) hours or more, the authorization must be increased to cover the gap in the following scenarios:

- **Home Time:** Picking up the child and taking them home between the approved activities would cause the parent and child to be home for less than two (2) hours.
- **Child Insufficient Sleep:** The parent picking up the child would cause the child to have fewer than eight (8) hours of potential sleep time between the hours of 9 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- **Travel Greater than Activities:** The number of activity hours for the first and the second activities are less than or equal to the travel time needed (job to child care to home, then home to child care to work).
- **Disruption of Child Schedule:** Picking up the child would interrupt meal time or nap time.

If the gap is more than two (2) hours and does not meet one (1) of these situations, local agencies should consider the circumstances of the particular case and proceed according to their discretion.

In a two-parent household, gap time cannot be approved for times when the second parent is available to care for the child.

~~If a parent is requesting child care authorization hours during a gap between approved activities (for example, a gap between two (2) jobs, work and school, or a gap between classes), the worker must assess the need.~~

~~In a two-parent household, gap time cannot be approved for times when the second parent is available to care for the child.~~

~~If the total gap time is two (2) hours or less, the gap shall be included in the authorized hours.~~

~~If the total gap time is more than two (2) hours, the worker should use the following guidelines to help determine if the gap should be included. Travel time must also be considered. If the case does not meet any of the following situations, that does not mean that the worker should deny the request. Instead, the worker should consider the circumstances involved in each case, and proceed according to their discretion.~~

~~If the parent picking up the child would interrupt a meal and/or nap time, the parent should wait until the meal or nap is finished, then pick up the child. The time that the parent waits must be taken into account when considering the gap.~~

- ~~**Gap Home Time:** If the parent were to pick the child up and take them home between the approved activities, would the parent and child be home for less~~

~~than two hours? If yes, then the gap shall be covered without asking further follow-up questions.~~

- ~~• **Child Insufficient Sleep:** If the result of the parent picking up the child would be that the child would have fewer than eight hours of potential sleep time between the hours of 9 p.m. and 7 a.m., the gap shall be covered without further follow-up questions.~~
- ~~• **Travel Greater than Activities:** Add together the number of activity hours for the first and the second activities. If the activity hours are less than or equal to the travel time (job to child care to home, then home to child care to work), the gap may be covered without follow-up questions. (See Example)~~

Example: Dana must travel to a different county in order to attend school. She has two (2) one-hour classes, with a gap of five (5) hours between them. The time from her house to the provider is 15 minutes, and the time from the provider to her school is one (1) hour and 15 minutes, so 1.5 hours each way. She and her child would be able to be home for two (2) hours during the gap. However, the classes add up to two (2) hours of activity time, and the travel adds up to three (3) hours. The case meets the Travel **is** Greater than Activities situation, and the gap ~~can~~ **must** be **included in the authorized hours covered without further follow-up questions.**

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.3.3 New Employment with a Varying Schedule/On-Call Employment

When a parent has recently started new employment with a varying work schedule, or has just started on-call employment, the parent must provide the work schedule they have been given by the employer.

If the parent has no way to predict their future schedule, a four-week authorization should be written based on the parent's best estimate, and the parent shall be instructed to record their actual work schedule. After the four-week authorization has ended, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the local agency for a new authorization. At that time, the employment is no longer new employment, but ongoing employment, and a schedule for the past four (4) weeks must be provided per Section 2.4.3.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.3.4 Authorizations During an Approved Activity Search Period

During the Approved Activity Search period (ACTS), the existing authorization will remain in place at the same number of hours for up to three (3) months unless the parent reports that they do not want or need the authorization, or requests that the authorized hours are reduced.

Children who do not have authorizations in place prior to their parent's ACTS period are eligible for an authorization during the ACTS period. The authorization worker must

write the authorization based on the parent's schedule and other authorization assessment information that was in place prior to the loss of approved activity.

During an ACTS period, authorized hours must be reduced following an authorization assessment when a school-age child transitions from summer break to a fall school year (see 2.4.2). Parents can change providers during an ACTS period in accordance with Section 2.4.9.

In a two-parent or three-generation household in which more than one (1) adult is participating in an ACTS period, the local agency must maintain authorizations at the same number of hours until all parents are again engaged and participating in approved activities (see 1.3.8 and 1.3.9).

Example 1: Josie has obtained a job and is determined eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care. Before Josie can provide authorization assessment information, she is laid off from her job. The authorization assessment of hours must be based on Josie's work hours in addition to other relevant authorization assessment information that was in place prior to the employment end.

Example 2: Samantha does not have an authorization in place for her school-aged child during the school year. She is terminated from her job at the same time school lets out for the summer. An authorization can be written based on Samantha's previous work schedule, along with other relevant authorization assessment information that was in place prior to Samantha being terminated by her employer.

Example 3: Audrey is receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidies for her two (2) children, Eva and Sophie, when she loses her job. While in an ACTS period, Audrey gives birth to baby Jessica. Baby Jessica is eligible for an authorization for the remainder of the Audrey's ACTS period.

Example 4: Mariana is open and ongoing for Wisconsin Shares Child Care, but does not have an authorization for her child, Paulo. Mariana is working third-shift when she loses her job. Mariana contacts the local agency, and the worker places her in ACTS. The worker completes an authorization assessment using Mariana's previous work schedule, and determines that Paulo is eligible for 30 authorized hours per week. Mariana can use the authorization during the day to send Paulo to child care while she looks for a job.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.3.5 Authorizations During a Temporary Break Period

During the Temporary Break period (TBRK), the existing authorization will remain in place at the same number of hours for up to three (3) months unless the parent reports that they do not want or need the authorization, or requests that the authorized hours are reduced.

Children who do not have authorizations in place prior to their parent's temporary break are still eligible for an authorization during the parent's TBRK period. The authorization worker must write the authorization based on the parent's schedule and other authorization assessment information that was in place prior to the break in approved activity.

During a TBRK period, authorized hours must be reduced following an authorization assessment when a school age child goes from a summer break to the fall school year (see 2.4.2). Parents can change providers during a TBRK period in accordance with Section 2.4.9.

In a two-parent or three-generation household in which one (1) adult is participating in a TBRK period, the local agency must maintain authorizations at the same number of hours until all parents are again engaged and participating in approved activities, unless the parent makes a request for a reduced number of hours.

Example 1: Sally does not have an authorization in place for her school-aged child during the school year. Sally's mother goes into hospice care at the same time school lets out for the summer, and Sally takes a break from employment to care for her mother. The worker writes an authorization based on Sally's work schedule, along with other relevant authorization assessment information that was in place prior to this temporary break.

Example 2: Eliza is receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidies for her daughter, Angelica, when she goes on unpaid maternity leave from her employer. She gives birth to baby Jordan during the TBRK period. Baby Jordan is eligible for an authorization for the remainder of the Eliza's TBRK period. The worker writes the authorization based on Eliza's schedule and other authorization information that was in place prior to the break in employment.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.3.6 Authorizations for New Self-Employment

During the first 12 months that a parent is engaged in a new self-employment business, the local agency may authorize child care for the hours the parent is engaged in self-employment, and needs child care in order to engage in this activity. The authorization may be up to ~~one~~ full-time authorization (50 hours per week, including any travel time that is needed) until the next annual eligibility renewal due date. If the annual eligibility renewal occurs before the ~~date is fewer than~~ 12th months ~~from the start~~ of the new self-employment, the authorization ~~following the renewal must~~ may continue ~~to be full-time~~ with the same number of hours authorized until the next annual eligibility renewal ~~12 months have passed~~.

If the parent's self-employment business began prior to the date he or she applies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care, the authorization worker must use the actual start date of

the self-employment to determine the 12-month new self-employment period. (See [Example 2 below](#).)

Example 1 (Self-Employment Prior to Application): Mary Jo began self-employment on May 6, 2019, but did not apply for Wisconsin Shares until July. Mary Jo's worker enters May 2019 on the Self-Employment page in CWW, as this is the start of the self-employment. Mary Jo's 12th month of self-employment is April 2020, but her annual renewal is not until June 2020. Her authorization may remain in place until her renewal due date in June 2020. Following the annual renewal (when a mandatory authorization assessment occurs), her authorization hours will be determined by her net earnings.

A parent may be eligible for a full-time authorization for a new instance of self-employment only once every 24 months. All months for a new self-employment business count and child care may not be authorized under a new self-employment business for a full-time authorization, as described in this section, until 24 months have elapsed.

~~Travel time cannot be added to the 50 hours, but travel time to transport their child to and from child care may be included as long as the authorization does not exceed 50 hours per week.~~

~~**Example 1 (Initial Eligibility with New Self-Employment):** Trista begins a new business baking cakes at the same time she applies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care. During the first 12-month eligibility period, she is not required to demonstrate a profit and the child care authorization may be for the number of hours she reports working, up to full time (50 hours per week). At her Wisconsin Shares Child Care eligibility renewal, Trista's child care authorization will be based on her monthly adjusted self-employment earnings divided by Wisconsin's minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour).~~

Example 2 (Initial Eligibility with New Self-Employment): Rosa starts her own business selling designer shirts in **December**. ~~October.~~ At the same time, she applies for Wisconsin Shares Child Care ~~in December~~. Her daughter, Louisa, is eligible for a **full-time** ~~an~~ authorization based on Rosa's stated work schedule (up to 50 hours per week) until the annual eligibility renewal. ~~following October.~~ Rosa's worker should write ~~consecutive authorizations until October 31.~~ Starting in **November**, Following the annual renewal, Louisa's weekly authorized hours must be determined by ~~authorizations would be based on~~ Rosa's monthly adjusted self-employment earnings divided by Wisconsin's minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour) **divided by 4.3**.

Example 3 (Ongoing Eligibility with New Self-Employment): Richard is employed working as a delivery driver for ABC Trucking and is receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care for his daughter, Aubrey. In September, he reports that he quit his job and will now be starting his own delivery business. His 2-year-old daughter, Aubrey, is eligible for an **full-time** authorization ~~(up to 50 hours per week)~~ based on **Richard's stated work schedule (up to 50 hours per week)** ~~the new self-employment business for the next 12 months~~ until the annual renewal that follows the 12th month of new self-employment.

