



Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program

Policy Manual – Chapter 3 EBT Payments

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Division of Early Care and Education

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Acronyms

ARF – Attendance Report Form
BPI – Bureau of Program Integrity
BRITS – Benefit Recovery Investigation Tracking System
BV – Benefit Recovery
CARES – Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support
CC – Child Care
CCR&Rs – Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies
CSAW – Child Care Statewide Administration on the Web
CWW – CARES Worker Web
DCF – Department of Children and Families
EBT – Electronic Benefit Transfer
EBT CSAW – EBT Child Care Statewide Administration on the Web
FIS – Fidelity Information Services
IPV – Intentional Program Violation
IVR – Interactive Voice Response
MECA – Milwaukee Early Care Administration
MilES – Milwaukee Enrollment Services
OLC – Office of Legal Counsel
PLBC – Post Load Benefit Change
PIN – Personal Identification Number
POS – Point of Sale device
RFA – Request for Assistance
SISO – Sign-in/ Sign-out Attendance Sheets
WI – Wisconsin

Purpose

This chapter focuses on MyWICChildCare policies and procedures as it relates to the proper administration of the Wisconsin Shares program. Much of the chapter focuses on how parents and providers can accomplish various tasks; however, it is vital that agencies have this information in order to answer questions as they arise from Wisconsin Shares participants. Thus, this chapter serves as a centralized location for MyWICChildCare-related payment procedures, and contains information that has been communicated to parents and providers separately.

3.1 Overview: MyWICChildCare Initiative Overview

MyWICChildCare modernizes how Wisconsin Shares parents pay for child care through the use of an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card, which is managed by Fidelity Information Services (FIS). This initiative supports a payment model similar to that of private pay parents who utilize child care. The MyWICChildCare initiative issues eligible parents an EBT card that has their approved child care subsidy loaded onto it monthly. Under this model, the relationship shifts from one that is between the child care provider and the state, to a relationship between the child care provider and the parent. This shift promotes parental responsibility by directly involving parents in the planning and scheduling of child care payments for their children.

Benefits to the MyWICChildCare initiative include:

- 1) Expanding parental responsibility for payments to providers and including the ability to pay in advance for services
- 2) Increasing the speed of payment to providers by parents
- 3) Increasing access to information for both parents and providers
- 4) Empowering parents to directly engage their provider regarding the cost of care
- 5) Simplifying the payment and billing process
- 6) Limiting child care provider's opportunities to over-bill

3.1.1 Implementation of the MyWICChildCare Initiative

The MyWICChildCare will be implemented in three phases effective the following dates:

- **Phase 1 (October of 2016):** The counties impacted will include Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau, Vernon, and La Crosse counties. Beginning in October, these counties will follow the MyWICChildCare initiative program policy and procedures as established in the [Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual](#).
- **Phase 2 (February 2017):** All Balance of State counties and tribes (except Milwaukee). In February of 2017, all counties and tribes (except Milwaukee) will participate in MyWICChildCare and adhere to the program policy and policy procedures as established in the [Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual](#).
- **Phase 3 (April 2017):** Milwaukee county. In April of 2017, Milwaukee County will participate in MyWICChildCare and adhere to the program policy and policy procedures as established in the [Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual](#).

The policies described in this chapter will become effective on those dates.

3.1.2 Overview of Process

Below is a diagram that demonstrates the work flow from determining parent eligibility to the payment of providers. This overview describes the steps necessary to be completed

by agency workers and parents in order to successfully participate in the MyWIChildCare program.

MyWIChildCare EBT Process

1. The parent applies for Wisconsin Shares and is determined to be eligible.
2. The child care worker and parent determine the family's child care needs.
3. The parent identifies the provider (or providers) that will care for the child(ren).
 - a. The provider must be regulated, participate in YoungStar, and have signed an FIS agreement.
4. The worker enters the parent's work schedule and the child care need schedule into EBT CSAW and selects the child care provider.
5. An EBT Authorization is created and communicated to the parent, FIS, and the provider.
6. FIS mails the EBT card to the parent.
7. The parent activates the EBT card and selects a PIN.
8. DCF sends the subsidy amount to the EBT vendor (FIS) to load to the parent's EBT card on the first of each month.
9. The parent uses the EBT card to initiate the child care payment(s) to their selected provider(s). Proof of the transaction is immediate.
10. FIS issues payment transactions directly to the provider(s)' bank account within two to three banking business days.

3.2 What is EBT?

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) is a program using an electronic method to disburse government **subsidy funds** to eligible cardholders using plastic debit card technology.

Fidelity Information Services (FIS) is the current vendor for the Wisconsin Shares Program.

3.2.1 How EBT Works

The MyWisconsinChildCare initiative utilizes EBT technology to issue child care **subsidy** to eligible cardholders electronically. Child care cardholders are issued a MyWIChildCare card to access their allotted child care subsidy funds through the phone, internet, or point of sale (POS) device provided by FIS.

After the card is swiped or the card number is entered, the cardholder enters his or her Personal Identification Number (PIN). A PIN is a four-digit number selected by the cardholder. PINs are used with the MyWIChildCare card to prevent unauthorized use of the card. The EBT system cannot process and approve a transaction without the correct PIN entry.

Every time a cardholder uses their card to make a purchase, he or she can easily check the balance in the account through the Parent Portal, POS device, or through the FIS Customer Service line.

Note: A [Parent Tutorial](http://paymenttraining.articulate-online.com/p/6342043222) (http://paymenttraining.articulate-online.com/p/6342043222) has been created on how to complete the necessary steps for each of these transactions.

Note: If the requested amount of purchase exceeds the account balance, the transaction will be denied. Instruct the cardholder that he or she must enter the amount that should be deducted from the MyWICildCare card, rather than the full purchase price if the purchase amount will exceed the balance in the account. The main reason transactions are denied is due to insufficient funds.

3.2.2 MyWICildCare Card

Cardholder's use MyWICildCare cards to access their Wisconsin Shares subsidy through an EBT (electronic benefit transfer) system.

- EBT accounts are set up on the EBT vendor system and subsidy funds are available to the cardholder the following day after an authorization is issued.
- New EBT cardholder information is sent to the EBT vendor on a nightly basis.
- The card will take approximately one week to arrive in the mail.
- A cardholder's balance is stored on the EBT system- NOT on the card.
- Subsidy balances are printed on the customer receipt, available by calling the FIS Customer Service Number, or through the Parent Portal.

3.2.2.1 MyWICildCare Card Mailer

MyWICildCare cards are mailed to MyWICildCare cardholders on the card mailer. The MyWICildCare EBT card mailer provides cardholders with information about **subsidy** issuance dates; how to **activate** the card; how to use the card; how to protect the card from being lost, stolen, or damaged; and the MyWICildCare card customer service phone number.

3.2.2.2 Subsidy Availability

Subsidy issued to new cardholders will be available the day after the authorization is issued.

Subsidy amounts for current cardholders will be available the first of the month.

3.2.3 EBT CSAW Navigation

MyWICildCare card information and transaction data can be found in EBT CSAW. Please see the EBT CSAW Authorization User Guide for additional details on each screen.

3.3 Parent-Related EBT Information

3.3.1 Parent Requirements to Participate

Parents may participate in Wisconsin Shares if they have been determined to be eligible and issued an authorization. For information regarding eligibility and authorizations, see the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Policy Manuals Chapters 1 and 2.

