



Updates 11-23-22: Policy Changes and Improvements to the Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program

Justin Dayhoff <justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov>

Wed, Nov 23, 2022 at 4:08 PM

Dear Child Care Provider,

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has begun the internal steps required to implement the policies identified in MSDE's Policy Changes and Improvements to the Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program Memorandum, dated October 20, 2022 (re-attached, for reference). This email is being sent individually. Due to limitations on the number of emails being sent each day from my email and the number of providers this email is going to, some providers will receive this email on November 23rd, some will receive this email after November 23rd. Providers do not need to worry if they do not receive this email on November 23rd.

As the memorandum indicated, MSDE would communicate openly with the community throughout the process. Today, the Department is sharing some updates. This is not the last email communication and it is not the only email communication. This is not an exhaustive list of updates -- there will be more to come. MSDE will continue to release details and updates when they are available so that everyone is clear about and ready for upcoming CCS program policy modifications.

Advanced Payments Policy Details

The policy memorandum for advanced payments references two payment dates each month, the first (1st) and fifteenth (15th). What does that mean for providers? When will providers be paid? How much will providers be paid since each month has a different number of days?

- MSDE will begin its payment processing on the 1st/15th of each month. That means, providers will receive payment (if providers receive direct deposit) starting the 6th and 21st of each month. Not all providers will be paid on the 6th/21st but that is when payments will start to be issued from the Comptroller.
- MSDE will divide the total amount a provider is due each month into two, equal payments.
- MSDE will calculate payments based on the number of days each month so that rates will differ, but MSDE will also be sending out new monthly emails, in addition to the invoice detail reports, that explain the numbers used in generating each month's total amount.

MSDE is not paying based on attendance anymore, will there still be attendance invoice reports?

- Attendance/Invoice Reports are still required within 60 days of the end of the service period. If the Attendance/Invoice Report is not received within 60 days, MSDE will have to take back the amount of the advanced payment for that invoice during the reconciliation month because MSDE will assume children have not attended for 60 days, which means MSDE would need to stop payment.

Generally, attendance adjustments will not affect monthly payment amounts since scholarship payments are now based on enrollment rather than attendance. There are two exceptions:

- Informal Providers are not paid for absences and holidays. When absences are reported for Informal Providers, an overpayment will be established to recover the advanced payment; and
- If a child is absent more than 60 days in a year and does not have a medical waiver an overpayment will be established for the excessive absences (see 60-day policy, above).

How will MSDE calculate payments when a voucher or EXCELS participation ends in a given month?

- If a voucher ends in the previous month, it will not be included in the next month's advanced payment.
 - For example, if a voucher ends in December, it will not be included in January's advanced payment.
- If a voucher ends in the middle of a month, the advanced payment will only include amounts up until the expiration of a given voucher.
 - For example, if a voucher ends in the middle of January, say January 11, the advanced payment amount will only include days up to January 11.

- EXCELS participation is a requirement for CCS program participation. If a provider's EXCELS participation ends in the middle of a month, MSDE will not include payment amounts for dates after EXCELS expiration if participation is not renewed before MSDE calculates the advanced payments for that month.
 - For example, if a provider's EXCELS participation ends in the middle of January, say January 22, the advanced payment amount will not include payment for any vouchers from January 23 to January 31, the days after the EXCELS participation ends. If EXCELS participation is renewed during January, the January gap days of Jan 23 to Jan 31 will then be paid retroactively in the reconciling month. For January, reconciling will occur in April.

Other Policy Questions:

- Registered Family Home Providers who are Service Employee International Union (SEIU) members will continue to have union dues and COPE deducted from the Advanced Payments, based on the information the union has provided us. Union deductions will be taken for each of the two payments in the month.
- Maryland EXCELS Tier Payments will be added to the Advanced Payment based on the Provider's quality rating.

MSDE will continue to provide updates and communication as it transitions its policies. In the meantime, thank you once again for all you do -- and Happy Thanksgiving.

Best,

Justin

--



Justin Dayhoff (He/Him)

Assistant State Superintendent
Financial Planning, Operations, and Strategy

O: (410) 767-0439

C: (443) 257-8767

justin.dayhoff@maryland.gov

200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

marylandpublicschools.org



The information contained in this communication (including any attachments) may be confidential and legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication or any of its contents is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please re-send this communication to the sender indicating that it was received in error and delete the original message and any copy of it from your computer system.

 **MSDE_CCS Memo_FINAL (4).pdf**
268K