Example 4 (Ongoing Eligibility with Changing Self-Employment): Jonathon is a mechanic and has been operating his business from his home for the past few years. He is receiving Wisconsin Shares Child Care for his son, Joseph. Now, Jonathon wants to close the mechanic shop because he is not making a profit and start a new business as a handyman. Working as a mechanic and working as a handyman are two (2) different skill sets, use different tools to perform the work, are performed in different work environments and the two (2) businesses do not have the same clientele. This is new self-employment. Joseph is eligible for an **full-time** authorization based on Jonathon's stated work schedule (up to 50 hours per week) until the annual renewal that follows the 12th month of new self-employment **for the next 12 months**.

Note: Self-employment as an unregulated child care provider is not allowed as an approved activity for Wisconsin Shares. **If the parent is self-employed as a regulated child care provider, see Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.**

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.3.7 Authorizations for Ongoing Self-Employment

Self-employment is considered ongoing after the annual eligibility renewal that follows the 12th month of new self-employment. ~~After the 12-month period for new self-employment has passed, subsequent authorizations are limited to the number of hours that produce monthly adjusted self-employment income equivalent to at least Wisconsin's minimum wage.~~ At each annual renewal, an authorization assessment is required and the authorized hours must be based on monthly adjusted self-employment earnings divided by Wisconsin's minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour). This sum is then rounded up and divided by 4.3 to determine the allowed weekly hours for the authorization.

Note: The allowed weekly hours for self-employment authorizations displays in CSAW on the Case Activity Summary page based on the information entered on the Self-Employment page in CARES Worker Web (CWW). Authorization workers do not need to manually calculate the number of hours that can be authorized for self-employment.

~~The monthly adjusted self-employment income divided by the Wisconsin minimum wage equals the maximum number of child care hours that may be authorized per month. All travel time is already included in the hours allowed under this formula.~~ The total authorized hours cannot exceed the calculated number. If the number of hours requested for child care is less than the calculated amount, travel time can be added, up to the calculated hours.

Note: When business expenses exceed the business's income, the business is operating at a loss. If the business is operating at a loss, the parent is not eligible for an authorization **for self-employment** with that self-employment business as the parent's **Approved Activity**.

Factors to consider for determining the authorized hours for self-employment include:

- Self-employed parents are eligible for school closed hours and inclement weather hours for school-age children, in addition to the maximum calculation.
- A child care need that is less than the self-employment minimum wage per hour calculation.
- Additional child care hours needed for another approved activity that may include travel time.
- Multiple parents in the household that do not have overlapping schedules.
- When there are two (2) self-employed parents that have different maximum calculated hours in CSAW, the authorization worker must use the lesser of the two (2) calculations for the maximum authorization amount.

Example 1 (Single Parent Self-Employed Business): Tiffany's cake business has been in operation for two (2) years and has a monthly adjusted income of \$400. CSAW will calculate a maximum number of hours that can be authorized based on Divide \$400/month divided by \$7.25 to get 55.17 monthly hours, which is rounded up to 56 hours for the month and then divided by 4.3 to determine the weekly amount (this weekly amount displays on the Case Activity Summary page in CSAW). ~~If~~ Tiffany's will child care authorization must not exceed utilize 56 hours for of child care each month (14 hours per week). Tiffany's worker must ~~de~~ not add additional hours for travel. If Tiffany requests only 10 hours per week for work, up to 4 hours of travel time per week could be added to the authorization.

~~**Example 2 (Single Parent Self-Employed and going to school):** Kenisha has been self-employed for 14 months selling cosmetics. Her monthly adjusted income is \$500. Divide \$500 by \$7.25 to get 68.97 hours for the month. Kenisha is also finishing college to get her business degree. She attends school part-time 13 hours per week, and needs 2 hours per week for travel time. $68.97 + (15 \times 4.348125) = 134.17$ hours for the month. 134.17 is rounded to 135 hours for the month.~~

Example 2 3 (Two-Parent Household-Separate Self-Employed Businesses): Keisha and Rick are married and have four (4) children. Rick has an auto repair business. Rick works at the auto repair from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and also on Saturday mornings. The auto repair business produces a monthly adjusted income of \$1,000. Keisha has her own small business selling scented candles and home décor. The monthly adjusted income from Keisha's business is \$600. Keisha works about 15 hours per week, always in the evenings after Rick is home. Since they indicated they do not have overlapping schedules, they are not eligible for an authorization.

Example 3 4 (Two-Parent Household Shared Self-Employed Business): Mary and Tom share a business selling honey and work the exact same hours. Their monthly adjusted income of \$1,000 is divided equally because they are equal partners. Mary's adjusted income of \$500 makes her eligible for 68.96 (round to 69) hours per month and

Tom's adjusted income of \$500 makes him eligible for 68.96 (round to 69) hours of child care **per month**. Their work hours overlap, therefore they are eligible for up to 69 hours of child care subsidy per month.

~~**Example 5 (Single Parent Self-Employed Business):** Bob is self-employed at Bob's Burgers and makes \$15,000 a year. He pays himself a draw/salary of \$10,000 per year. That draw/salary amount is entered in Employment Page in CWW. The remaining \$5,000 self-employment income is entered on the self-employment page in CWW. Use the total Self-Employment Income of \$15,000 to calculate the number of authorized hours. Divide \$15,000 ÷ 12 to find a monthly income of \$1,250. Then \$1,250 ÷ 7.25 = 172.41. Bob is eligible for a maximum of 173 hours per month.~~

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.3.8 Self-Employed Foster Parents

Foster Care parents, Subsidized Guardians, Interim Caretakers, and relatives with court-ordered placement receiving Kinship Care (see Glossary for "Receiving a Kinship Care Payment") are not subject to the authorization limits described in Section 2.4.3.7 for the children placed in these homes. Justification for authorized hours must be documented in CSAW comments. The authorization limits for self-employment continue to apply to authorizations for the biological or adopted children in these families.

Example: Ava and Elijah just became foster parents for two (2) preschool-aged children. They do not have any children of their own. Ava works full time at the local elementary school and Elijah operates a business as a web designer. During the application process, Ava provided verification of her full time employment and Elijah provided copies of last year's taxes. During the authorization assessment, the authorization worker enters Ava's work schedule and Elijah's stated work schedule into CSAW. CSAW will determine a projected number of weekly authorized hours based on these two (2) work schedules, plus any travel time needed. The authorization worker must accept this calculation without regard to the monthly adjusted self-employment income and the minimum wage.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.3.9 Two-Parent and Three-Generation Families with a Teen Parent

A child care agency must only authorize child care in two-parent families for the period of overlap in the parents' approved activities.

When determining the authorization for a teen parent's child, the authorization worker must authorize child care for the period of time during the overlap of approved activities of all parents in the assistance group, including the dependent teen parent.

When determining child care hours for other children in the assistance group of a three-generation family that are not the dependent teen parent's children, the dependent teen parent's schedule is not considered in the overlap. The authorization worker must

consider only the overlap in approved activity of the other adults in the assistance group for other children in the assistance group.

Example 1: Alberto and Alana both work full time. Alberto works from 3:30 p.m. to midnight and Alana works 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The child care authorization is limited to the overlap in work and travel time for both parents. Alberto is available to care for their 1-year-old until he drops the child off with the provider at 3:00 p.m. and leaves for work. It takes Alana 30 minutes to get to the child care center after work. The authorization may cover 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., or two (2) hours per day.

Example 2: Melissa is 17 years old. She and her baby live with her parents. This is a three-generation family. The authorization worker must consider the approved activity schedule of the teen parent and both of the grandparents when determining the number of authorized hours for Melissa's baby.

Example 3: Mai is 17 years old. She and her baby live with her mother, Choua, and her 3-year-old little sister Nancy. This is a three-generation family with a teen parent. The authorization worker must consider only Choua's approved activity schedule when determining the number of authorized hours for Nancy. The authorization for Mai's baby is based on the overlap of both Choua's and Mai's approved activity schedules.

In two-parent and three-generation family situations where one (1) parent is unable to work and unable to care for the children as documented by a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist, child care may be authorized for the time period when the other parent is participating in an approved activity.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.3.10 Sleep Hours for Third Shift Employment

Parents who work third shift may request an authorization for child care for sleep time based on the parent's need to sleep in order to remain employed. The local agency will determine a reasonable number of authorized hours based on the parent's request. The same family may also request child care for the hours of employment. The total number of authorized hours cannot exceed 75 hours per week.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.4.3.11 Travel Time

Travel time is the amount of time the parent needs to travel from the child care location to his or her approved activity and from the activity back to the child care provider location.

CSAW requires entry for daily travel time needs. The authorization worker must assess this to ensure that adequate travel time is included in the number of authorized hours.

The authorization worker must always document the rationale for the amount of or the lack of travel time need in CSAW comments.

Any requests of more than one (1) hour of travel time per day must be verified via an Internet map search or a public transportation schedule.

Travel time that is one (1) hour or less per day is not required to be verified; but if questionable may be verified via an Internet map search or a public transportation schedule. Questionable situations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Parent requesting travel time from child care to work prior to the child care hours of operation.
- Parent requesting travel time from work to the child care after the child care hours of operation.
- Parent requesting daily travel time up to an hour when they work at the child care.
- Parent requesting daily travel time up to an hour when they work five (5) minutes away from the child care and the agency worker is aware of this information because they are familiar with the child care location and location of the parent's employment.

The authorization worker is not expected to manually calculate a daily average of a varying travel need as was previously instructed and can take the maximum amount of daily travel need and enter it into CSAW.

Example 1: Marni requests a daily travel time need of a half hour each way per day. This is not considered questionable and the authorization worker enters a one (1) hour daily travel need. The authorization worker documents in the comment field that this is what Marni requested and that it is not considered questionable.

Example 2: Jose requests a daily travel time need that varies from day-to-day. He needs 30 minutes on Monday/Tuesday, and 45 minutes on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. This is not considered questionable and the authorization worker enters the highest of the travel time need, which is 45 minutes for the daily amount. The authorization worker documents that this is not questionable and per policy the highest amount of travel time is entered into the system.

Example 3: Amy requests a daily travel time need that exceeds one (1) hour per day. She requested two (2) hours per day. The authorization worker asks why she needs this amount of time and she states that she rides public transportation to work and she works in a different city than where she resides. The authorization worker verifies this information via an Internet map search and a bus schedule and documents that this information was verified.