3.3.2 MyWICChildCare Card Issuance

Each family will receive an EBT card from the EBT contractor, Fidelity Information Services (FIS), after an initial authorization has been created and verified. The primary person on the case will receive the card. One card will be issued per family, not per child. Multiple authorizations for multiple children are able to be maintained on one MyWICChildCare card.

3.3.2.1 Initial Card Issuance

The EBT vendor will mail the card to the cardholder address listed in CWW. When the card has been received, the cardholder must activate the card and select a PIN before the card can be used to access the Wisconsin Shares subsidy. The card mailer that protects the card includes the phone number to call (1-877-201-7601), to select a PIN.

The cardholder will be asked for the last four digits of their Social Security Number in order to activate their card. If the cardholder does not have a Social Security Number, they are directed to contact their local agency. The agency should supply the parent with their client PIN number from Cares Worker Web (CWW) to enter in lieu of their Social Security Number. This is located on the Application Entry – Case Information – Summary page.

A new card will not be reissued for a client returning to Wisconsin Shares after a period of ineligibility, unless the card is reported as lost or stolen. This same card will be registered for the client if a new authorization is granted. If an agency worker anticipates that eligibility or an authorization will be granted soon, advise the client not to lose or throw away their card. If the client loses their card, the cardholder must contact FIS Customer Service (1-877-201-7601) to order a replacement card.

3.3.2.2 Following the MyWICChildCare Commencement

New or updated client information is shared automatically with FIS daily. Thus, new client's EBT card(s) will be mailed the same or next day. FIS will generate the EBT cards and mail it to the client with the address listed in CWW. Cardholders will typically receive their card within one week.

During the one week time period while the cardholder is waiting to receive their MyWICChildCare card, the parent and provider should discuss the provider's payment policies and verify that the authorization was created for the correct provider (see 3.3.4.1).

Note: The intention of Wisconsin Shares is for the funds to be applied to care provided from the start of the authorization. If a client has an amount due from a previous month not covered by Wisconsin Shares, they will need to pay this out of pocket.

3.3.2.3 If a Card Does Not Arrive

There are various reasons why a parent's EBT card may not arrive at their home. It may be that an authorization was not issued, the address was incorrect (undeliverable card), or that there was an error with the provider. Steps for workers for each process are described below:

1. Log in to EBT CSAW and open the case.
2. Verify that the authorization was processed. If it was processed, proceed to Step 3. If the authorization is pending, inform the client of the necessary steps to complete in order to process the authorization.
3. Locate the Account/Card Details page on the side bar, and open the Account/Card Details page.
4. Select the Replace/Reissue Card page. This page documents whether or not a card has been listed as undeliverable.
 - a. If the card is listed as undeliverable, this means that the card has been returned to FIS as undeliverable mail.
 - i. Verify the correct address with the client, and select the send again button on the Replace/Reissue Card page.
Note: This will only work if the address has been updated in EBT CSAW.
 - b. If the card is listed as delivered, verify the address listed on the account with the client. If it is correct, verify that the selected provider has an FIS contract. If all of the above information is correct, direct the parent to contact FIS.
 - i. If the address is incorrect, correct the address and select the send again button on the Replace/Reissue Card page.

If the authorization was not processed and is listed as pending, please refer to the Wisconsin Shares [EBT CSAW Authorizations](#) User Guide.

3.3.3 PIN Selection and Activation

The parent must create a Personal Identification Number (PIN) in order to activate their MyWICChildCare card and access their **subsidy**. A PIN is a secret four-digit number created by the parent to access their card. Have cardholders choose a PIN that is easy to remember, but not easily guessed. Do not suggest a PIN to a cardholder. Suggest ways to select a PIN. Point out to cardholders that they should not record the PIN in a place that someone else might see (such as written on the card). Remind cardholders that with the PIN and the card, anyone can access the subsidy funds; thus, the cardholders should not tell anyone their PIN.

Cardholders are not required to show any identification when accessing their subsidy. The PIN is used as an electronic signature.

Cardholders are fully responsible for their EBT account. If they choose to give their PIN number to a friend or relative and the funds in their account are depleted, the subsidy funds will not be replaced.

Once the card is received, the cardholder must activate it and select a PIN. Two options are available for activation and PIN creation:

- Call 1-877-201-7601 or
- Log in to www.ebtEDGE.com

Note: The customer service number above for FIS is for client assistance. For provider customer service, contact 1-877-201-7753.

3.3.3.1 Updating a PIN

At any time the parent believes that their PIN may have been compromised, or if the parent has forgotten their PIN, the parent should immediately contact FIS to update their information. The parent may either call the below number or log on to ebtEDGE.com to change their PIN. The phone number and website listed will assist the parent with step-by-step directions on changing their PIN.

- Call 1-877-201-7601 or
- Log in to www.ebtEDGE.com

Note: If an agency suspects that a provider is in possession of the parents' cards, or has compromised the parents' PINs, the agency should reset the parents' PINs. The agency must then notify each of the parents that they will need to create a new PIN.

3.3.3.2 Locking a PIN

If the cardholder attempts four consecutive invalid PIN entries, the EBT vendor system will suspend card access until 12:01 a.m. Central time the next day. A lock notification will appear on the device for which the client is entering the PIN. Advise the client to call FIS through the automated phone line for assistance, or wait until midnight when the lock is automatically removed, so that he or she will not lose access to his or her subsidy for the rest of the day.

3.3.4 Parent Payment Procedure and Policies

Parents will be issued child care subsidy funds to their EBT card monthly in order to pay their provider. These funds will become available the first day of each month.

Note: The parent is not required to disclose their subsidy amount to their provider. This is strictly at the discretion of each parent.

3.3.4.1 Prior to First Payment

Parents should verify that they have been authorized to the correct provider and location prior to issuing the first payment. Parents may verify the authorization by checking:

1. The [Parent Portal](https://MyWICChildCareparents.wisconsin.gov) (<https://MyWICChildCareparents.wisconsin.gov>) website that contains information regarding the authorized hours, subsidy amount, and provider location. If a parent is unable to access the Parent Portal, they should speak with their selected provider and verify that their child is authorized for that location. For provider verification processes, see 3.4.2.3.
2. Using ebtEDGE.com, a website operated by FIS that documents parent's transaction information.
3. Asking their provider: If the provider reports to the parent that the child is not authorized to their location, the parent should call their local agency. If a payment has already been issued to the incorrect provider, an overpayment/adjustment will be assessed. See 4.5 for details.

3.3.4.2 How to Check Account Balances

It is vital that parents always know their account balance prior to using their MyWICChildCare card. Parents may check their account balances either online, by telephone, or by swiping their MyWICChildCare card at their provider's POS terminal.

3.3.4.2.1 How to Check an Account Balance by Telephone

Call the MyWICChildCare Card Customer Service at 1-877-201-7601, which is available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week. Follow the automated instructions to learn the account balance.

3.3.4.2.2 How to Check an Account Balance Online

Log in to the Parent Portal. Select the My Account button. The account balance can be located in the far right hand column called "Balance."

3.3.4.2.3 How to Check an Account Balance through a POS Terminal

Swipe their card at the POS terminal located at their provider's facility (if available). Enter the PIN, and select Balance Inquiry.

