

PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES

Why is the Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program freezing new enrollments?

The Child Care Scholarship Program is freezing new enrollments due to a significant increase in participation and current budget limitations. The number of children served has grown from approximately 21,000 in January 2023 to over 45,000. As a result, the program has reached its maximum budget capacity for providing scholarships. The freeze allows the program to continue supporting currently enrolled families.

How will the freeze affect families who are currently receiving a scholarship?

The temporary enrollment freeze will affect new applications only. Families currently enrolled in the CCS Program will continue to receive their benefits without interruption, provided they continue to meet eligibility and program requirements and complete the recertification process on time.

Can I still apply for the scholarship during the freeze, and what happens to my application if I do?

Families may continue to submit CCS Program applications at any time, including on or after May 1, when the enrollment freeze begins. Applications submitted during the freeze will be processed, and if determined eligible and approved, families will be added to a frozen status list.

When will the freeze be lifted?

The freeze will be lifted once additional funding becomes available. To ensure the program remains stable and can continue supporting families already receiving assistance, the frozen status list will stay in place until the budget can support new enrollments.

As children naturally leave the program—such as when they age out or no longer need care—families from the frozen status list will be invited to enroll, helping us maintain a steady number of children served.

Are there any alternative resources or assistance available for families who cannot receive a scholarship during the freeze?

Yes. While the Child Care Scholarship Program is frozen, there are other resources that may help families pay for child care. Be sure to check with each program or resource directly to see if you meet their eligibility requirements.

- Head Start and Early Head Start: These programs are free for eligible low-income families and offer early learning, health, and family support services for children from birth to age 5.
- Military Child Care Assistance: Military families may qualify for financial help through special programs, no matter where they are stationed. Visit the [Child Care Financial Assistance for Military Families](#) page to learn more.
- Local Assistance and Scholarships: Some child care providers and nonprofit organizations offer financial help or scholarships. Ask providers you are considering if they offer any assistance.
- Sibling Discounts: Some providers offer discounts if you enroll more than one child, such as a reduced rate or waived fees. Be sure to ask about this when exploring options.
- Military Discounts: Some civilian providers offer discounts for active-duty military families. Always ask if this is available.
- Employer-Sponsored Child Care Benefits:
 - Some employers offer Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), which let you set aside pre-tax income to pay for child care.
 - Others may offer onsite child care or partner with providers who offer employee discounts. Check with your human resources department to see what is available.
- College or University Child Care: Some higher education institutions offer child care services on campus, often with discounts for students, faculty, and staff. Contact your college or university for details.
- Pre-K for 3- and 4-Year-Olds: State-funded Pre-K programs are available for eligible 3- and 4-year-olds. These programs are offered through public schools and private providers, including family child care, child care centers, and Head Start programs. Contact your local school district for availability and eligibility information.
- [Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance Program](#): This program is for families residing in Montgomery County with incomes above the initial income scale for the CCS Program as listed on money4childcare.com.
- [Parent and Provider Consumer Education Guide](#): This resource provides information that supports families and child care providers.

These resources can help fill the gap while the scholarship program enrollment is on hold.

How will I know if or when my application will be approved for benefits?

Be sure to regularly check your portal account for updates on your frozen status, application status, or requests for additional information.

If I am on the frozen status list, how will I be notified that I received a scholarship?

You will receive notification through the Child Care Scholarship Portal or by email when you receive a scholarship.

Will I be able to submit a Fast-Track Application during the enrollment freeze?

During the enrollment freeze, Fast-Track applications will not be processed. You must complete the full application to be determined eligible to be on the scholarship frozen status list.

What does it mean to be placed on the frozen status list, and how does that work?

Being on the frozen status list means your family qualifies for help, but a scholarship cannot be given yet because of limited funds. You will receive notification through the Child Care Scholarship Portal or by email when a scholarship is available for your family.

If I start child care now and pay my child care provider, will I be reimbursed later if my application is approved after the freeze?

No. If you begin child care while on the frozen status list, neither you nor your child care provider will be reimbursed for any costs incurred before your scholarship is officially issued. Scholarships cannot be backdated to cover care provided for families who have not been issued a scholarship, including during the freeze.