Example 4: Katie requests a daily travel need of one (1) hour. She states she needs 30 minutes to travel from the child care center to work and 30 minutes to travel from work to the child care center. She works 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the child care provider's hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. This request is considered questionable. The authorization worker must ask a follow-up question as to why she has this need if

she works earlier than when the child care provider opens. Katie clarifies that her mom drops the children off at the child care in the morning and therefore she changes her daily travel need request to 30 minutes. The authorization worker documents this in CSAW comments.

Example 5: James works third shift from 12 a.m. to 7 a.m. Monday through Friday, however he requests a child care need only for sleep time because his mom watches the children overnight. He states that he arrives home after work at 7:30 a.m. and then drives to the child care and drops the children off at the child care at 8 a.m. and picks them up after sleeping at 5 p.m. The travel time is included within the request for sleep time from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Therefore, the authorization worker does not need to add additional travel time, but overrides the zero hour authorized hours to be an average of 45 weekly hours. This is documented in the CSAW Override Hours field.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.4 Child Care Need Schedule

The Child Care Need Schedule is used to identify the days and times that child care is needed to allow the parent to participate in their approved activity. The Child Care Need Schedule has the same three (3) schedule options as the parent's approved activity schedule.

- **One-week schedule:** If the child's need for child care is the same each week, collect the schedule and enter it in the one-week schedule in CSAW.
- **Two-week schedule:** If the child's need for child care alternates every other week, collect the two-week schedule and enter it into CSAW.
- **Four-week schedule:** If the child's need for child care varies every week, collect a four-week schedule and enter it into CSAW.

CSAW will compare the Child Care Need Schedule to the Approved Activity schedule and will project an average number of weekly hours to be authorized based on the overlap of these schedules.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.4.1 Shared Placement Authorizations

Authorizations that involve the shared placement of children require extra attention to ensure accuracy and to prevent overpayments.

The authorization worker is responsible for collecting a shared placement schedule that illustrates the days that the child is with each parent, and collecting updates when the parent informs the worker of schedule changes. This should be reflected in the Child Care Need Schedule in CSAW.

A shared placement schedule can be collected on a monthly calendar or by using CSAW or Parent Portal. The authorization must cover the number of hours the

applicable parent will need for his or her approved activity plus travel time. Case comments must be entered in CSAW.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.4.2 Head Start and 4K School Programs

Child care authorizations must always be based on the parent's need for child care while the parent is participating in an approved activity. However, when the 4K program that is overseen by a public school board or a Head Start program is located at **the same location and address as** a child care program **(as listed in CSAW)**, the education hours ~~can~~ **could potentially** be included in the authorized hours.

If the school program is located at a different site than where child care is provided, the authorization must cover only the hours the child attends the child care provider and must not include the hours the child attends the school program. The school **program** provider and the child care provider must have the same provider number and location number **in CSAW** in order to meet the definition of co-located. An authorization cannot be written to a second provider to cover the school program hours. ~~This is not considered wrap-around care.~~

The education hours can be included in the authorized hours if each of the following are true:

- The parent is engaged in his or her approved activity at least part of the school program hours;
- The school program (4K or Head Start) and the child care program are co-located;
- The total number of hours of the child's school program(s) is not more than four (4) hours per day; and
- The total length of the child's authorized child care day is five (5) or more hours per day (the school program hours are included in this total).

If any of these requirements are not met, the authorization must not include the school program hours.

Example 1: Charlie attends the Head Start program located at 1256 Water Street and the child care program that is located at 1536 Water Street. Charlie's authorization is limited to the hours he will spend at the child care program located at 1536 Water Street because the child care and the Head Start programs are in different locations.

Example 2: Dara attends a 4K program that is overseen by the local public school board, and is located at the child care center where she is enrolled. Dara's mom needs child care from 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Monday – Friday. The 4K program is provided at Dara's child care center from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monday – Thursday. Dara's authorization may be written to include all of the hours that Dara's mom needs child care, which is 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Example 3: Cary attends an ~~Early~~ Head Start program that is overseen by the local public school board, and that is located at the child care center where she is enrolled. Cary's mom needs child care from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday while she goes to work. The ~~Early~~ Head Start program goes from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday – Friday. Cary's authorization may be written for only the hours that Cary attends the child care program because the ~~Early~~ Head Start program hours are indicated to be six (6) hours daily. Cary's authorization must begin at 2 p.m. when the ~~Early~~ Head Start program has ended until 4:30 p.m. when mom picks Cary up, Monday – Thursday.

Example 4: Melissa attends a Head Start program that is overseen by the local public school board, and is located at the child care center where she is enrolled. The Head Start program hours are 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Melissa's mom works 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mom leaves Melissa at the center after the Head Start program ends. The authorization should be written from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. plus travel time. Mom is not engaged in her approved activity during any part of the school program hours so those hours would not be included.

Example 5: Josh attends a 4K program that is overseen by the local public school board, and is located at the child care center where he is enrolled. The child care facility operates 24 hours a day. The 4K program hours are 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Josh's dad works 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The authorization should be written for 11:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. plus travel time. Josh's dad is not in an approved activity during any part of the school program hours so those hours would not be included in the authorization.

Example 6: Melvin attends a Head Start program that is located at his child care provider. The Head Start hours are from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Melvin's mom, Raquel, needs child care from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. while she goes to work. Melvin's authorization can be written for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. plus travel time from work to the child care provider at the end of her shift. The travel time in the morning would not be counted because Raquel is not going to her approved activity after dropping off Melvin at the child care provider.

Process: When a parent is only in their approved activity during part of the school program hours, the authorization worker ~~should~~ **must** enter "Other" on the Parent Approved Activity Schedule in CSAW. This will allow CSAW to calculate the correct amount of authorization hours without ~~the worker having to do~~ an override **to the authorized hours**. The authorization worker ~~should make sure to~~ **must document in the CSAW authorization case comments the reason that why** "Other" is being used.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.4.3 Authorizations for Children in Grades 1 through 12

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program does not allow authorizations for time during the typical school day for children in grades 1 through 12 while the school year is in session, in accordance with 45 C.F.R. s. 98.56(c). The typical school day is

determined by the local agency after a review of the school district hours of operation and school district calendar for schools within the particular county.

Part-time or full-time authorizations for children in grades 1 through 12 can be made for times outside of the typical school hours during the school year and for times when school is not in session (e.g. summer break, planned holiday breaks, or other planned school-closed times).

Children who are homeschooled, truant, or suspended from school are not eligible for an authorization during the typical school day. Children who are homeschooled, truant, or in out-of-school suspension from school are also not eligible for an authorization for inclement weather hours.

Expelled children who are considered disenrolled may be eligible to receive an authorization during the typical school day. The parent will have been notified by the school if the child is expelled and disenrolled. If a child's enrollment status is questionable, the parent must provide verification of the child's school enrollment status.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.4.4.4 Scheduled School Closures

All parents with school-age children (all children who are three (3) years old or older on September 1) may request child care hours for days and hours that school is closed according to the school calendar and times that the parent will need child care in order to attend work or other approved activity (e.g. planned holiday breaks, or other planned school closed times).

If scheduled school closed hours were not included in the original authorization, parents must request these scheduled school closed days within 10 calendar days after the need for the additional hours.

School closed hours may also be added for unexpected school closures that are not weather-related. These child care hours are added to the scheduled school closure page of CSAW. The authorization worker must use the note section of this page to identify the reason for the school closure. Parents must request these additional hours within 10 calendar days after the need for the additional hours.

Children who are authorized for a before and after school program or a co-located Head Start or 4K program as described in Section 2.4.4.2 may need a secondary zero hour authorization if the school program is not available during school closures, including inclement weather. The authorization worker must assess the child care needs and the parent's approved activity to determine if a secondary authorization is needed.

Children who are homeschooled, truant, in out-of-school suspension, or expelled and disenrolled are not eligible for child care subsidy for days when school is closed.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.4.4.5 Zero-Hour Authorizations

If a school-aged child only needs child care on days of school closure and does not need child care before and/or after school on a regular basis a zero hour authorization can be written to a child care provider to care for the child during scheduled school closures or other days that school is closed for inclement weather. These authorizations won't have weekly/monthly hours calculated in CSAW. Instead, the authorization worker will add school closed hours for each day that school is closed and the parent expects to be engaged in their approved activity.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.4.6 Authorizations For Inclement Weather Related School Closures

Parents who request scheduled school closed hours for their children are also provided 10 additional child care hours per month in November, December, January, February, and March to be available when school may close due to inclement weather. The inclement weather hours assist with the cost of child care when school is not in session due to inclement weather, such as snowstorms, below-zero conditions, hail, or ice. Parents may utilize these extra hours and funds to help them maintain employment or another approved activity.

After the 10 hours have been used in a month, the parent must assume the cost of any additional child care needed for inclement weather situations. If there is a need outside the months of November through March, the local agency may contact the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance Line to add more subsidy hours to the authorization. If the school-age child has authorizations to two (2) providers, CSAW will apply the 10 hours to the first authorization that was created for the month; however, agency workers may move the inclement weather hours from one (1) provider and add them to the secondary provider if the original entry was to the incorrect provider. The 10 hours allotted per month for inclement weather situations should not be deleted by the local agency for any reason.

The inclement weather hours are subject to the same 90-day removal policy as all other funds. If there are no school closures due to weather for November, and the parent has not expended all of the funds by February 1, they will age-off and no longer be available. For the 90-day removal policy, please see Section 2.5.6 or Section 3.3.4.4.

Children who are homeschooled, truant, in out-of-school suspension, or expelled and disenrolled are not eligible for child care for inclement weather hours. Children who are homeschooled, truant, or in out-of-school suspension are also not eligible for an authorization during the typical school day. Expelled children who are considered disenrolled may be eligible to receive an authorization during the typical school day (see 2.4.4.3).

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.4.5 Subsidy Maximum Rates

The Department publishes the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Maximum Rates. Hourly and monthly maximum rates are established according to provider county or

tribe, provider types (licensed group, licensed family, regularly certified or provisionally certified), and the age of the child in care. The maximum rates are based on an annual statewide survey of licensed child care providers regarding the child care prices they charge to the general community. The Department has the authority to freeze the maximum rates due to budget constraints.