3.3.4.3 Payment to Providers Options

Parents are responsible for issuing payments to their providers. There are three ways a parent may issue payment to their provider. The payment procedures listed below are to be completed by the parents. Agency workers should know the process in case of an assistance call, but the payment procedure should NEVER be completed by the agency worker or provider for the parent, unless under approved circumstances (such as parent training led by agencies).

~~It is strongly recommended that parents do not share their account balance or monthly subsidy amount with anyone.~~ Parents may use their discretion to determine who (if anyone) they share this information with.

Wisconsin Shares is a subsidy program; therefore each parent is required to pay any remaining costs out of pocket to their provider. Payment disputes will not be resolved by the Department or local agencies, see section 3.3.4.6 for details.

Note: A [Parent Tutorial](http://paymenttraining.articulate-online.com/p/6342043222) (<http://paymenttraining.articulate-online.com/p/6342043222>) has been created on how to complete the necessary steps for each of these transactions.

3.3.4.3.1 Online Payments

Go to ebtEDGE.com and select the EBT Cardholders Portal to make a payment. Parents can access the website via a desktop computer, tablet, or mobile phone to process or review payments. This service is provided at no cost to parents and may be used 24 hours per day, seven (7) days a week. A parent may log onto the website using their card number and password. The username is the 16-digit MyWICChildCare card number, and the password will be their selected PIN. The parent will then be able to see information regarding their authorization, including the number of hours, the authorized provider, etc.

In order to pay their provider, the parent must select which of their authorized children they would like to submit payment for, which provider should receive the payment (if more than one), and how much the payment should be. A separate payment transaction will need to occur for each authorized child on the case and/or provider and/or provider location. The provider will be identified only by their FIS Identification Number. The Parent Portal can confirm if the correct provider has been authorized. At the conclusion of this process, the parent will receive a confirmation number that they should keep in case of payment disputes between the provider and parent.

Note: A [Parent Portal Tutorial \(https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/elearning/mwcc-parentportal/story_html5.html\)](https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/elearning/mwcc-parentportal/story_html5.html) has been created to demonstrate how the Parent Portal functions, and provides some guidance on how to make payments through the Parent Portal.

Online Payment Procedure (ebtEDGE)

1. Log on to ebtEDGE.com and select the Cardholder Portal. Log in using the 16-digit card number and PIN.
2. Click Child Care Payment Transfer.
3. Select the child and the Provider's ID number.
4. Enter the amount to pay the provider.
5. Verify that the amount displayed is correct.
6. Enter the PIN and press enter.
7. Print the confirmation page or write down the child, provider, tracking number, the amount of the payment, the date and the time that the payment was made for record keeping purposes.

3.3.4.3.2 Telephone Payments

Parents can also utilize the telephone-based Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to make a payment by calling 1-877-201-7601. This system is provided at no cost to parents and is available 24 hours per day, seven (7) days a week. The phone number is also located on the back of their MyWICChildCare card.

The cardholder will be prompted to enter their card number and PIN. Cardholders should continue to follow the instructions on the phone. Each authorized child and/or provider and/or provider location will require a separate payment transaction. The provider will only be identified by their FIS Identification Number. At the conclusion of this process, the parent will receive a confirmation number that should be maintained in case of payment disputes between the provider and parent.

Telephone Payment Procedure

1. Call 1-877-201-7601.
2. Enter the 16-digit card number found on the front of the MyWICChildCare card and the PIN.
3. Listen to the balance, and then select "Child Care."
4. Select "transfer funds to your child care provider."
5. When asked, choose the child by their "Child ID number."
6. Choose the Provider's ID number. Enter the child care subsidy amount to transfer to the provider, if correct, press 1.
7. Write down the child, provider, tracking number, the amount of the payment, and the date and time you made the payment for your records.

3.3.4.3.3 POS Payment

Parents can also use the POS terminal at their provider's location (if available) to issue payments to their provider. This terminal functions similarly to a credit card machine. However, there are notable differences. Please note that MyWICChildCare cards will only operate on POS terminals provided by the EBT vendor. Any third party POS terminals will not be able to process MyWICChildCare cards.

To complete a payment via the POS device, the parent must swipe their card and enter their PIN. Next, they must select the child they would like to issue payment for. Then, the parent will enter the amount to be withdrawn from the card, and swipe the card. If the funds are available, a receipt will print out for both the parent and the provider. Both parties should maintain their respective receipts for their records in case of payment disputes.

POS Payment Procedure

1. Swipe the card through the POS terminal.
2. Enter PIN.
3. Choose a child from the screen.
4. Enter the amount of the child care payment.
5. Obtain a receipt from the provider. The receipt will not show the account balance, but a parent may complete a balance inquiry on the POS terminal.

Note: Parents and providers are responsible for handling their own payment disputes. The agency will take no role in the dispute process. See section 3.3.4.6 for more details.

3.3.4.4 Expiration of Funds

Any remaining balance for a month, if not utilized, will be carried over to the following month. Funds are used in a last in–first out format. If the subsidy amounts are not used within 90 days from the date they were issued, the funds will be removed from the card. The unused funds removed from the account after 90 days will not be re-issued.

As an agency worker, if you receive a call regarding expired funds, inform the parent of the age-off rule and that the funds may not be re-issued. See Chapter 2, Section 2.7 in the Child Care Subsidy Program Manuals for additional information.

An Expunged Funds report will be available in WebI on a monthly basis in 2017. Unused funds for three (3) or more months should result in the pending of the case in order to assess whether the authorization should be ended due to lack of utilization.

Example: A parent receives their first subsidy load on March 1 for \$300. They use \$250 of the \$300 for March. On April 1, they receive their next subsidy load of \$300. Their total balance at this point is \$350 (\$50 from March, and \$300 from April). When the parent goes to issue their next payment to the provider, the amount will be taken out of the April funds, rather than the remaining March funds. To access the remaining March funds, the parent will have to use all of their April balance first.

If the parent makes a \$325 payment, \$300 will be removed from the April balance, and \$25 will be removed from the remaining March balance. This will leave \$25 remaining from the March funds. If the parent does not use the March funds, by June 1st (90 days after issuance) these funds will be removed from the card.

Note: If a provider believes they have been overpaid, they should contact their local authorizing agency to discuss why this may have occurred, and how the provider may voluntarily return those funds. For how providers may voluntarily return funds, see 4.12.1.1.

3.3.4.5 Overpayment to Providers

If the parent discovers that they have overpaid their provider, they should first discuss the payment discrepancy with their provider. They should determine how the error occurred, and how to handle the discrepancy. If the parent has paid the wrong provider, they should alert the agency immediately.

Note: If a provider believes they have been overpaid, they should contact their local authorizing agency to discuss why this may have occurred, and how the provider may voluntarily return those funds. For how providers may voluntarily return funds, see 4.12.1.1.

3.3.4.6 Payment Disputes

The Department and local agencies are not responsible for resolving payment disputes. Payment disputes must be resolved by the parent and provider. Resolution should involve discussion on how the error was made, how to correct the error, and how to prevent the recurrence.

3.3.5 Parent Policies

Parents are responsible for communicating with their child care provider to establish payment procedures and expectations. Below is a recommended list of information that parents should obtain about their provider's policies.

3.3.5.1 Establish the Cost for Child Care

Parents are responsible for knowing their provider's child care rates (weekly/biweekly/monthly) and their monthly subsidy amount. The Wisconsin Shares subsidy amount does not cover 100% of the providers' rate. This difference is the Parent Share. Parents are responsible for paying all additional costs not covered by the subsidy.

