



Managed By:
City of San Antonio
Department of Community Initiatives
Child Care Services Division

Regulated Provider Handbook

Information Line: 210-246-5200

Child Care Services (CCS)

Bexar County

702 San Pedro, Suite 100
San Antonio, TX 78212
Tel (210) 246-5200
Fax (210) 246-5241
www.sanantonio.gov

Rural Counties

8700 Tesoro, Suite 700
San Antonio, Texas 78217-6228
Tel (210) 362-5200
Fax (210) 225-5937
www.aacog.com

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TDD/TTY 1-800-735-2989

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Purpose	3
CCS Mission	3
Eligible Child Care Providers	4
Independent Provider	4
Arrangements for Child Care	5
Parental Access	6
Provider Application	6
Reimbursement Terms	6
Attendance Codes	7
Basis for Reimbursement of Child Care Services	7
Parent Fee (Share of Cost)	8
Requesting Reimbursement	9
Technical Assistance / Non-Compliance	10
Suspected Fraud	10
CCS Corrective Action	10
Record Keeping Requirements	11
Provider Changes	11
Visits to Providers	12
Texas Rising Star Certification	12
Children with Disabilities	12
Complaints/Grievances	13

FOREWORD

The City Of San Antonio has developed this Provider Handbook to inform you about its child care services and to explain your role as a regulated child care provider.

All rules, policies and procedures in this Provider Handbook are based on federal or state laws and Workforce Solutions-Alamo policies and procedures. Any changes to federal or state laws are automatically incorporated into this provider handbook.

Please read this handbook carefully. Keep it handy as a reference for questions you may have later. Feel free to call us at 210-246-5200 and ask to speak to your Provider Specialist if you have any questions.

PURPOSE

This handbook is for regulated child care providers offering child care services to families receiving assistance through CCS. It will:

- Provide you with a reference guide that you can keep
- Explain your role in providing child care to CCS families
- Explain the conditions on which child care services are based
- Explain reimbursement procedures for child care services rendered

In this handbook you will find the guidelines set up for CCS Contracted Providers to ensure proper implementation of the program. **This handbook is an addition to the CCS Provider Agreement or Rate Schedule and does not exhaust all policies and procedures within the CCS Program.**

CCS MISSION

CCS provides child care services to eligible parents who are striving to become self-sufficient. The program allows families flexibility to select child care and access to multiple funding sources, which can be managed by the CCS through a simple process as the needs of families change.

CCS provides child care services to over 9,000 children per day. Child care services are available for both full and part-time care for qualifying families. To be eligible for CCS services, individuals must meet certain criteria.

ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

A regulated child care provider must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive CCS funds for providing child care services:

- ◆ Have a current license from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) as a child care center, licensed child care home or a registered child care home, or
- ◆ Be licensed as a youth camp by the Texas Health Department (TDH) or
- ◆ Operated and monitored by the United States Military Services

“Listed” providers as defined by TDFPS are not eligible to receive CCS funds to provide Child Care Services, except if the listed provider is an eligible relative provider.

Note:

CCS cannot provide reimbursement for child care services to a child care provider if the provider or a staff person of the provider has been found to debarred from any other State or Federal program (such as the Child Care Food Program) or if the provider has lost their license or registration with DFPS.

INDEPENDENT PROVIDER

The provider shall at all times be an independent provider and not an agent or employee of the City of San Antonio. The Child Care Services does not have the right or power to control how a provider selects its employees, hires or fires staff or otherwise provides child care services; nor does the Child Care Services have the right to direct the Provider’s action in any way. The provider is not entitled to wages or benefits from the City of San Antonio, Child Care Services and the provider is fully responsible for the payment of all federal, state and local taxes or contributions imposed or required under unemployment insurance, Social Security and employment tax laws.

Any licensed or registered provider of child care in Texas may apply to become a CCS provider. The provider must submit the following:

1. A current license from the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (TDFPS) as a child care center or licensed home or be a registered home, or must be licensed as a youth camp by the Texas Department of Health (TDH), or be operated and monitored by the United States Military Service
2. Provide a copy of either **their** Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Social Security card and picture ID
3. Provide a copy of their published rates and center holidays.

CCS Providers must abide by Terms of the Provider Agreement or Provider Rate Schedule and the Provider and Billing Handbooks.

Having a Provider Agreement or a Provider Rate Schedule does not guarantee that a provider will have children referred by the CCS Contractor. All referrals made by the CCS Contractor are based on parent choice. However, if providers do not have contractor-referred children in care, they must still comply with the terms of the CCS Provider Agreement or Provider Rate Schedule.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILD CARE

All arrangements for child care shall be made between the parent and child care provider according to the parent's child care needs and the provider's policies. CCS will reimburse the child care provider after services are rendered.