Hourly maximums for regularly certified providers are set at 75% of the licensed family hourly maximum, and hourly maximums for provisionally certified providers are 50% of the licensed family hourly maximum. Monthly maximums are not set for certified providers; however, the monthly subsidy payments are capped at the licensed family monthly maximum.

Maximum rates for child care providers located within tribes are grouped with the county in which the child care provider is geographically located.

The local agency is responsible for updating the provider's prices in CSAW when the change is reported.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.6 Full- and Part-Time Prices and Full- and Part-Time Authorizations

Whether to use regular (full-time) or part-time provider prices is dependent on the average weekly authorized hours.

- If the authorized hours do not vary from week to week and the authorized hours are 20 per week or less (but not zero), use the part-time provider price.
- When the part-time provider price is used, the provider's part-time weekly rates must be recorded in CSAW.
- If the authorized hours do not vary from week to week and the average authorized hours are more than 20 per week, use the regular provider price.
- If authorized hours vary week to week and any of the weeks are more than 20 hours, use the regular provider price.
- When the authorization is only for scheduled school closures and for inclement weather days, use the regular provider price.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.7 Override Provider Price

Override prices are used for writing authorizations with a child with special needs higher price, discount, or for in-home authorizations when child care will be provided for 15 or more hours per week. Using the override price will allow the CSAW system to disregard the lowest weekly rate amount to allow higher prices in cases of a child with a special need, to lower prices for discounts, and to adjust rates for in-home child care when in-home care is provided for 15 or more hours per week.

Note: Do not confuse override prices with overriding the system derived approved hours.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.4.7.1 Inclusion Rate for Children with Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs may be eligible for a higher subsidy amount to reflect the increased costs the child care provider incurs in providing care to a child with special needs. The local agency may consider additional subsidy amounts for providers caring for children with special needs on a case-by-case basis.

The subsidy adjustment should support the provider in caring for the child (e.g., specialized training, services, and/or environmental adaptations). It is the provider's responsibility to comply with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The parent must provide documentation from a physician, special educator, or other licensed professional of the special need and identify the specific additional care that is needed for physical, behavioral, or educational needs.

The child care provider must provide a rationale and documentation of the extra costs associated with providing care for the child. The reason for the higher subsidy amount must be documented in CSAW comments and form DCF-F-2976 must be scanned into ECF, or uploaded by the parent via the Parent Portal.

Local agencies must use the approved higher subsidy amount in CSAW as an Override Provider Price Type when writing the authorization; see the CSAW Authorizations User Guide.

If a 13-year-old or older is verified to have a special need but the provider does not incur extra costs to provide care, CSAW will use the provider's price or county maximum rate for 12-year-old children, whichever is less, and in this situation the authorization worker will not need to use an Override price.

Form DCF-F-2976 must be completed to request and document a higher subsidy amount for a child with special needs. If a higher subsidy amount is approved by the local agency, the increased amount is valid for one (1) year. If the form expires or the override price ends during the 12-month eligibility period, the override price will remain in CSAW until the next renewal or there is a change in child care providers.

A new form must be completed every 12 months to evaluate the needs of the child and determine any adjustments to the cost incurred by the provider. A new form must also be completed if there is a change in child care providers to determine the cost incurred by the new child care program.

In addition to providing the local agency with a statement by a physician or medical provider that the child has a special need, the following supporting documentation helps to identify and clarify the specific accommodations that are needed.

- An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) from Birth to 3.
- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) from a school district.
- A 504 plan (child has an alternative plan in place to provide some assistance to participate fully in school).

The child care provider must provide the rationale for additional costs incurred by the program and identify the specific additional care that is needed for physical, behavioral, or educational needs.

This form also includes an option for the child care provider to request training and technical assistance from the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency or YoungStar Technical Consultant regarding child care for children with special needs.

After the child care provider has completed the “Provider Rationale” section, the parent is responsible for submitting the form to the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Coordinator or authorization worker at the local agency, or uploading the document via the Parent Portal.

Note: CSAW will require an hourly price. Select the Override-Special Needs price in CSAW.

Authorizations for children with a special need may be authorized for more than 50 hours per week. The hourly rate for the hours above 50 will be paid at the county’s hourly maximum rate for that provider rather than the higher Special Needs rate.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.7.2 Provider Discounts

A discounted price may be applied in the following circumstances:

1. When a licensed child care provider offers a discounted price that is lower than the **initial hourly amount** ~~county maximum hourly rate~~ or ~~weekly~~ **agency** ceiling
2. When another program, such as AmeriCorps, is providing a child care stipend and the licensed child care provider’s price, after the stipend is applied, is lower than the ~~county maximum rate~~ **initial hourly amount or agency ceiling**.

~~Discounts are often given when more than one child from a family is enrolled in child care or when the parent is employed by a child care provider.~~

Providers must inform parents of discounts. It is the parent’s responsibility to then inform the authorization worker that the child care provider is offering a discount when requesting an authorization. The parent must report **discounts received** ~~it~~ within 10 calendar days of the occurrence and it will become effective the ~~following~~ **month after the discount is reported and entered into CSAW** ~~unless it is untimely reported~~. If there is confusion on the exact amount, the authorization worker can contact the child care provider for the discounted price. If another program (such as AmeriCorps) is paying

part of the cost of child care, the authorization worker must find out the amount the other program will pay in order to determine the rate that ~~should~~ will be ~~used~~ entered in the Override Price field in CSAW. CSAW will compare the discounted price to the initial hourly amount and agency ceiling, and the lowest of the three (3) amounts will be used to calculate ~~for~~ the Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount.

~~If, after applying the discount, the licensed child care provider's price is not lower than the county maximum rate, disregard the reported discount and do not use an override price.~~

Discounts can only be applied to subsidy payments for parents using licensed child care providers.

Discounts are disregarded for certified child care providers. Authorization workers must also disregard a discount that a child care provider applies to the parent's share. This is not considered a discount for purposes of the Wisconsin Shares program.

Example 1: Randy's Licensed Group Child Care is giving the Jones family a 50% discount. The child care provider's weekly price is \$300. The weekly amount after the discount is applied to the provider's original weekly price is \$150. ~~The county maximum weekly rate is \$250. Since \$150 is less than the county maximum of \$250,~~ The discounted amount should be entered on the Weekly Hours page in CSAW by selecting the Override (Discount) option in the Provider Price Type ~~Override Price~~ field and entering the discounted price in the Override Price field. ~~for the new authorization.~~ CSAW compares the discounted price with the initial hourly amount and agency ceiling, and uses the discounted price for the subsidy calculation because it is the lowest of the three (3) amounts.

Example 2: Bella is enrolled in AmeriCorps, and they provide a weekly stipend of \$200 to help cover the cost of child care. When Bella informs her child care worker, the worker ~~There may be instances where AmeriCorps or another organization provides financial assistance for a portion of a parent's child care costs. In these cases,~~ subtracts the amount that ~~the other organization~~ AmeriCorps will pay from the provider's price that is entered in CSAW – this is the discounted price. The worker then enters the discounted amount into CSAW and CSAW compares the discounted price to the initial hourly amount and the agency ceiling. ~~county maximum rate. If the discounted price is less than the county maximum rate, enter the discounted amount into CSAW. If the county maximum rate is less than the discounted price, disregard the discount and allow CSAW to calculate using the regular provider price.~~

Initial Hourly Amount: \$989.91 ~~County weekly max: \$300~~

Agency Ceiling: \$984.64

Provider's weekly ~~rate~~ price: \$325

Subtract AmeriCorps subsidy: \$200

Discounted Price: $\$325 - \$200 = \$125$ (Entered as Override (Discount) weekly amount)

Monthly discounted provider price: \$543.52

CSAW uses the discounted price for the subsidy calculation because it is the lowest of the three (3) amounts.

~~The remaining \$125 is less than the county maximum weekly rate of \$300. Enter \$125 into the *Override Discount Rate* field in CSAW.~~

Example 3: Because Pa has two (2) children enrolled in Alice's Wonderland Child Care, the child care provider gives Pa a 50% discount on her Parent Share for the second child. After the Wisconsin Shares subsidy has been applied for her second child, Pa's outstanding balance is \$150. The provider gives her a 50% discount on this Parent Share leaving \$75. Since the provider price discount is only applied to the Parent Share, it must not be entered for CSAW to use in the Wisconsin Shares subsidy calculation.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.7.3 In-Home Care for 15 or More Hours Per Week

When child care is provided in the child's own home and the child care provider is working 15 or more hours per week, the parent must ensure that the child care provider is paid at the state minimum wage. The Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidy amount can be adjusted to ensure that the provider's base rate is minimum wage in the rate calculation. If a child qualifies for a higher price due to a special need, that rate can exceed state minimum wage.

When authorizing for less than 15 hours per week, use the part-time provider price.

Local administrative agencies should remind parents that choosing in-home child care creates an employee/employer relationship between the provider and the parent(s). Parents should be referred to Department of Revenue's Customer Service Bureau, Department of Workforce Development's Bureau of Tax and Accounting, and/or business professionals like accountants or attorneys for more information about their responsibilities as employers.

Note: When authorizing for 15 or more hours per week, agency workers must use the Provider Price Type field in CSAW to enter the Override (In-Home) price.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.8 Maximum of 75 Authorized Hours Per Week

A child's total authorized hours cannot exceed 75 hours per week. This includes a child in two (2) Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance Groups and/or authorized to more than one (1) provider. CSAW will not allow authorizations for more than 75 hours of child care per week. It is only when the hardship policy requirements are met that staff with the Child Care Coordinator profile in CSAW may write an authorization for more than 75 hours of child care per week (see 2.4.9.1 and 1.1.3).

Example: Claudia has an authorization for 43 hours per week for her child, Jackson, at Lydia's Child Care program. Claudia asked for and was approved an exception to change child care providers mid-month due to Lydia's Child Care program's abrupt permanent closure. In this scenario, Jackson would have a 43 hour authorization at Lydia's Child Care program and another authorization for 45 hours at Jolly House Child Care program, for a sum of 88 hours. Since the original authorization to Lydia's Child Care program cannot be end-dated until the end of the month, the new authorization to Jolly House Child Care must be written by a worker with the Child Care Coordinator privileges in CSAW.