Note: Refer parents and providers with payment concerns to their provider agreement. See Appendix 1 for a Parent-Provider Agreement example.

Example: Steve receives \$300 a month in the Child Care subsidy. His child care provider has a price of \$400 a month. Therefore, Steve is responsible for paying the difference of \$100 out of pocket every month. The decision of when Steve will pay his Parent Share costs should be discussed and decided upon by Steve and his child care provider.

3.3.5.2 Establish Frequency of Payments with Provider

After establishing the total cost of care, parents and providers should determine the timing and frequency of parent payments. This includes: whether the parent should pay in advance for child care service or retroactively; and how often the parent will pay the provider (such as monthly, biweekly, or weekly).

Note: This may be established through the creation of a Provider-Parent Agreement/Contract. See Appendix A for example.

3.3.5.3 Maintain Receipts and Records

Parents should maintain receipts and confirmation numbers for each transaction made, and document the time period or date range for which the payment was made. This practice will assist with payment disputes that may arise between parents and providers, or any concerns regarding account balances.

Note: It is recommended that parents do not share the amount of their monthly subsidy with their provider. However, this decision is at the discretion of the parent. At no point should a provider require a parent to disclose their subsidy amount to them. If this occurs, refer the parent to report fraud to the Child Care Fraud Mailbox.

3.3.5.4 Do Not Share the MyWICChildCare Card, Account Number, and/or PIN

Parents may not provide access to, share, or give their MyWICChildCare Card, account number, or PIN to any child care provider or other individual. If they do, it is a violation of the Wisconsin Shares program. Please see 4.5 for penalties associated with the sharing of the MyWICChildCare Card and/or PIN.

Note: Department and agency staff should also never disclose a client's balance with any individual other than the client, unless it meets the criteria established in 3.3.11.

3.3.6 Responsibilities to the Department

By participating in the Wisconsin Shares program, parents agree to follow all of the policies and procedures associated with the program, as established by the Department. This includes properly using their subsidy funds and reporting any changes that may impact their eligibility or authorization within 10 days.

3.3.6.1 Reporting Changes to Authorization

Parents must report to their local agency any changes that may impact their eligibility or authorization within 10 days of the change. See Chapter 1, Section 1.9.1 for a full list of reporting requirements. Information regarding how authorization workers should process these requests based on whether they are timely or untimely is located in Section 2.2.13.1.

3.3.6.2 Reporting Change of Provider

In order to change providers when the situation does not meet hardship criteria (see 2.2.6), the parent must notify their local agency prior to the last business day of the month. If a parent switches providers for reasons that do not meet hardship criteria in the middle of a month, the parent is responsible for paying their new provider out of pocket until the following month, when their authorization to the new provider begins. Agency workers should record a summary of the reason for change in the case comments (examples include: moving, dispute with provider, etc.).

Procedure

If a parent calls to report a change of provider, the worker should ask the reason and date of change, and whether the parent must still make payment to their previous provider. This will assist the worker in determining whether hardship criteria are met.

If a parent claims that they need the funds to pay their previous provider for care, a fraud investigation referral should be entered to verify the funds were actually needed to be paid.

Example: Today is November 4. Tony calls and wants to change his provider starting November 15. Tony does not meet hardship criteria. End the current authorization on November 30. Start the authorization to the new provider on December 1. Tony will have to pay his new provider out of pocket from November 15 – November 30 or postpone changing providers until the end of the month.

Example: Today is November 15. Lupe requests to switch providers starting December 16. End the current authorization December 15. Enter the new authorization starting December 16. When Lupe's account is loaded on December 1, it will have funds for her current provider from December 1 - December 15, and funds for her new provider from December 16 - December 31.

Note: If funds were erroneously loaded onto an EBT account because of either an agency or client error, authorizations can be corrected in the current month using the Post Load Benefit Change (PLBC) module. An overpayment may be assessed if the funds were issued to the incorrect provider. See 4.5 and 4.11 for overpayment information.

Note: Any funds remaining from the previous provider cannot be transferred to another provider. If the parent issues the remaining funds to the previous provider after the provider change request, an overpayment may be assessed.

3.3.7 Hardship Policy

There are instances when a parent may need to switch providers due to hardship (described in 2.2.6). Only when a situation meets the hardship criteria may a family be eligible for additional child care funds for a different provider location in the current month. For issuance of additional funds due to hardship, please submit a request to the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance line (childcare@wisconsin.gov).

If it is discovered that a parent is misrepresenting their hardship need, various sanctions may be issued to the client. For additional information regarding hardship policy sanctions, see 4.5.

3.3.8 Lost or Stolen Cards

Lost or stolen cards must be reported to FIS immediately at 1-877-201-7601. FIS will freeze the account and send a new card to the client. The newly-issued card will be attached to the same account as the lost or stolen card, so any remaining funds will automatically be loaded on to the new card.

Any lost or stolen cards may be subject to further investigation. For example, if the previous card's balance was zero, and the parent claims that they had remaining funds on the card, the case should be referred for investigation either to the local agency fraud investigator or to BPI. Any time PLBC may be used to adjust the amount on the card due to a lost or stolen card, the agency worker should contact BPI for assistance through the Technical Assistance Mailbox (DCFBPITArequest@wisconsin.gov).

Note: If a card is lost due to a hardship (such as a fire), the parent should contact the agency to update their new address, and then contact FIS to request a replacement card.

3.3.8.1 Subsidy Fund Replacement

If a MyWICChildCare card is lost or stolen, and was not reported immediately, any lost funds during the time period where it was not reported, will not be replaced. Subsidy funds will be replaced if the funds are depleted after the cardholder reports to FIS Card Customer Service that the card has been lost or stolen, or due to system errors or malfunctions.

If there is a situation where subsidy funds need to be replaced, contact the Child Care Subsidy and Technical Assistance Line (childcare@wisconsin.gov) and CC the Bureau of Program Integrity's Fraud Mailbox.

3.3.9 Parent Inappropriate Use of Funds

Recipients of the Wisconsin Shares program are responsible for the appropriate use of the child care subsidy. The funds may only be used to pay for child care services as described in Wisconsin Shares statutes, rules, and policy, or on the client's authorization notice. Inappropriate use of the subsidy may result in a sanction.

Some examples of inappropriate use of the child care subsidy are (but are not limited to):

- The parent asking a provider to cash out their subsidy for them.
- The parent accepting a cash refund for any portion of their child care subsidy from a child care provider.
- Banking **subsidy funds** with a provider for future use.
 - "Banking" is the process of paying in advance for child care services that have not yet been provided, and will not be provided within a month's time, with the assurance of the provider that these monies can be applied to later child care services in future months. This does not apply to cases where parents are paying to hold a spot for their child, see 2.7 for approved absence policies.

Example: Felipe's two children attend Michael and Me's Child Care. Felipe receives \$500 a month from Wisconsin Shares. Michael and Me's Child Care costs \$400 a month. Michael offers to take the additional \$100 from Felipe's card, and apply it to some future bill at an undetermined time.

- Giving a child care provider their MyWICChildCare card, account number, and/or PIN.
- Using the child care subsidy to pay a provider who has not provided child care for the authorized children and will not provide care of these children within the month.
 - **Note:** Exceptions are allowed to this for situations described in 2.7.
- Using an authorized child's subsidy amount to pay for another child's care (regardless of whether the other child is authorized or unauthorized).
- Using the subsidy (as a recipient) to pay themselves as a child care provider.