When the parent notifies CCS that a decision has been made, CCS will:

- Contact the provider to be sure space is available, and if so,
- Verbally authorize care to start, and give authorization numbers
- Send the provider a TWC Form 2450, Authorization for Child Care Enrollment.

Form 2450 tells the provider:

- The date child care is to begin,
- The amount of the parent fee or whether the parent is exempt from the parent share of cost,
- The days and hours of care authorized, and
- Whether transportation is authorized.

The provider must not accept a child unless CCS staff has called the provider and issued enrollment numbers. Even if CPS or a Texas Workforce Center (TWC) caseworker refers the child, the provider still must have CCS authorization numbers before accepting the child. Providers who accept a child without first receiving CCS enrollment numbers will not be paid.

Providers must accept all children referred to them by the CCS Contractor as long as:

- The children are within the age range the providers are licensed to serve,
- The children are the ages covered by the Provider Agreement or Provider Rate Schedule,
- Accepting the children does not put the provider over the number of children they have said they will care for in the Provider Data Worksheet, and
- Accepting the children do not put the provider over its PRS licensed capacity.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, requires that all individuals, regardless of their disabilities, be allowed access to child care facilities, including registered homes.

PARENTAL ACCESS

The provider shall ensure that the CCS customers have access to their children at the provider's facilities at all times while in care.

PROVIDER APPLICATION

Each provider must furnish their Provider Specialist with information on their program that will be documented on the Provider Worksheet. Information from the worksheet will be entered into the CCS automated system. **The provider must report program changes to the CCS Provider Specialist within one work day.**

REIMBURSEMENT TERMS

The Workforce Solutions-Alamo Board sets maximum reimbursement rates that providers can be reimbursed for child care services based on the following:

- The type of child care provided,
- The age of the child receiving child care services,
- Whether full-time or part-time care is authorized and
- Whether additional adult assistance or equipment is required for a child with a disability

CCS will reimburse the child care provider after services are rendered. The provider will request reimbursement by completing a Form 2455 billing form or submitting electronically on the web-based program (eVision), in accordance with the billing guidelines in Billing Handbook.

ABSENCES:

CCS will reimburse the provider for absences under the following conditions:

- The absence is due to illness
- The first three absences, upon initial enrollment **and if** the provider notifies CCS on the 3rd day that the child did not begin
- The child is on court ordered visitation for up to 2 weeks—approval must be received in advance from CCS The child does not attend but is authorized to attend
- The child does not attend but is authorized to attend
- The child is scheduled to attend but due to extenuating family circumstances is not able to, with approval by CCS

HOLIDAYS / EXENTUATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

CCS will reimburse the child care provider up to nine holidays for each child currently enrolled. Texas Rising Star Providers will be reimbursed up to twelve holidays.

ATTENDANCE CODES

It is the provider's responsibility to record attendance for each child receiving CCS services. Absences for CCS funded children must be recorded according to the absence codes on the Service Delivery Report (*Billing Form 2455*) or on eVision.

CCS will not reimburse for child care beyond the following occurrences:

- 5 days consecutive absences with no contact from the parent with the provider
- 30 days absence in a one year period unless approved by CCS

Please reference the CCS Billing Handbook for an outline of billing procedures.

BASIS FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

Full-time vs. Part-time Care:

- Full day care is defined as between 6 to 12 hours a day,
- Part day care is less than 6 hours a day,
- Part-time care is for less than 5 days (or 30 hours) per week,
- School-age care:
 - ≈ Before and/or after school care is part-day care,
 - ≈ Full day care during school breaks and holidays is full day care.

DETERMINING THE PROVIDER'S PUBLISHED DAILY RATE:

Providers must furnish daily rates for the following age categories:

- Infants (0-17 months)
- Toddlers (18-35 months)
- Preschool (3-5 years)
- School age (6-12 years)

This may also include any registration/membership fees, any applicable activity fees and the provider's transportation rate (if separate from the provider's published rate). Fees for field trips or other special activities not part of the provider's normal activity schedule will not be included in these calculations.

For providers whose rates are charged on a basis other than daily, the provider may use the following standards:

- Monthly rates (Divided by 4.33 to obtain weekly rates),
- Weekly rates (Divided by 5 to obtain daily rates), and
- Hourly rates (Multiplied by 5 for part day or 10.5 for full day).

Assistance is available in calculating rates by contacting the Provider Specialist staff.