This section last updated 10/30/2017

2.4.9 Changing and Ending an Authorization Mid-Month

When an authorization has been established for a full month, parents may not receive an authorization to a different provider mid-month, unless there is an agency or client error in which a subsidy amount was loaded to the EBT card for the incorrect provider, or the situation meets the policy in Section 2.4.9.1.

If the authorization was created to the incorrect provider and a payment was made to the incorrect provider by the parent, please see Chapter 4.

If the situation meets the policy in Section 2.4.9.1, or if there was an agency or client error in which the subsidy amount was loaded to the card for the incorrect provider, the agency worker must end the current authorization to the first provider at the end of the current month and write a new authorization to the correct provider for the current month. The agency's Child Care Coordinator must write the new authorization to the second provider for the current month if the total number of hours authorized to the first provider and second provider are greater than 75 hours per week.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.9.1 Authorizations in Situations of Hardship

Families experiencing unforeseen circumstances that are no fault of their own and that inhibit them from utilizing the originally authorized child care provider during the current month may be eligible for a new authorization to a different child care provider location during the current month if continuing with the original child care provider would cause a hardship for the family.

Families may be eligible for a second authorization in situations of hardship when the subsidy amount has been loaded to the EBT card in the current month for a previously authorized child care provider if the family's situation meets the criteria of this policy. The request for this additional authorization must be made by the parent within 10 days of the start of the unforeseen circumstance.

In order to be eligible for an authorization in this situation, the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance Group must meet one (1) of the following situations and the situation

must create a legitimate and unforeseen hardship for the child or children to continue to attend the current child care provider location for the remainder of the current month:

- The child is relocated from his or her current residence so the family can escape domestic abuse and it is not reasonable to travel to the current child care provider location.
- The child is ill and is not able to attend his or her current child care provider due to that illness, but another child care provider will allow the child to attend child care at his or her facility. This may be a chronic or temporary illness not otherwise qualified under special needs.
- There is alleged abuse or neglect of the child by his or her current child care provider and a complaint has been made to the appropriate certification or licensing agency.
- The child is expelled from his or her current child care provider for behavior issues.
- The child's special needs are no longer being met by the current child care provider (for example, a teacher who supported the child has suddenly left the child care facility).
- The safety of the parent or child is threatened by remaining at the current child care provider.
- The family is evicted from their current home and it is not reasonable to travel to the current child care provider location.
- A formerly homeless family finds stable housing and it is unreasonable to use the current child care provider.
- There are sudden changes in a parent's approved activity location which makes the use of the current child care provider **unreasonable**.
- There are sudden changes in a parent's approved activity schedule and the provider's hours of operation do not accommodate the family's need for child care.
- One (1) parent passes away or unexpectedly leaves a two-parent or multi-generational Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance Group and the current child care provider either does not have the facility capacity to handle the additional hours of the family's child care need, or the hours of operation of the child care facility no longer supports the family's need for child care.
- There is damage to the child care facility that creates an unsafe environment for children, such that it is impossible for them to continue to attend the same provider.
- The child care provider has a voluntary, unforeseen permanent closure and the family needs to attend an alternate provider.

- The provider does not allow the child(ren) to attend due to circumstances that are outside of the parent’s control (for example, the center has reached their regulatory capacity or provider-to-child ratios).
- The child care provider’s regulation is suspended or revoked by a regulatory authority.

Upon request, DCF Wisconsin Shares policy staff may approve limited situations of hardship at their discretion. Local agencies that receive a request which does not fall under the criteria above, but is demonstrated to be a hardship on the family, should email the Wisconsin Shares Subsidy and Technical Assistance staff for review and approval or denial.

In situations where a hardship authorization is granted due to circumstances regarding the child (for example, the child is expelled from his or her current child care provider for behavior issues), all other children on the case may also change providers as long as those children were attending the same child care center as the child receiving the hardship authorization.

The local agency will determine the duration of the subsequent authorization for the new child care provider location. Subsequent authorizations do not need to be for a full month depending on the circumstance and point in time in the current month that the hardship is requested.

Any cases ~~s that are being~~ reviewed for a possible hardship authorization must be documented ~~in~~ **on** the CSAW Hardship page. Local agencies **must** utilize this page for each situation that is reviewed, ~~even those which are denied for untimely reporting.~~ **When the local agency denies a hardship request, a Hardship Denial Notice must be mailed to the parent. The Hardship Denial Notice includes the reason(s) for the denial as well as appeal rights to the decision.**

Note: Agencies must send cases involving foster or other placement children to the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance Line for approval or denial. Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance staff will make hardship decisions for these cases.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.4.10 Provider Closure Policy

Parents may utilize their subsidy to pay child care providers during a one-week shutdown once per calendar year. If the parent needs to attend a different provider during the one-week shutdown, the parent must request another authorization.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.11 Excessive Unexplained Absences

Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidies assist eligible, low-income parents with the cost of child care while they participate in an approved activity. Excessive unexplained

absence is an indicator that the authorization worker needs to review the authorization to determine if the level of child care need is accurate.

Child care providers are required to report to the local agency when a child in subsidized care has been absent for 30 consecutive days during which the parent has not contacted the child care provider to explain the reasons for or to inform the child care provider of the absences.

Upon receiving the notification from the child care provider, the local agency must make multiple attempts to contact the parent before ending the authorization. The local agency must document these attempts in CSAW comments.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.4.12 Authorizations and Case Transfers

If a case is transferred to another Wisconsin Shares agency, any authorizations for that case will be systematically ended at the end of that month. There is an exception for cases transferred within Northern and WREA consortia: if a case is transferred between two (2) Northern agencies, or two (2) WREA agencies, the authorizations for that case will not systematically end.

This section last updated 01/31/2018

2.5 Subsidy Payments

Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidies assist eligible, low-income parents with the cost of child care while they participate in approved activities (see 1.3.8 and 1.3.9). The CSAW system considers several factors in order to determine the amount of subsidy for which a parent may be eligible.

Copayment

The copayment is the amount that is reduced from the subsidy amount based on household income and family size (see 2.5.1). CSAW subtracts the copayment from the parent's overall subsidy amount prior to loading funds to the MyWICChildCare card.

Note: The parent is responsible to pay the difference between their subsidy amount and the provider's price, which may be more than the copayment reduced from the subsidy amount (see 2.6).

Subsidy Amount

The subsidy amount is the final amount of funds that are loaded to the parent's MyWICChildCare card. CSAW considers multiple factors in order to determine the subsidy amount, including the provider's location county, the number of subsidized hours of care, the provider's regulation category, and the provider's YoungStar rating (see 2.5.4).

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.1 Copayments

CSAW determines the copayment that will be subtracted from the subsidy amount based on the:

- Assistance Group's Federal Poverty Level (FPL) (based on family size and income),
- Number of children in subsidized child care, and
- Sum of subsidized hours for all children in the Assistance Group (AG).

CSAW subtracts a portion of the AG's copayment from each child's subsidy based on the percentage of total subsidized hours that each child has at each location. The total copayment assessed for each child will not exceed 152 hours per month per child, even if the child attends multiple providers.

See the current Wisconsin Shares Copayment Schedule.

The Department revises the Copayment Schedule annually based on changes made to the FPL (published annually in the Federal Register). The Copayment Schedule lists monthly FPL levels in 5% increments (e.g., 70%, 75%, 80%, etc.) and assigns an hourly copayment according to an AG's FPL. When the AG's FPL is between two (2) levels, CSAW will use the lower of the two (2) FPL percentages. If the family is in the Exit Copayment Period (see 2.5.1.1), CSAW will use the family's actual FPL and will not round to the lower FPL percentage.

Example 1: Sean's income places his family at 164% FPL. Sean's copayment per hour will use the copayment for the 160% FPL copayment level.

Process: CSAW determines the family's copayment per hour based on the family's FPL and the number of children in care with a Regular copayment type (see 2.5.2). CSAW then multiplies the copayment per hour by the sum of subsidized child care hours for the AG for the month. The maximum family copayment will not exceed 760 monthly subsidized hours.

CSAW subtracts a portion of the AG's copayment from each child with a Regular copayment type (see 2.5.2). The portion of the copayment applied to each child is capped at 152 hours per month per child. If a child has two or more authorizations in a month to different child care providers, the child's portion of the AG's copayment is subtracted from each of the authorizations based on the number of subsidized hours at each location (see Example 3 below).

Children with a Reduced copayment type (see 2.5.2) are calculated separately from the family copayment. CSAW will not apply an hourly copayment to children with a \$0 copayment. For children with a Minimal copayment type (65% FPL), CSAW will use the 65% FPL copayment per hour for one (1) child multiplied by the individual child's subsidized hours (capped at 152 hours per month).

Example 2: Juniper's income places her family at 115% FPL. Juniper's two (2) children, Fantasia and Kyle, attend Sally's Day Care Center for 20 hours per week each. Juniper's total family copayment per month is \$**113.10** ~~141.36~~.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 115% FPL: \$0.6**54**

Fantasia: 20 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 86.96 (87 monthly hours)

Kyle: 20 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 86.96 (87 monthly hours)

Total Monthly Family Hours: 87 + 87 = 174

Total Family Copayment: \$0.6**54** x 174 = \$**113.10** ~~141.36~~

In the summer, Juniper's two (2) children begin attending 40 hours per week each. Juniper's full-time total family copayment is \$**197.60** ~~194.56~~.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 115% FPL: \$0.6**54**

Fantasia: 40 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 173.92 (174 monthly hours, capped at 152 monthly hours)

Kyle: 40 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 173.92 (174 monthly hours, capped at 152 monthly hours)

Capped Monthly Subsidized Hours: 152 + 152 = 304

Total Family Copayment: \$0.6**54** x 304 = \$**197.60** ~~194.56~~

Example 3: Monique works 30 hours per week on second shift. Monique's income places her family at 75% FPL. Monique has two (2) children, Genesis and Jasmine. Genesis attends Lil' Buddies for 28 hours per week. Jasmine attends Jumpin' Around in the afternoon for 8 hours per week, and Lil' Buddies in the evenings for 28 hours per week. Monique's total family copayment is \$**63.02** ~~57.54~~ per month.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 75% FPL: \$0.2**34**

Genesis: 28 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 121.75 (122 monthly hours)

Jasmine: 8 hours per week x 4.348125 = 34.79 (35 monthly hours)

28 hours per week x 4.348125 = 121.75 (122 monthly hours)

35 + 122 = 157 monthly hours (capped at 152 monthly hours)

Total Monthly Family Hours: 122 + 152 = 274 monthly hours (279 uncapped monthly hours)

Family Copayment: \$0.2**34** x 274 = \$**63.02** ~~57.54~~

The copayment distribution is:

Genesis: 122 monthly hours ÷ 279 monthly uncapped hours = 43.73% of copayment

Copayment distribution: \$**63.02** ~~57.54~~ x .4373 = \$**27.56** ~~25.16~~

Jasmine Authorization for Jumpin' Around: 35 monthly hours ÷ 279 monthly uncapped hours = 12.54% of copayment

Copayment distribution: \$**63.02** ~~57.54~~ x .1254 = \$**7.91** ~~7.22~~

Jasmine Authorization for Lil' Buddies: 122 monthly hours ÷ 279 monthly uncapped hours = 43.73% of copayment
Copayment distribution: \$63.02 ~~57.54~~ x .4373 = \$27.56 ~~25.16~~

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.5.1.1 Calculating the Copayment in the Exit Copayment Period

During the Exit period (see 2.5.3.3), the copayment is determined according to a different methodology. CSAW still uses the copayment per hour, but it is set at the 200% FPL copayment level. After the total hourly copayment amount has been determined, CSAW adds an additional family copayment to the total hourly copayment amount. The additional family copayment is determined by increasing the family's copayment \$1 for every \$3 by which the Assistance Group's (AG's) gross income exceeds 200% FPL.