Note: Sanctions for each of these actions are established in Chapter 4 of the Child Care Policy Manual.

3.3.10 Parent Portal

DCF has designed a Parent Portal. The [Parent Portal](https://MyWICChildCareparents.wisconsin.gov) (<https://MyWICChildCareparents.wisconsin.gov>) is a website that allows parents to view information about their authorization, such as which children are authorized, authorization history, and the account balance. In order to log in to the Parent Portal, parents will utilize their existing ACCESS username and password. A Parent Portal User Guide is under development and will be available to agencies in 2017.

A Parent training on the Parent Portal is available at:

https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/elearning/mwcc-parentportal/story_html5.html

3.3.11 Confidentiality for Parents

Do not disclose information about the client or any investigations that may occur to anyone for any purpose not connected with the direct administration of the Wisconsin Shares program, except for a disclosure of information to the Department of Revenue. Penalties for unauthorized release of a client or recipient's information may include a fine of \$25 to \$500 or imprisonment from 10 days to one year, or both [Statute [49.83](#)].

Note: This includes that parent and/or authorization information (such as subsidy amount and the clients' authorized hours) should not be shared with their child care provider.

3.3.12 Personal Rights for Parents

As detailed in Statute [49.81](#), all public assistance and relief granting agencies are required to respect the following rights of recipients of public assistance:

- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to confidentiality of agency records and files
 - **Note:** Federal law allows for the use of records:
 - To locate a person or the assets of a person:
 - Who failed to file tax returns
 - Who underreported taxable income
 - Who is a delinquent taxpayer
 - For identifying fraudulent tax returns
 - Providing information for tax-related prosecutions
 - Auditing or accounting purposes to the extent permissible under federal law
- The right to access records and files relating to the client or recipient's case. The agency may withhold information obtained under a promise of confidentiality to the provider of the information.
- The right to a speedy determination of eligibility for public assistance, to notice of any proposed change in such eligibility, and, in the case of assistance, to a speedy appeal.

If agencies have questions or concerns about disclosure, they may contact the Office of Legal Counsel for assistance.

Note: The method used to verify information when determining eligibility must not violate the client’s rights, privacy or personal dignity (See Grandberry v. Schmidt).

3.3.13 Parent Concern Triage Information

Consult the table below to determine whether a parent’s question should be referred to FIS.

Local Agency	FIS
Subsidy Amount	Activating EBT card
Subsidy availability date	Selecting/changing PIN
Parent cannot provide authentication to FIS and needs case number or CWW PIN for activating and selecting MyWICChildCare card PIN	Damaged, stolen, lost EBT card
Eligibility/ authorization changes	Emergency EBT card issuance
EBT card deactivated or cancelled	www.ebtEDGE.com issues
EBT card undeliverable because of address change or incorrect address	IVR (phone) issues
Subsidy Benefit expiration date	Balance and/or History Questions
Change Provider, Pay Wrong Provider	

3.4 Provider EBT Information

3.4.1 Provider Requirements to Participate

There are various criteria that must be met for a provider to accept MyWICChildCare cards. These criteria include (but are not limited to):

1. Providers must be Licensed or Certified under DCF [202](#), [250](#), [251](#), [252](#). Providers must continue to follow all licensing and certification rules and regulations, and agree to the fingerprinting requirements
2. Sign an FIS Agreement (see 3.4.2.1 for details) and be issued an FIS Identification Number.
3. Participate in YoungStar.
4. Provide their Private Pay Rates.
5. Comply with the 40% Rule (see Chapter 4.9.1 for details).

3.4.2 Payment Procedures

3.4.2.1. FIS Agreement

Providers will receive their FIS contract three months prior to the implementation of MyWICChildCare. Providers that wish to participate in MyWICChildCare following its implementation must contact FIS by calling 1-800-894-0050 to receive their contract. The agreement must be completed and returned to FIS.

Note: Providers that join YoungStar will automatically receive an FIS agreement.

Providers may complete the agreement online at the ebtEDGE Provider Portal or contact FIS directly for a paper copy. FIS will provide a paper copy to the provider if it is requested.

The FIS agreement will require the following information:

- The Provider's Federal Tax ID or Social Security Number
- Checking or debit account routing number

Once the agreement application has been completed, the Department will assign the provider a "FIS Provider Identification Number" that will be sent to FIS in a daily batch. The Department will communicate the FIS Provider Identification Number to the provider.

After the initial implementation, any new providers will receive a letter in the mail that contains their FIS Provider ID Number and instructions for how to complete the agreement.

Note: During the MyWICChildCare initiative rollout, parents will receive a notification if their current provider has not completed an FIS agreement. This notice will inform them to find a new provider that has an agreement.

3.4.2.1.1 Checking Accounts

Providers must have an active checking or debit account established in order to receive payments from MyWICChildCare cards. Providers who do not have a checking or debit account and are unable to obtain one will follow the “unbanked” provider policy below.

Some providers may not be able to obtain a checking account. All providers who wish to receive Wisconsin Shares payments should make all reasonable efforts to obtain a checking account. If a provider is unable to establish a checking account, the provider may receive Wisconsin Shares payments via a reloadable debit card offered through several companies, including (but not limited to) Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. The checking account number or card number will be required on the FIS agreement.

3.4.2.2 Obtaining a Point of Sales (POS) Terminal

Providers may request a POS terminal while completing the FIS Agreement. POS terminals will be available for lease from FIS for a monthly fee of \$14.50 (fee subject to change). If a provider would like to either obtain a POS terminal after submitting the agreement or return their POS terminal, they may contact the FIS customer service number for assistance (1-877-201-7753).

If a provider selects to lease a POS, they will be required to complete POS Training and a POS Contract from FIS.

3.4.2.3 Prior to First Payment

During the Parent/Provider Agreement signing and/or prior to receiving a newly authorized parent’s first payment, the provider should ensure that the parent has been authorized to the correct provider location. This will ensure accuracy of payment and decrease the chances for an overpayment.

Verify the authorization via:

1. **Monthly Authorization Letter:** Lists all current, future, backdated, and deleted authorizations. These letters are mailed to the providers on the last business day of each month. If the child is authorized to begin care in the next month, the child’s name will be included in the next month’s authorization letter. If the child’s name is not listed for their next month’s authorization, the provider should alert the parent who should contact the agency.
2. **[Provider Portal](https://mywchildcareproviders.wisconsin.gov/login)** (<https://mywchildcareproviders.wisconsin.gov/login>): The Provider Portal contains information on the provider’s facility(ies), regulation details, prices, authorizations, contact information, YoungStar quality adjustments, documents, messages, and links. Under the authorizations page, the provider can view authorizations for their center(s). If the provider sees that the child is authorized for their location, the parent may move forward with the payment. If the provider cannot see the child, the parent must contact the agency.

3. **ebtEDGE** (<http://www.ebtedge.com/>): This website operated by FIS contains provider transaction information and the online FIS Agreement for completion. If the provider cannot see the newly authorized child, the parent must contact the agency.

If the agency is notified that a child is not authorized to the correct provider's location, the worker must end the current authorization to the incorrect provider, assess for an overpayment if a payment was made to the incorrect provider, and create a new authorization to the correct provider in EBT CSAW. See 4.5 and 4.11 for overpayment policies.

