



COVID-19 Enrolment & Fees Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is valid from 6th April 2020 to such time as the Government declares an end to the Early Childhood and Education and Care Relief Package (ECECRP). It aims to provide procedures which guide best practice in ensuring families, children and staff at the service are best supported during the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes it brings. Due to rapidly changing developments within this period of Pandemic, this policy is subject to change in line with Government changes and directives.

PROCEDURE

The Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package (ECECRP) provisions

- The Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package (ECECRP) is a payment to support childcare services (including Centre Based Day Care, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and In-Home Care) to remain open. Due to the impact of COVID-19, the early childhood education and care sector has reported significant decreases in attendance and enrolments. These payments ensure services can remain open, and families who need it can access care.
- Under the ECECRP, the Government provides weekly payments, equivalent to approximately 50 per cent of HHOOSH Policy & Procedures services' fee revenue or 50 per cent of the existing hourly rate cap, whichever is lower, for sessions of care in the fortnight preceding 2 March 2020 (i.e. Monday 17 February 2020 through to 28 February 2020).
- The ECECRP is effective from the week beginning 6 April 2020. It replaces the Child Care Subsidy and the Additional Child Care Subsidy. This is effective until the week ending 28 June 2020 (unless advised otherwise).
- The provisions under the ECECRP include:
 - No childcare fees will be charged to families during the time that the ECECRP is in effect
 - HHOOSH will continue to provide meals and art supplies at no extra cost.
 - If administrative fees (e.g.: late pick up fees) were charged before the introduction of the scheme, these can continue however, the fees cannot be increased, and no extra fees can be introduced. Hence, HHOOSH will continue to charge administrative fees as per our existing Fee Scheduled
- Normal charging of fees and fee policy will resume at the cessation of the ECECRP scheme.

Enrolment of Children

- In accordance with Government regulations, care is prioritised to:
 - children of essential workers,
 - vulnerable and disadvantaged children and
 - previously enrolled children.



- When determining priority, proof of employment may be required.
- Any permanent bookings existing prior to 6th April 2020 will be held, unless cancelled in writing by the family.
- Any additional bookings (e.g.: additional sessions to an already existing enrolment) will be assessed on a case by case basis, as necessary.
- Any new enrolments will be assessed on a case by case basis, as necessary.
- During the pandemic, our regular staff to child ratios will be maintained; however, attendances will be determined by the space available at the service, taking into account physical distancing measures (refer to Pandemic – Covid-19 Risk Assessment) as well as available staffing and other operation costs.
- The service reserves the right to limit the number of enrolled children during the Pandemic in order to comply with recommended physical distancing measures as well as available staffing and other operation costs.
- Careful consideration of all aspects of service provision as well as risk management procedures will be undertaken in order to determine the maximum amount of care the service can provide to families, as well as ensuring priority for essential workers and vulnerable children. The safety of the service will not be compromised.
- All fees owing up until Friday 3 April 2020 must be paid in full. HHOOSH reserves the right to refuse care if fees from that period are not paid. Debt collecting agencies may be contracted to recover owing fees.

Additional Child Care Subsidy

- If a family's current ACCS (Wellbeing) determination continues past the end of the above package period, HHOOSH Policy & Procedures they will return to ACCS (Wellbeing) entitlement. If however, this determination expires during the period, our service will need to apply for a continued determination to ensure ACCS (Wellbeing) continues to be in effect once the ECECRP ceases.

Attendance and absences from childcare

- In accordance with ECECRP requirements, attendance information of children who attend our service will be recorded each day. This will be included in the statement provided to families.
- Families must inform the service of any attendance changes, otherwise a non-notification fee may apply as per our existing Fee Schedule.
- As per changes in Government provisions, families have access to 62 allowable absences in the 2019-2020 financial year, rather than the 42 allowable absence days without the need for families to provide documentation such as a medical certificate.
- Absences will not be counted during the ECECRP period. If there is cessation of care during the period of time ECECRP is in effect, and the child is absent on the last day of enrolment, any CCS received by the service will not be recovered.
- If a child presents to the service unwell (runny nose, cough, fever sore throat, shortness of breath, headache, lethargy or any other cold/flu symptoms) they must remain at home. This



is essential in protecting the health and wellbeing of all children and staff at the service. DEBASCA reserves the right to send children home if they present unwell at the service.

- Children should not attend the service if they have been administered Panadol or other fever reducing medication in the 12 hours prior to presenting at the service. If they have been administered Panadol/other fever reducing medication, the child must be kept at home.
- Families have an obligation to the service and other users of the service to ensure they are self-isolating and/or following social isolation guidelines as much as possible to reduce the likelihood of infection and spread of COVID-19 to staff and families at the service.

Closure of the Service

- The service will remain open unless the service has been advised to close by relevant state and territory governments or the Regulatory Authority. This may be due to a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our service community.
- Should this occur, all families will be notified immediately via email.
- The Approved Provider will notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of any closure via the NQA IT System
- The service will still receive ECECRP payment in the event of a forced closure.
- Services must stay open, with at least one active enrolment, to receive payment.
- If the service decides to close, and it has not been directed to do so for a valid health and safety reasons, no

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Reg 86 Notification to parents of incident Reg 88 Infectious diseases Reg 168 Policies and procedures	2.1.1 2.1.2 2.2 7.1.2	NSW Department of Health https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19 Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) https://www.dese.gov.au/covid-19/childcare	



VERSION CONTROL AND ENDORSEMENT

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