Example: Renee's income places her family at 207% FPL at renewal in April. Based on that information, Renee's family is determined to be in the Exit period. Renee's two (2) children, Suki and Sahara, attend Joe's Quality Day Care for 15 hours per week each. Renee's total family copayment is \$233.72 ~~215.56~~.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 200% FPL: \$1.46 ~~1.33~~

Suki: 15 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 65.22 (66 monthly hours)

Sahara: 15 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 65.22 (66 monthly hours)

Total Monthly Family Hours: 66 + 66 = 132 monthly hours

Initial Copayment: \$1.46 ~~1.33~~ x 132 = \$192.72 ~~175.56~~

Additional Copayment (for Exit period): \$41~~0~~ (207% FPL for an AG Size of 3)

Total Family Copayment: \$192.72 ~~175.56~~ + \$41~~0~~ = \$233.72 ~~215.56~~

Renee receives a raise in December that places her family's income at 212% FPL. Renee's total family copayment increases to \$244.56.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 200% FPL: \$1.46 ~~1.33~~

Total Monthly Family Hours: 132

Initial Copayment: \$1.46 ~~1.33~~ x 132 = \$192.72 ~~175.56~~

(This part stays the same, as Renee has not requested additional hours)

Additional Copayment (for Exit period): \$71 ~~69~~ (212% FPL for an AG Size of 3)

Total Family Copayment: \$192.72 ~~175.56~~ + \$71 ~~69~~ = \$263.72 ~~244.56~~

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.5.1.2 Assuming the Full Cost of Care

A parent assumes the full cost of care when the parent's copayment equals or exceeds the subsidy amount. A parent may assume the full cost of care during any Copayment

Period; however, most parents will assume the full cost of care at some point during the Exit Copayment Period.

Agency workers must not end eligibility or end the authorization due to the parent(s) assuming the full cost of care. An Assistance Group (AG) can retain eligibility as long as they continue to meet financial and nonfinancial requirements. The authorization must remain in place because a family may need to request more hours or report a decrease in income at any time. However, a parent may request that the local agency end the authorization at any time, and the local agency must comply with this request.

Example 1 (No Subsidy Amount): At her annual renewal in August, Ebony's income places her family at 225% FPL. Ebony has one (1) child, Aiesha, who is 4 years old and attends Bundles of Fun in Brown County for 10 hours per week. Bundles of Fun is a Licensed Group provider.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 200% FPL: \$2.34 ~~2.19~~

Aiesha: 10 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 43.48 (44 monthly hours)

Total Monthly Family Hours: 44

Initial Copayment: \$2.34 ~~2.19~~ x 44 = \$102.96 ~~96.36~~

Additional Copayment (for Exit period): \$117 ~~144~~ (225% FPL for an AG Size of 2)

Total Family Copayment: \$102.96 ~~96.36~~ + \$117 ~~144~~ = \$219.96 ~~240.36~~

Brown County Licensed Group Hourly Maximum for 4yo: \$4.48 ~~4.26~~

Initial subsidy amount (prior to any reductions): \$4.48 ~~4.26~~ x 44 hours per month = \$197.12 ~~187.44~~

In this example, Ebony's total family copayment (\$219.96 ~~240.36~~) exceeds her initial subsidy amount (\$197.12 ~~187.44~~). As CSAW subtracts the total family copayment from the subsidy amount prior to loading the funds, no funds would be loaded to Ebony's EBT card.

Example 2 (Small Subsidy Amount): At her annual renewal in August, Sarafina's income places her family at 225% FPL. Sarafina has one (1) child, LaTanya. LaTanya is 4 years old and attends Reading Rainbow in Dane County for 10 hours per week. Reading Rainbow is a Licensed Group provider.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 200% FPL: \$2.34 ~~2.19~~

LaTanya: 10 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 43.48 (44 monthly hours)

Total Monthly Family Hours: 44

Initial Copayment: \$2.34 ~~2.19~~ x 44 = \$102.96 ~~96.36~~

Additional Copayment (for Exit period): \$117 ~~144~~ (225% FPL for an AG Size of 2)

Total Family Copayment: \$219.96 ~~240.36~~

Dane County Licensed Group Hourly Maximum for 4yo: \$5.79 ~~5.54~~

Initial subsidy amount (prior to any reductions): \$5.79 ~~5.51~~ x 44 = \$254.76 ~~242.44~~

In this example, the initial subsidy amount (\$254.76 ~~242.44~~) is \$34.80 ~~2.08~~ more than the total family copayment (\$219.96 ~~240.36~~). The \$34.80 ~~2.08~~ would be loaded to Sarafina's EBT card. Sarafina will remain eligible in CWW due to continuing to meet financial and nonfinancial requirements, and her authorization must remain in place (unless Sarafina requests that the worker end the authorization).

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.5.2 Copayment Types

The Wisconsin Shares copayment types are as follows:

- **Regular:** The Regular copayment code will base the copayment on the actual income and family size, and the number of children in subsidized child care. This copayment code is used when a family does not qualify for a \$0 or Minimal Copayment Type.
- **Reduced Copayment Types:**
 - **\$0 Copayment Types:**
 - **Foster:** The Foster copayment code applies \$0 copayment reduction to the subsidy amount. This copayment code is used for foster care, subsidized guardianships, and interim caretakers.
 - **Kinship:** The Kinship copayment code applies \$0 copayment reduction to the subsidy amount. This copayment code is used for children who are residing with a relative under a court-ordered placement (with or without the Kinship Care payment).
 - **Learnfare:** The Learnfare copayment code applies \$0 copayment reduction to the subsidy amount. This copayment is used for teen parents participating in the Learnfare program due to their custodial parent participating in W-2.
 - **Minimal Copayment Types (Based on 65% Federal Poverty Level [FPL]):**
 - **Non-Court Ordered Kinship:** The Non-Court Ordered Kinship copayment code applies a copayment that is based on 65% FPL instead of the placement family's actual income level. This copayment code is used when children are residing with a relative and there is no court order for the child's placement.
 - **Teen Parent:** The Teen Parent copayment code applies a copayment that is based on 65% FPL instead of the family's actual income level. This copayment code is used for teen parents under the age of 20 years old who are enrolled in high school or its equivalent.

- **W-2 Employed:** The W-2 Employed copayment code applies a copayment based on 65% FPL instead of the family's actual income level. It is used for W-2 participants who move from a W-2 employment position (Community Service Job (CSJ), W-2 Transition (W-2 T), or Trial Employment Match Program (TEMP) placement) to regular employment.

If a family is within their eligibility period, the authorization worker must not apply any copayment type change that would increase the family's copayment per hour until the next annual eligibility renewal. The authorization worker must enter the new copayment type in CSAW with the day following the next renewal date entered as the Begin Date.

Example 1: Timothy's household consists of himself, a teenage son, Kurt, and Kurt's infant son, Cameron. Timothy is a participant in W-2. The household is found eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care in April and Cameron becomes authorized with a Learnfare copayment type (\$0). Then in June, Timothy discontinues participation in W-2, meaning that Cameron is no longer eligible for the Learnfare copayment type; his new copayment type would be Teen Parent (65%). Since the change from the Learnfare copayment type to the Teen Parent copayment type causes an increase in the copayment amount, the new copayment type shall not take effect until Timothy completes his next annual renewal.

Example 2: Melody and Jennifer are married and have a foster child, Joshua, placed with them. They are found eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care in April, and Joshua is authorized with the Foster copayment type (\$0). In October, Melody and Jennifer adopt Joshua. Since the change from the Foster copayment type to the Regular copayment type causes an increase in the copayment amount, the new copayment type shall not take effect until Melody and Jennifer complete their next annual renewal.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.3 Copayment Periods

After CARES Worker Web (CWW) determines initial eligibility for the Assistance Group (AG), CSAW will assign the AG to one (1) of three (3) Copayment Periods based on their Federal Poverty Level (FPL). CSAW will reassign the AG's Copayment Period at each annual renewal, according to their FPL at that time.

CSAW will automatically determine which Copayment Period to assign the AG based on the AG's FPL and point in the eligibility period (application, ongoing, or renewal). Agency workers must continue to enter reported changes that may affect eligibility or the authorization into CWW and CSAW; CSAW will automatically determine whether the changes entered should affect the copayment per hour. The three (3) Copayment Periods are:

Copayment Period	Assistance Group FPL	Copayment Per Hour Status During 12-month Eligibility Period
Copayment Stabilization	Below 190% FPL	Will not increase

Gradual Phase Out (GPO)	190% - 199% FPL	May increase up to 200% FPL copayment level
Exit	200%+ FPL	May increase

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.3.1 Copayment Stabilization

If an Assistance Group's income is below 190% FPL at any time, CSAW will assign the Assistance Group (AG) to the Copayment Stabilization period. During the Copayment Stabilization period, CSAW will not allow increases in income to increase the AG's copayment per hour until the AG's next eligibility renewal. Once CSAW has assigned the AG to the Copayment Stabilization period, CSAW will not assign the AG to a different Copayment Period until the AG's next eligibility renewal.