3.4.2.4 MyWICChildCare EBT Payments for Providers

After the parent completes the child care payment through any of the processes described in Section 3.3.4.3, the payment amount will be electronically transmitted to the provider's bank account or loadable card within 2–3 banking business days. The provider will be able to see payment transactions in real-time on [ebtEDGE.com](http://www.ebtedge.com) to verify payments are in process. If there is a discrepancy with the amount deposited in to the provider account, or if the provider wishes to confirm the amount of the transfer, they should contact the FIS Provider Assistance Helpline at 1-877-201-7753 or log in to [ebtEDGE.com](http://www.ebtedge.com).

3.4.2.5 YoungStar Quality Adjustments

YoungStar is Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. Participating child care facilities are rated on a 1-5 Star scale and only those with a 2 Star or higher are eligible for authorizations. The child care program's rating is then used to calculate the YoungStar adjustment amount (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5 for YoungStar adjustment details).

The YoungStar rating batch will run in the evening on the 15th of every month. The local YoungStar office will have until the 25th of each month to activate any ratings. The rating will then be effective the first day of the following month. The YoungStar adjustment will be issued to the providers through FIS on the first of every month. The provider will see the YoungStar adjustments made at the deposit level for a given month on [ebtEDGE.com](http://www.ebtedge.com) and a list of YoungStar adjustments made to the provider by month and individual child on the Provider Portal.

If a parent is issued an authorization during the middle of the month, the YoungStar adjustment will be generated to the authorized provider within 24 hours.

Note: YoungStar recoupments/overpayments are discussed in sanctions (4.11).

3.4.2.6 Reviewing Deposits

There are three options available to a provider if they wish to review a deposit. They may do so through the IVR telephone system, the Provider Portal, or [ebtEDGE.com](http://www.ebtedge.com). Each of these processes is described below.

Reviewing Deposits by IVR Telephone

1. Call FIS Provider Customer Service at 1-877-201-7753.
2. Select Language.
3. Enter the FIS Provider ID.
4. Continue following the prompts to receive the desired information.

Reviewing Deposits through the Provider Portal

1. Log in to the Provider Portal (<http://mywchildcareproviders.wisconsin.gov>).
2. Select the appropriate location (if more than one).
3. Select the Authorizations button.

Reviewing Deposits through the ebtEDGE

1. Log in www.ebtEDGE.com.
2. Sign in using the Provider ID and password.
3. Transaction history is available on the landing page.

3.4.2.7 Overpayments by Parent to Provider

If the provider is overpaid by a Wisconsin Shares family, the provider should make arrangements with the parent(s) to reconcile the difference, according to the provider's payment policies. However, providers must NOT return any form of payment including cash to the parent from the child care subsidy amount. This is referred to as cashing out the subsidy funds or a kickback, which may result in a sanction (4.5 or 4.11). The provider should return any overpaid Wisconsin Shares funds to the Department through a Voluntary Repayment Agreement (see Chapter 4.12.1.1 for details).

Example: A parent pays a provider at the beginning of a month for the entire month. The parent decides to change providers in the middle of the month. The parent requests a refund for their unused funds. Their provider's payment policy allows this. However, providers are not allowed to refund a parent's unused Wisconsin Shares subsidy to the parent.

If the agency becomes aware of this action, a referral should be opened in BRITS and investigated. An overpayment and/or IPV may be issued to the provider and/or client for this situation.

If the provider's policy did not allow for a refund, they should adhere to their own policy.

3.4.3 Provider Responsibilities

The provider has various responsibilities to their parents and children, and should treat parents who receive a subsidy the same as their private pay parents.

3.4.3.1 Establish and Communicate Child Care Rates

It is the responsibility of the provider to establish child care rates, to report their rates to their local agency, and to communicate these rates to parent(s). This is especially important because it will assist the parent with calculating their Parent's Share.

Note: See Appendix A for a Provider-Parent Agreement/Contract example.

3.4.3.2 Determine Frequency of Payments

The provider and parent should establish expectations regarding the frequency of payments. The provider should determine, in agreement with the parent, whether they will be requiring payment proactively or retroactively, and how often they would like

payments (monthly, weekly, biweekly, etc.). The Department recommends that the provider should include this information in their Provider-Parent Contract/Agreement.

Note: This may be established through the creation of a Provider-Parent Agreement/Contract. See Appendix A for example.

3.4.3.3 Develop a Record Keeping System and Attendance Documentation

Method

Providers must continue to maintain accurate attendance records also known as Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheets (SISOs), also commonly referred to as Daily Attendance Records, as established in DCF [202.08\(5\)\(i\)](#), [250.04 \(6\)\(b\)](#) and [251.04\(6\)\(b\)](#). The SISOs must contain the children's exact arrival and departure times. These times should never be rounded, and should be recorded daily as the child arrives and departs. These records must be available to the Department upon request.

The SISOs must be retained on site for the length of time the child is enrolled in the program, and for three years after a child's last day in attendance at the child care facility. Providers that discontinue their participation in the Wisconsin Shares program must also adhere to this policy. Not completing and/or retaining these records may result in an assessment of an overpayment to the provider, and/or a permanent suspension from the Wisconsin Shares program.

It is recommended that the provider maintain records of all Wisconsin Shares, Parent Share, and YoungStar payments received. Providers will receive monthly notices and have access to the ebtEDGE Provider Portal, and the Child Care Provider Portal to verify transaction information. The information provided will be real time payment information. A history of transactions will be available in the Child Care Provider Portal as well.

Note: Samples of [Daily Attendance Records](#) are available. These forms can also be located by going to the Forms Search page (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/forms>) and searching Daily Attendance Record.

Note: Licensed Group Providers may design their own forms or utilize a computer system if the same information is shown as described above, so long as they record and maintain the same information that would be recorded on the DCF form, which is required for family providers.

3.4.3.4 Possessing a Clients' MyWIChildCare Cards, Account Numbers, or PINS

Providers should never use, possess, or copy the Parent's MyWIChildCare cards, account numbers, or PIN numbers, even by parent request. This is strictly against Wisconsin Shares policy (see Chapter 4 for additional details). Providers with these items in their possession may be investigated, which can result in a sanction and/or permanent suspension.

3.4.3.5 Cooperate with Department and Agency Staff during Site Visits and Investigations

The provider is responsible for cooperating with Department and agency staff during all monitoring visits. Providers must provide accurate information and any documents requested. Common documents requested include (but are not limited to):

- Original SISOs or printed attendance program reports
- Employee schedules and punch times
- Transportation records
- Payment practices and/or policy

3.4.3.6 Provider Notifications to Agency

Providers are responsible to notify the local agency of various changes, including any changes to their facility, attendance, or an expulsion of a child.

1. Any facility, license, or staffing changes must be reported to their licensor or certifier; and rate changes must be submitted to their local child care agency. Timely notification by the provider will decrease the chances of an overpayment or other sanction being issued to a provider. Untimely reporting of changes may result in various sanctions.
2. Any unutilized authorizations (either for children that have never attended or have stopped attending) must be reported to the agency by the provider. Providers should notify the agency of these situations within 10 days of the occurrence or as soon as the provider is aware of the situation. Timely notification by the provider will decrease the chances of an overpayment or other sanction being issued to a provider.