Providers will be reimbursed for child care services rendered at the provider's published rate up to the maximum reimbursement rate established by Workforce Solutions-Alamo for the Alamo Area CCS. If the provider's published rate is less than the maximum reimbursement rate established by Workforce Solutions-Alamo, the provider will be reimbursed for allowable costs up to their published rate.

CCS Contractor staff may review the provider's records (i.e. supporting documents) to determine if the rates established by the provider reflect rates consistent with rates paid by non-Child Care Contractor referred parents.

If providers change their published rates they must send written documentation of the new rates to the CCS Contractor. An amendment to the agreement or a new rate schedule showing the new rates will be completed and effective the first full month after the form has been signed.

PARENT FEE (SHARE OF COST)

Most parents receiving care will be assigned a monthly parent fee. As a provider, it is your sole responsibility to collect the parent's share of cost before child care is delivered. **Providers must not charge parents who are exempt from paying a parent fee or parents whose parent share of cost is calculated to be zero, the difference in cost between the provider's published rate and the WSA Board's maximum reimbursement rate.** The Child Care Authorization Form (2450) will indicate which clients are exempt.

Providers must report instances in which the parent fails to pay their required parent fee. This must be reported within three working days to the Case Aide. After reporting, the provider has the option to:

- Option 1: Allow the family to remain in care while the provider works with the family to pay their required fee.
- or
- Option 2: Deny services for non-payment of the parent fee. However, if you deny services, you may not bill the CCS for these days.

CCS will not be responsible for any parent fee owed to the provider.

Note: The parent's share of cost (commonly referred to as the "parent fee") will be deducted from the provider's reimbursement. It is the provider's responsibility to collect the parent's share of cost.

REQUESTING REIMBURSEMENT

CCS will reimburse the child care provider for services rendered on either a monthly or twice-monthly basis. Effective October 1, 2008, all payments will be made using Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT-direct deposit) or by Debit card.

MONTHLY REIMBURSEMENT:

The child care provider will submit a complete, signed Billing Form 2455 or eVision submittal after the last day of the month. Billing submittals must be **received by CCS on or before the 8th** day of the following month in order to be paid.

TWICE-MONTHLY REIMBURSEMENT:

The child care provider may bill twice monthly only via eVision. The provider who **bills twice monthly must** submit a complete, eVision submittal for the first half of the month (1st – 15th). The submittal for the first half of the month must be **received by CCS** on or before the 23rd day of the same month.

Billing **via eVision** for the second half of the month (16th – end of the month) must be **received by CCS on or before** the 8th day of the following month.

SUBMITTING ACCURATE CLAIMS:

Providers are responsible for submitting accurate claims. If claims contain errors, this may involve returning the Billing Form 2455 to the provider for corrections, which will delay payment, if the corrections are not received promptly.

All reimbursement discrepancies must be reported to the CCS Case Aide within 15 days from the date of the check, otherwise payment corrections will not be made.

Providers will be required to refund any payments that they are not entitled to, including:

- Overpayments,
- Duplicate payments, or
- Payments made in error.

All forms must be signed and dated in blue or black ink. Use of white out is not acceptable. Failing to submit accurate claims may result in a Service Improvement Agreement (SIA).

Note: Billing submittals received past the deadline will be noted in the provider's history for tracking purposes. Requests for reimbursement that are not submitted by the 20th day of the month following the billing period will not be paid.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE / PROVIDER NON-COMPLIANCE

Technical Assistance will be documented on the Provider Non-Compliance Form. A third non-compliance of the same type will result in a Service Improvement Agreement, to include closed intake for a period of one month. A fourth non-compliance will result in a Suspension of the Rate Schedule or Agreement for a period of three months. Any non-compliance beyond the 4th occurrence, within a 24 month period, will result in termination of the Rate Schedule or Agreement and ineligibility to re-apply for provider status for a period of six months.

SUSPECTED FRAUD

A provider may be suspected of fraud if one or more of the following is presented:

1. A request for reimbursement:
 - In excess of the amount charged by the provider for the child care; or
 - Is made when the provider's license or registration is no longer valid
2. A claim for child care if evidence indicates that the person may have:
 - Known, or should have known, that child care services were not provided as claimed;
 - Known, or should have known, that information provided is false or fraudulent;
 - Received child care during a period in which the child was not eligible for services;
 - Known, or should have known, that child care services were provided by a provider not eligible to be a CCS provider
 - Otherwise indicated that the person knew or should have known that the actions were in violation of this chapter or state or federal statute or regulations relating to child care
 - Become debarred and did not notify CCS to report the change and continued to provide child care