Example: At application in June, Brad's income places his AG at 75% FPL. In September, Brad receives a \$1.00/hour raise, which brings his AG's income up to 90% FPL. CSAW will not increase Brad's copayment per hour above the 75% FPL copayment level until his next renewal.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.3.2 Gradual Phase Out (GPO)

If the Assistance Group's income is at or above 190% FPL but below 200% FPL at renewal, CSAW will assign the Assistance Group (AG) to the Gradual Phase Out Copayment Period. During the Gradual Phase Out period, CSAW will increase an AG's copayment per hour starting the month after the agency worker enters the new income in CARES Worker Web (CWW), but the AG's copayment will not exceed the 200% FPL copayment level at any time.

Example: Sari's income places her AG at 193% FPL at renewal in July. CSAW assigns Sari's AG to the Gradual Phase Out period. In October, Sari starts a new job. Her new income places her AG at 205% FPL. Sari's copayment per hour will increase from the 190% FPL copayment level to the 200% FPL copayment level. CSAW will not increase her copayment beyond the 200% FPL copayment level and her AG will remain in the Gradual Phase Out period, regardless of subsequent increases in income, until the next annual renewal.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.3.3 Exit

If the Assistance Group's income is at or above 200% FPL at renewal, CSAW will assign the Assistance Group (AG) to the Exit Copayment Period. During the Exit period, CSAW will increase the AG's copayment starting the month after the agency worker enters the new income in CARES Worker Web (CWW). CSAW determines the copayment during the Exit period by adding an additional family copayment to the total hourly copayment for the 200% FPL copayment level (see 2.5.1.1). CSAW will continue

to increase the AG's additional family copayment following subsequent income increases until the family assumes the full cost of care (see 2.5.1.2).

Example: Gloria's income places her AG at 212% FPL at renewal in July. CSAW assigns Gloria's AG to the Exit period and sets the AG's copayment per hour at the 212% FPL copayment level. In September, Gloria starts a new job, which places her AG at 218% FPL. The AG's copayment increases to the 218% FPL copayment level. In March, Gloria receives a raise for passing her 6-month probationary period, and her AG's income increases to 220% FPL. The AG's copayment increases to the 220% FPL copayment level.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.3.4 Moving Between Copayment Periods

CSAW will only assign an Assistance Group (AG) to a higher Copayment Period at the AG's annual renewal. If an AG's FPL decreases, CSAW will reassign the AG to a lower Copayment Period at any time without regard to the renewal date, but will not reassign the AG to a higher Copayment Period until their next renewal, regardless of subsequent increases in income.

Example 1 (GPO – Stabilization):

At renewal in February, Jack's income places his AG at 192% FPL. CSAW assigns Jack's AG to the Gradual Phase Out period. In April, Jack's employer cuts his work hours to part-time. The resulting income loss places his AG at 115% FPL. CSAW determines Jack's copayment per hour at the 115% FPL copayment level, and reassigns Jack's AG to the Copayment Stabilization period. Even if Jack's work hours increase back to full-time, Jack's AG will remain in the Copayment Stabilization period at the 115% FPL copayment level until his next annual renewal.

Example 2 (Exit – GPO):

LaQuisa's income places her AG at 205% FPL at renewal in October. CSAW assigns LaQuisa's AG to the Exit period. In November, LaQuisa starts a new job. Her new income places her AG at 192% FPL. CSAW decreases LaQuisa's copayment per hour to the 190% FPL copayment level and reassigns LaQuisa's AG to the Gradual Phase Out period. If LaQuisa's income increases after this, CSAW will increase her copayment per hour. However, CSAW will not reassign her AG to the Exit period, and will not increase her copayment per hour beyond the 200% FPL copayment level until her next renewal.

Example 3 (Exit – Stabilization):

At renewal in July, Mai Thao's income places her AG at 206% FPL. CSAW assigns Mai Thao's AG to the Exit period. In September, Mai Thao loses her job, and her AG's income decreases to \$0. Mai Thao's worker offers her the Approved Activity Search period (ACTS), which she accepts. CSAW reduces Mai Thao's copayment per hour to the 65% FPL copayment level, and reassigns Mai Thao's AG to the Stabilization period.

In November, Mai Thao starts a new job, and her AG's income increases to 210% FPL. Mai Thao remains in the Copayment Stabilization period, and her copayment remains at the 65% FPL copayment level until her next renewal.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.4 Subsidy Calculation

The variables as described below are components of the subsidy calculation. When these factors change, the subsidy amount can also change.

- The family's Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which is based on the Assistance Group (AG) size and household income;
- The AG's Copayment Period (see 2.5.3);
- Monthly Authorization hours: The average weekly authorized hours, capped at 35 hours (the full-time cap), converted to a monthly number, plus Scheduled School Closed Hours and Inclement Weather Hours
- Copayment Type (see 2.5.2);
- Capped subsidy: The subsidy is capped at the lowest of the following three (3) amounts.
 - Initial Hourly Amount;
 - Provider Price; and
 - Monthly maximum from the Wisconsin Shares Subsidy Maximum Rates (see 2.4.5).
- Above Full-Time Hours: The number of average weekly hours above 50 and up to 75 per week, converted to a monthly number. This additional amount is added after the capped subsidy comparison.
- Adjustments: YoungStar Quality Adjustment (see 3.4.2.5) or Out of State Accredited Adjustment (see 2.1.1.4)

For further details on the subsidy calculation, see the CSAW Authorizations User Guide.

This section last updated 10/01/2018

2.5.5 Changes in Subsidy Amounts during the Eligibility Period

The subsidy amount will remain stable during the 12-month eligibility period with a few exceptions.

1. CWW Changes

The following are changes the agency worker makes in CWW that could impact the subsidy amount.

Changes Related to the Case

- **Change in Assistance Group (AG) or Income:** A change to the case's Assistance Group composition or income:

- Can change the case's Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the next month's calculations, which may or may not impact the copayment per hour based on Copayment Period (see 2.5.3).
- Will not result in a higher Copayment Period.
- **Change in Child Placement Status:** A change in the child's relationship to the parent, such as the adoption of a foster child, will not result in a higher copayment (see 2.5.2) until the next eligibility renewal.

Process: When an agency worker enters changes into CWW, the information will interface with CSAW and the subsidy amount for future months will recalculate. The new subsidy amount will be effective the first day of the month after the change was entered and confirmed in CWW or the first of the recurring month if the change was entered after Adverse Action in CWW. If it is after Adverse Action and the change must take effect the immediately following month in order for CWW to correctly calculate income and AG size and CSAW to correctly calculate the copayment, agency workers must run with dates to ensure the change takes effect for the correct month (see 1.8.4).

2. CSAW Changes

The following are changes the agency worker makes in CSAW that could impact the subsidy amount. Before making a change to a child's authorization, see Section 2.4.2.

Changes to Authorizations

- **Change in Subsidized Hours:** A change in subsidized hours for any child, including adding a new authorization, deleting an existing authorization, or ending an authorization (either by allowing the authorization to end systematically or by the authorization worker manually ending the authorization):
 - Can impact the Initial Hourly Amount (see 2.5.4); the family copayment amount (see 2.5.1); the copayment distribution among children; and the Provider Price Type used in the subsidy calculation (i.e., full- or part-time).
 - Will not impact the family's copayment per hour.

Note: If the child's copayment has already reached the 152 hour monthly cap (see 2.5.1), no additional copayment will be charged.

- **Change in Providers:** A change in providers will impact the provider price that is used in the subsidy calculation. If the new provider is in a different county/tribe than the previous provider, the subsidy calculation will use the Maximum Rates for the new county/tribe (see 2.4.5).

Changes Related to a Child

- **Change in Child Age:** A change in the child's age will not change the age bracket used for Provider Price or Maximum Rates (see 2.4.5) until the next eligibility renewal.

- **Special Needs Inclusion Rates:** The expiration of a child’s Special Needs Inclusion Rate form (see 2.4.7.1) will not result in the removal of an “Override (Special Need)” Price. Unless the family indicates that they no longer need the override price, the override price for the child to attend that particular provider will continue until the next eligibility renewal.

Changes Related to the Provider

- **New Provider Prices:** When a child care provider submits new prices, the agency worker must enter the new prices and the subsidy calculation will use the new provider’s price for the next month’s calculations. For information about entering new Provider Prices, see the CSAW Child Care Provider Screens User Guide.
- **Provider Discounts:** When a child care provider gives a family a discounted price for an ongoing authorization, the agency worker must apply the discounted price to authorizations as of the first of the next month, and the subsidy calculation will use the discounted price instead of the provider’s regular price. For information about entering a Provider Price discount, see the CSAW Authorizations User Guide.
- **Provider YoungStar Changes:** If a provider’s YoungStar rating increases from a 2 star rating, the removal of the negative adjustment to the family’s subsidy will be applied at the beginning of the next month. If a provider’s YoungStar rating decreases to a 2 star rating, it will not result in a negative adjustment to the family’s subsidy until the next renewal. Changes in YoungStar ratings can result in a decrease or increase to the provider’s YoungStar incentive as of the effective date of the rating change.
- **Provider Regulation Changes:** A change in the provider’s regulation category, such as a change from certified to licensed or vice versa, can affect the provider’s category that is used in the subsidy calculation at the beginning of the next month.

Note: For information about how changes in Licensing/Certification can affect the authorization, please see [Changes in Licensing/Certification – Impact on Other Child Care Programs \(DCF-P-5271\)](#) located online on the [Child Care User Guides page of the DCF Internet](#).

3. Departmental Mass Changes

The Department makes the following changes that could impact the subsidy amount.

Federal Poverty Level and/or Copayment Schedule

The annual updates to the FPLs used in eligibility determination and copayment calculation:

- **Can** result in a change to the family’s FPL level and resulting copayment per hour, and/or the family moving to a lower copayment period as of the effective date of the annual updates.

- **Cannot** result in the family moving to a higher copayment period.

Maximum Rates

An update to the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Maximum Rates can impact the Maximum Rates (monthly maximum and hourly maximum) used for the subsidy calculation (see 2.4.5) as of the effective date of the new Maximum Rates.