If an agency worker is notified by the provider of an absence, the worker should contact the parent to determine the cause of the absence. The child may stop attending for various reasons including: family vacation, change in child care need, authorized to the incorrect provider, etc. The agency worker should use the new information to update the parent's eligibility or authorization (according to Chapter 1 or 2 policies), and should assess for an overpayment if the situation meets overpayment criteria as described in Chapter 4.

3.4.3.7 Provider-Parent Agreement/Contract

Providers are encouraged to develop and utilize a business contract or agreement with parents that fully explains the payment arrangements and expectations. Providers may require parents to pay in advance of services being rendered. If a parent fails to pay the provider, the provider will use their established business practices to collect unpaid child care amounts from parents. The provider must have these policies available for parents in their Parent Handbook. The Department and the local agency will not settle payment disputes between providers and parents.

At a minimum, the Provider–Parent Agreements/Contracts should include:

- The providers price/rates (if not included in the contract, the provider must provide a separate rate sheet)
- When payment is due
- The names of the children the provider will be providing care for
- The provider's days and hours of operation
- Expulsion of attending children procedure
- The provider's payment dispute policy
- A space for the signatures of the parent and provider to sign and date

Note: An example of Provider-Parent Agreement is attached in Appendix A.

Note: The information within the Provider – Parent Agreement/Contract should mirror the same information that is on record with the Department. Any changes to this information should be communicated with the licenser or authorizing agency as appropriate.

3.4.4 Provider Inappropriate Use of Funds

When a provider enrolls as a DCF child care provider, they are agreeing to receive the child care subsidy funds from parents only for child care services provided. Any inappropriate activity or use of these benefits may result in further sanctions.

Some examples of a provider's inappropriate use of child care subsidy funds include (but not limited to):

- Cashing out subsidy funds for parents.
- Refunding any amount of the child care subsidy to the parents.
- Banking subsidy funds for parents to use later.
 - "Banking" is the process of paying in advance for child care services that have not yet been provided, and will not be provided within a month's time, with the assurance of the provider that these monies can be applied to later child care services in future months. This does not apply to cases where parents are paying to hold a spot for their child (2.7).
- Collecting and/or using the parent's MyWICChildCare card, account number, and/or PIN, or any representation of these items.
- Using the Child Care subsidy (as a recipient) to pay themselves (as a provider).
- Receiving subsidy funds for child care provided for a child(ren) that the funds were not intended for.

Note: Additional information on what qualifies as Wisconsin Shares violations, overpayments, and sanctions, see 4.5 and 4.11.

3.4.5 Provider Portal

The [DCF Provider Portal](https://MyWICChildCareproviders.wisconsin.gov) (https://MyWICChildCareproviders.wisconsin.gov) allows providers to access information regarding their facility, authorizations, and other documents. This includes:

- Facility details such as FIS Provider ID(s), physical address(es), etc.
- Regulation details (including history)

- Provider prices used for authorization calculation in EBT CSAW
- Child care authorizations
- Contacts (phone, address, and email information for the licensor/certifier and the YoungStar technical consultant assigned to the program if applicable).
- YoungStar Details (including history)
- YoungStar Quality Adjustments (4 and 5 Star programs)
- Documents (provider authorization notice and FIS enrollment letter)
- Messages (previously announcements)
- External links (Regulated Child Care and YoungStar, FIS ebtEDGE Provider Portal, Child Care Registry, and CCR&Rs)

Additional tools will be added to the Provider Portal. Future enhancement will allow providers to:

- Submit facility updates
- Enter changes to prices
- Choose paperless notices
- Upload documents
- Report closure schedules for the facility
- Report children receiving Wisconsin Shares who no longer attend the facility
- View payment history (will be pulled from ebtEDGE.com)
- View Registry details

Note: Computer-based training on the Child Care Provider Portal is available on the [For Providers](#) tab on the MyWICildCare homepage (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mywchildcare/providers>). An additional training video is available in the Child Care Provider Portal.

3.4.5.1 Accessing the Provider Portal

The Provider Portal uses the same security clearance as the previous CCPI system. Providers who previously had access to CCPI will have their security clearance transferred to the Provider Portal. Any providers who did not have access to CCPI and who would like to gain access to the new portal must complete the CCPP application process explained at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/provider-portal/ccpp-access>.

Agency workers can request access to the Provider Portal using the following form: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/doc/13358.docx>

3.5 Contact Information

The local subsidy agency or tribe may reach out to the following contacts for assistance and reporting measures.

Issue	Reasons	Who to Contact	Contact Information
For EBT Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activating EBT Card • Selecting or Changing a PIN • Damaged, Lost or Stolen EBT Cards • POS Issues • www.ebtEDGE.com Issues • IVR (Automated Telephone) Issues 	FIS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FIS Customer Assistance Helpline (for Clients): (877) 201-7601. 2. FIS Provider Assistance Helpline (for Providers): (877) 201-7753. 3. FIS Merchant Services Helpline (for Providers regarding an FIS agreement): (800) 894-0050. 4. Customer Assistance Website: www.ebtEDGE.com
For Technical Assistance:	<p>Eligibility or Authorization Questions</p> <p>Note: Please first contact your BRO coordinator with your question prior to contacting the Child Care Help Desk.</p>	<p>1) BRO Coordinator</p> <p>2) Child Care Help Desk</p>	<p>Bureau of Regional Operations https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/regionaloperations/pdf/bro-contacts.pdf</p> <p>Child Care Help Desk: ChildCare@wisconsin.gov</p> <p>Child Care Helpline: (608) 422-7200</p>
	Collection Questions	PACU	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PACU helpline: (800) 943-9499 2. PACU Assistance Mailbox: dwspace@wisconsin.gov
	Legal Questions	OLC	DCFCallLegal@wisconsin.gov
	Provider or Client Investigation, or Sanction Questions	BPI	DCFBPITArequest@wisconsin.gov
	YoungStar Questions	YoungStar	youngstar@wisconsin.gov
	BRITS Questions		<p>Security or Technical Questions: DCFServicedesk@wisconsin.gov</p> <p>For policy questions: DCFBPITArequest@wisconsin.gov</p>

For Fraud Reporting:	For Milwaukee County	MECA	Parent referrals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MECA fraud hotline: (414) 289-5799 2. MECA fraud mailbox: DCFMBMECACCFRAUD@wisc.onsin.gov
	For Balance of State	BPI	For Both Parent and Provider Referrals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DCF fraud mailbox: dcfmbchildcarefraud@wisconsin.gov 2. The DCF fraud hotline: (877) 302-3728 3. Submit the Report Child Care Fraud Form 4. Writing to: Department of Children and Families Bureau of Program Integrity PO Box 8916 Madison, WI 53708-8916

APPENDIX A: Guidelines and Sample Provider-Parent Agreement/Contract

Note: This is an Example of a Provider – Parent Agreement for a Family child care program.



Guide to Develop Family Child Care Contracts

The more carefully you spell it out, the more clearly your expectations are communicated!

Does your contract have these five essential parts?