CCS CORRECTIVE ACTION

The CCS, Workforce Solutions-Alamo or TWC may take the following actions if a provider is found to be in non-compliance with the policies and procedures:

- (1) Suspension, nonrenewal, or termination of child care or a Provider Agreement or Rate Schedule;
- (2) Temporary withholding of payments to the provider for child care delivered;

- (3) Nonpayment of child care delivered;
- (4) Recoupment of funds from the provider;
- (5) Stop authorizing care at the provider's facility or location;
- (6) Moving children to another provider selected by the parent; or
- (7) Any other action consistent with the intent of the governing statutes or regulations to investigate, prevent, or stop suspected fraud.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Providers must maintain financial records for each child receiving subsidized child care and make them available for review by CCS upon request. At a minimum the provider must keep the following for each child receiving subsidized care:

- Attendance records,
- Receipts for parent fees paid by the parent,
- Copies of the Billing Form 2455 and the check proofs, and
- Any other records pertaining to financial claims for a child receiving subsidized care.

In accordance with Federal law, providers must keep financial records for 3 years and 90 days from the last day the child receives subsidized child care.

PROVIDER CHANGES

Most changes in the way a facility runs will mean that a new Provider Agreement or Provider Rate Schedule must be signed or amended. **All changes must be reported to the CCS Contractor within one work day.**

These changes must be reported to the assigned Provider Specialist:

- A change in the facility name,
- A change in governing body or corporate status,
- A change in facility rates or fees,
- A change in hours of operation,
- A change in holiday schedule,
- A change in the ages of children served,
- A change in the facility owner's address,
- Any change in facility license or registration caused by conditions placed on it by TDFPS's Licensing Division, or any condition affecting the status of facilities regulated by the TDH or the United States Military Service,
- A change in the contact person or director, and
- A change in transportation policies.

Changes that cause termination of the Provider Agreement or Rate Schedule:

- A change in facility ownership,
- A move to a different location,
- Loss of TDFPS license, registration, or certification status, or
- A provider found to be in serious noncompliance with, seriously deficient by, or debarred from another State or Federal Program.

VISITS TO PROVIDERS

CCS has the right to conduct an on-site fiscal monitoring during operational hours. CCS may, at its discretion, utilize the assistance of other departments, City resources, Workforce Solutions-Alamo, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) or other State or Federal entities to conduct on-sight monitoring visits. In addition, providers must submit copies upon request to staff that are authorized to review records and documents.

TEXAS RISING STAR CERTIFICATION

The Texas Rising Star program offers providers the opportunity to participate in a voluntary plan to improve the quality of child care by meeting program criteria that exceed the Minimum Standards for Child Care Licensing.

Texas Rising Star Criteria covers:

- FPS Licensing Compliance, Caregiver staff and Director qualifications, Staff orientation and ongoing staff development, Group Size, Activities, Caregiver-child interaction, Physical environment, Health/Safety, Nutrition/Mealtime, and Parental involvement.

Providers who are interested in being certified as Texas Rising Star Providers may ask their Provider Specialist for the necessary materials and information. Provider Specialists work closely with providers in the application, self-assessment, and formal assessment processes. Provider Specialists also monitor and provide technical assistance to providers who are in the Texas Rising Star processes.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

A child with a disability is defined as a child who is mentally or physically incapable of performing routine activities of daily living within the child's typical chronological range of development. A child is considered mentally or physically incapable of performing routine activities of daily living if the child requires assistance in performing tasks (major life activity) that are within the typical chronological range of development including but not limited to,

caring for oneself; performing manual tasks; walking; hearing; seeing; speaking; breathing; learning; and working.

Providers may be reimbursed for additional staff or equipment needed to assist in the care of a child with disabilities. A professional who is familiar with assessing the needs of the child with the disabilities must certify the need for a higher reimbursement rate.

If the certification is made, the provider will be paid up to 190% of the provider's reimbursement rate for a child of that same age, which is subject to the maximum reimbursement rate.

COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Providers have the right to have complaints or grievances heard without the threat of losing child care services. Providers should begin by explaining the problem or complaint to their Provider Specialist, if this is unsuccessful, provider may request a review by the Child Care Coordinator.

Providers may also request a review by the Workforce Solutions-Alamo staff. The request for review shall be submitted to AWS staff in writing and delivered to the AWS within 15 calendar days of the date of written notification of CCS adverse action. AWS shall review the written request, and ask for additional documentation from CCS and/or provider if needed. AWS shall issue its determination in writing to the provider and CCS within 30 days of receipt of the request for review. The provider and/or CCS may file an appeal to the Texas Workforce Commission if the provider or CCS disagrees with the outcome of the local review.