Note: New FPL numbers and Maximum Rates are published with an effective date of the first of the following month.

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.5.6 Subsidy Availability

The Wisconsin Shares subsidy is loaded the night before the first day of the following month. When an authorization is written during a current month, the subsidy is loaded to the EBT card the night the authorization was written.

The subsidy is available for use up to 90 calendar days from the date the funds were loaded to the parent's EBT Card. Any amount not expended by the ninetieth day will be returned to the state.

This section last updated 01/31/2017

2.6 Parent Share

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program is intended to help low-income parents with the cost of child care, and is not intended to cover the full cost of child care. A parent may choose a child care provider whose price is higher than the total Wisconsin Shares Child Care subsidy amount. The parent has the responsibility to know and pay the provider the difference between the Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount and the provider price. This balance is referred to as the "parent share."

Example: At her annual renewal in September, Destiny's income places her family at 175% FPL. Destiny has two (2) children, Laylah and Malik, who attend Smiles R Us in Dunn County for 25 hours per week each. Laylah is 4 years old and Malik is 2 years old. Smiles R Us is a Licensed Group center.

Destiny is responsible for paying the provider the difference between the subsidy amount and the amount the provider actually charges. Destiny's monthly subsidy amount for both children is \$~~679.07~~ ~~642.04~~ and the provider's actual price for both children as recorded in CSAW is \$1,478.38, so $\$1,478.38 - \$\del{679.07} \del{642.04} = \$\del{799.31} \del{836.37}$. Destiny can expect to pay a total "parent share" of \$~~799.31~~ ~~836.37~~ to the provider for the month. The provider may choose to charge Destiny less than their listed provider price, but this is between the provider and Destiny to work out.

The calculation details are:

Copayment Per Hour for 175% FPL: \$~~1.24~~ ~~1.20~~

Laylah's Monthly Hours: 25 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 108.70 (109) hours per month

Malik's Monthly Hours: 25 hours per week x 4.348125 weeks per month = 108.70 (109) hours per month

Total Family Hours: 109 + 109 = 218

Total Family Copayment: \$~~1.24~~ ~~1.20~~ x 218 = \$~~270.32~~ ~~261.60~~

Amount distributed to each child: \$~~135.16~~ ~~130.80~~ (50% of the sum is applied to each child because each are enrolled for the same number of hours)

Laylah's Authorization: 109 hours per month

Dunn County Licensed Group Hourly Maximum for 4yo: \$~~4.14~~ ~~3.94~~

Initial subsidy amount: \$~~4.14~~ ~~3.94~~ x 109 hours per month = \$~~451.26~~ ~~429.46~~

Monthly Maximum for Licensed Group for 4yo in Dunn County: \$~~630.05~~ ~~600.05~~

Monthly Provider Price for 4yo at Smiles R Us: \$165/week x 4.348125 = \$717.45

Laylah's Subsidy Amount after Copayment: \$~~451.26~~ ~~429.46~~ - \$~~135.16~~ ~~130.80~~ = \$~~316.10~~ ~~298.66~~

Expected Parent Share for Laylah: \$717.45 - \$~~316.10~~ ~~298.66~~ = \$~~401.35~~ ~~418.79~~

Malik's Authorization: 109 hours per month

Dunn County Licensed Group Hourly Rate for 2yo: \$~~4.57~~ ~~4.35~~

Initial subsidy amount: \$~~4.57~~ ~~4.35~~ x 109 hours per month = \$~~498.13~~ ~~474.15~~

Monthly Agency Ceiling for Licensed Group for 2yo in Dunn County: \$~~695.49~~ ~~630.48~~

Monthly Provider Price for 2yo at Smiles R Us: \$175/week x 4.348125 = \$760.93

Malik's Subsidy Amount after Copayment: \$~~498.13~~ ~~474.15~~ - \$~~135.16~~ ~~130.80~~ = \$~~362.97~~ ~~343.35~~

Expected Parent Share for Malik: \$760.93 - \$~~362.97~~ ~~343.35~~ = \$~~397.96~~ ~~417.58~~

This section last updated 03/01/2019

2.7 Authorization Correspondence

2.7.1 Parent Authorization Notices

Eligible parents with completed authorizations will receive a Quarterly Subsidy Authorization Notice which contains three (3) months of detailed authorization information. The authorization notice contains the following detailed information:

- Child's name;
- Date of birth;
- FIS Child ID;
- Child care provider name, provider number and location number;
- FIS provider ID;
- Monthly authorization effective periods;
- Monthly authorized hours; and
- Monthly Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount.

The Quarterly Subsidy Authorization Notice will be mailed approximately 10 calendar days before the beginning of the next quarter, as follows:

- **First Quarter:** Mailed approximately December 20 for the months of January, February, March.
- **Second Quarter:** Mailed approximately March 20 for the months of April, May, June.
- **Third Quarter:** Mailed approximately June 20 for the months of July, August, September.
- **Fourth Quarter:** Mailed approximately September 20 for the months of October, November, December.

The Quarterly Subsidy Authorization Notice also provides a forecast of the next 12 months indicating the months for which an authorization is in place.

When authorizations are updated after the notice cutoff date, approximately 10 calendar days before the end of the month, but before the last business day of the month, an updated quarterly authorization notice will be sent.

Example 1: After the first quarter notice was mailed on December 20, on January 15 there is a change to the authorization for the month of February. An updated quarterly authorization notice will be mailed on January 20.

Example 2: The first quarter notice was mailed on December 20 and after January 20 (10 days before the end of the month), there is a change to the authorization for the month of February. An updated quarterly authorization notice will be generated the day of the authorization change.

Example 3: An authorization is in place from January through December, but in January, the worker takes action to change the end of the authorization on August 31. The second-quarter notice will include that change.

Authorization Ending Language

When an authorization ends and a new authorization has not been created in CSAW, an updated Quarterly Subsidy Authorization Notice may be mailed to the parent that includes authorization ending language to inform the parent that a future authorization for their child(ren) does not exist.

In scenario 1, the authorization is naturally ending after the February monthly notice cutoff date and no future authorization exists; therefore, an updated quarterly authorization notice with the new authorization ending language will be sent.

Scenario 1:

- On 10/24/17, an authorization is created for 11/1/17 – 3/15/18. The 2017 fourth quarter authorization notice is sent on this date for October, November, and December.
- On 12/20/17, the authorization is still in place for 11/1/17 – 3/15/18. The 2018 first quarter authorization notice is sent on this date for January, February, and March.
- On 2/19/18, the authorization is still in place for 11/1/17 - 3/15/18. No authorization exists after 3/15/18 so the same 2018 first quarter notice is re-sent and now includes the new authorization ending language.

In scenario 2, eligibility is ended in CARES Worker Web (CWW) after the February monthly notice cutoff date; therefore, an updated quarterly notice will be sent with the new authorization ending language.

Scenario 2:

- On 10/27/17, an authorization is created for 11/1/17 – 7/15/18. The 2017 fourth quarter authorization notice is sent on this date for October, November, and December.
- On 12/20/17, the authorization is still in place for 11/1/17 – 7/15/18. The 2018 first quarter authorization notice is sent on this date for January, February, and March.
- On 2/19/18, the authorization is still in place for 11/1/17 - 7/15/18. Batch ACT closes Child Care in CWW and ends the authorization as of 2/28/18. No authorization exists after 2/28/18, so the 2018 first quarter notice is re-sent and now includes the new authorization ending language.

In scenario 3, the authorization ends after the April monthly notice cutoff date and there is no future authorization; therefore, an updated 2018 second quarter notice will be sent and include the new authorization ending language.

Scenario 3:

- On 3/15/18, a retro-authorization is created for 3/1/18 – 7/31/18. The 2018 first quarter notice is sent on this date for January, February, and March.
- On 3/20/18 the authorization is still in place for 3/1/18 – 7/31/18. The quarterly authorization notice is run on this date; therefore, the 2018 second quarter notice is sent out for April, May, and June.
- On 4/20/18, the authorization worker changes the authorization to 3/1/18 – 4/30/18. The 2018 first quarter notice and the 2018 second quarter notices were sent out on 3/15/18 and 3/20/18. The authorization ends after the monthly notice run date of 4/20/18 and there is no future authorization, so the same 2018 second quarter notice is re-sent and now includes the new authorization ending language.

In scenario 4, the authorization ends prior to the January monthly notice cutoff date; therefore, no updated quarterly authorization notice will be sent.

Scenario 4:

- On 11/1/17, an authorization is created for 11/15/17 – 1/20/18 and for 3/19/18 – 6/8/18. The 2017 fourth quarter notice is sent on this date for October, November, and December.
- On 12/20/17, the authorization is still in place for 11/15/17 – 1/20/18 and for 3/19/18 – 6/8/18. The quarterly authorization notice is run on this date; therefore, the 2018 first quarter notice for January, February, and March is mailed.
- On 1/22/18, at the parent's request, the authorization worker deletes the 3/19/18 – 6/8/18 authorization. This is the date of the monthly notice run. The authorization ended prior to the monthly notice run and no future authorization exists; therefore, no updated authorization notice will be sent.

Changes can be made to the completed authorizations before or after the scheduled quarterly notices are mailed, but they must be made before the last business day prior to the authorization month. If they are not made by that day, then the changes must be made in PLBC.

When a change is made to a current month's authorization or for a past month when done in PLBC, an updated quarterly authorization notice will be generated that day and will include an additional section listing the details of the change.

This section last updated 08/01/2018

2.7.2 Authorization Information for Child Care Providers

The authorization information will be mailed to providers on the last business day of each month. The authorization information letter will contain the following:

- All current and future authorizations;
- Any backdated authorizations added since the last notice was sent; and
- Any authorizations that were deleted or ended by the authorization worker or the system, and that were previously listed in an earlier notice.

The letter will indicate when the dates of the authorization have been changed.

The child care Provider Authorization letter does not include payment or authorized hour information. The parent is responsible for discussing the cost of child care, agreed upon payment dates, and hours per week the child will be attending the child care program. The Parent Authorization Notice provides the parent with the subsidy amount for each month and the number of hours that were used in the subsidy calculation. The parent is responsible for initiating payment to the child care provider and knowing the amount of child care that their subsidy will purchase. The parent is responsible for all child care costs that are above the subsidy amount each month.

This section last updated 10/30/2017