- **Names of the contracted parties** – This would be you and the person/agency responsible for payment as well as the names of child(ren) being cared for. It's important to know who the contract is between/among.
- **Signatures of those parties** – Without the signature, the contract is meaningless. Whoever signs the contract is responsible for payment, so make sure you include both parents, if applicable. This would also include any co-signers, like in the case of a contract with a parent who is also a minor or someone who may not have a strong credit history. Adding an effective date is a great idea, so everyone is clear when the contract starts.
- **Termination clause** – How does one get out of this contract? Termination clauses do not have to be identical for both parties. Usually a child care provider will want to be able to terminate the contract immediately, known as "at will," (for things like non-payment, for example). These need to be spelled out in the contract. Child care providers often require of the other party two weeks' notice and termination requests put in writing, with payment still due for that period (see below).
- **Hours of operation** – What exactly is being contracted for? You will want to be clear if the child is welcome to attend any of the hours you are open or if the parent is only paying for a set number of hours. Who sets those hours – you or the parent? This would also be the place to clearly state how payment for time off is made.
- **Terms of payment** – What is your rate of payment? Is your daily rate different than your drop-in rate? How do you expect to get paid? Will you accept cash, checks, money orders, credit cards, or other methods of payment? How are payments recorded or tracked? When is payment due – every Monday? The 1st of the month? Before the care is provided or after? What happens if a parent doesn't pay? Is there a grace period for a missed payment? What other fees are parents responsible for? These questions should be able to be answered by reading your contract.

In addition, YoungStar encourages providers to have paid time off. (See Indicators C.2.2 and/or C.4.2) Professionals receive paid time off as part of their benefits package. Family child care providers can use paid time off to attend conferences or other continuing education, have a vacation with their family, run necessary errands, or even have a day to recharge their batteries. Caring for children is difficult work and having some time away from children can improve the ability to provide good care.

It is appropriate to include a description of a provider's paid time off in the contract – this way, parents understand this is part of their agreement with the provider. Providers can use their contract to enforce the ability to take paid time off, by reminding parents if needed, that this is part of the document they signed, when agreeing to start care with that program. Parents should always get a copy of the contract they sign.

Things to consider adding if it makes sense for your situation:

- ✓ If you are providing care for families on subsidy, consider adding language which states that *the subsidized client is responsible for paying the full amount of your fee if the subsidy program doesn't pay you for any reason.**
- ✓ If you have clients with a questionable or unknown credit history, consider adding a co-signer for the contract. If the client defaults on payment, the co-signer is responsible for paying the debt in full.
- ✓ You may wish to add a trial period to your contract of care.
- ✓ If you are holding a spot for a parent and they have paid a "holding fee," consider adding language to your contract that states that this payment is non-refundable. Otherwise, if a parent changes his/her mind after several months, you may be out of luck if s/he demands their money back since you are now no longer holding a spot for him/her.
- ✓ You may wish to add a statement that outlines an annual rate increase of a certain amount.
- ✓ Consider adding these clauses:
 - *The client will pay for child care one week in advance.**
 - *The client must give two week written notice to end this contract. Payment is due for the notice period whether or not the child is brought to the provider for care during that time.**
 - *The client will pay for the last two weeks of care upon signing this contract.**

**From Tom Copeland's Family Child Care Contracts and Policies, 3rd Edition*

(Insert provider location name)
Child Care Contract

This agreement is between:

1. _____
Parent/Guardian (Full Name) Home Phone Work Phone

Home Address, including ZIP code

Employer/School Address and Phone Number
and

2. _____
Parent/Guardian (Full Name) Home Phone Work Phone

Home Address, including ZIP code

Employer/School Address and Phone Number
and

3. _____
Child Care Provider Home Phone

Home Address

For the care of:

Child's Full Name Child's Birth date

With an agreed upon start date of _____ Deposit due: _____ Paid on _____

RATES & PAYMENTS

Payment shall be \$_____ per month OR \$_____ per week OR \$_____ per hour
Two weeks of payment will be paid as deposit to hold a child's spot. This money will be applied to the last two weeks of care. This money is forfeited by the parents if the termination policy is not followed (insert provider location name) operates from _____ AM/PM to _____ AM/PM.

The child's normal schedule, within those hours, will be:
Monday _____ to _____ Tuesday _____ to _____ Wednesday _____ to _____
Thursday _____ to _____ Friday _____ to _____

This payment does not include extra charges that may be incurred for field trips/special events, as agreed upon in advance. These charges will be the parents'/guardians' responsibility.
Payment shall be due on: _____ last day of the month that the child attends for the following month

_____ 1st day of the week the child attends
_____ other: _____

Overtime rates:
For this agreement, overtime is drop-off before 7:25AM or pick up after 5:35PM, or 5 min. before/after scheduled care.
*If the parent/guardian makes agreed-upon arrangements with the provider, the child may attend overtime at the rate of \$3.00 per 15 minutes or portion thereof. Payment will be due when the child is picked up that day.

* If the parent/guardian has not made arrangements with the provider regarding schedule change, the parent/guardian will be charged at the rate of \$5.00 per 15 minutes or portion thereof. Payment will be due upon child's pick up, or when child is next dropped off for care, at the latest.

Rates for Holiday, Vacation, Sick, & Personal Days:

*Due to the nature of my expenses, payment is expected even if the child cannot attend due to illness or short absences. Arrangements can be made with the provider for longer illnesses [missing over 3 days a week] or family vacations, etc. to make up those days of care, taking into consideration scheduling constraints.

*The following are paid holidays: MLK Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, 4th of July, & Thanksgiving and the day after.

*The provider will receive eight (8) personal days that she may take at her convenience. Parents will be notified 2 weeks in advance, unless an emergency arises.

*Parents and provider will give each other 2 weeks advanced notice for scheduled vacation or other leave.

Closings:

*No care will be available from Christmas Eve Day through New Year's Day (Winter Holiday).

*(Insert provider location name) will be closed for 10 days throughout the year so that the provider may attend Continuing Education activities. (Conference Days). Parents will be given 2-4 weeks notice.

**Payment is expected as normal for the months in which Winter Holiday, personal days, and/or Conference Days fall as the overall rates have been adjusted for these occurrences.

*If (insert provider location name) must be closed unexpectedly due to emergency, etc., no payment will be expected for the hours of scheduled care during that closing.

*(Insert provider location name) does/does not follow the (Insert School District Name) School District calendar. Snow days or other weather related closings are at the discretion of the provider.

* Parents/guardians are responsible for finding their own care when (insert provider location name) is closed.

Other:

*Parents of those children needing preferred formula, diapers, pull-ups, homemade baby food or other special food or supply needs are required to supply those items.

* Payment that is made late (without prior consent from the Provider) will be subject to an additional \$25.00 fee.

Termination Procedure:

*This contract may be terminated by either parent/guardian or provider by giving 2 weeks written notice in advance of the child's last day. Payment by parent/guardian is due, whether or not the child is brought to the provider for care. The provider may terminate the contract without notice if parent/guardian does not make payment when due or fails to abide by the terms of contract. Failure by the provider to enforce one or more of the terms of the contract does not waive the right of the provider to enforce any other terms of the contract.

SIGNATURES:

By signing this contract, parents/ guardians agree to abide by the contract and the written policies of the provider. The provider may amend the policies by giving the parents/guardians a copy of the new or changed policy.

Provider's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Co-Signer Signature _____ Date _____

If the parent/legal guardian is under 18, a co-signer must sign this agreement and act as a guarantor to the contract and agree to be bound by all financial agreements held within this contract.

This document is also located (in English) at:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/resources> under the Business and Professional Practices tab listed as [Information and Sample Family Child Care Provider Contract with Family](#).

SAMPLE