

# CDD.1025: Application Processing

**Category:** Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)

**Authority:** 33 V.S.A. § 3512

**Last revised date:** 10/07/2024

**Effective date:** 11/22/2024

## Overview

This policy guides the Child Development Division and Eligibility Specialists in ensuring consistent practice statewide throughout the child care financial assistance eligibility determination process.

## Updates

This document has been updated with the changes listed below:

1. Clarify electronic signature validity in Section A.1.b.
2. Refine Children’s Integrated Services connections in Section A.6.
3. Change name of Section B from “CDDIS Management” to “Case Management.”
4. Include the Children’s Integrated Services Specialized Child Care Coordinator in Section B.
5. Expansion of consent to exchange information in Section B.5.

All changes are highlighted in gray below.

## Policy

A family’s eligibility for financial assistance **must** be reviewed and redetermined annually. The family **must** be notified that their eligibility period is ending no less than one month (30 days) before eligibility terminates. Child care financial assistance may be retroactive for up to two service periods (**not** to exceed 30 days) if the primary caretaker(s) can document that the family was eligible and had a service need during that period of time.

## Procedure

### A. General Application Information

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1. The primary caretaker **must** submit a Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) application to the [Community Child Care Support Agency \(CCCSA\)](#) serving their geographical area.
  - a. Applications may be completed online in the CDDIS Parent Portal or as a paper application.
  - b. All applications **must** be signed and dated.
    - i. **Note:** Electronic or typed signatures are valid for online applications or paper applications submitted digitally or printed.
  - c. Applications without a signature **cannot** be processed and will be returned to the primary caretaker for completion.
2. Assistance begins on the Sunday of the week the family is determined eligible and the child begins care.
  - a. The start date for financial assistance may be set up to 2 service periods before (**not** to exceed 30 days) the date the family is determined eligible if:
    - i. The child was placed with a licensed, registered, or certified child care provider.
    - ii. The primary caretaker(s) can document service need and income eligibility during that period.
    - iii. The primary caretaker requests the alternative date of their application.
  - b. **Note:** The Eligibility Specialist may submit a request to the Child Development Division if an alternative start date more than two pay periods before the approval date is necessary.
  - c. A primary caretaker may request certificates with specific start and/or end dates that are within their 12-month eligibility period. The primary caretaker **must** note this information on the application or submit the request by phone or email.
    - i. The Eligibility Specialist **must** document this request and make a note in CDDIS.
3. The child care provider **must** be registered, licensed, or certified for payment.
  - a. Payments are **not** made until the child care provider is approved. The Eligibility Specialist will communicate this requirement to the primary caretaker if the provider chosen by the family does **not** meet this requirement.
  - b. **Note:** The Eligibility Specialist will check for child care provider license start date and rate agreement if the provider is found in CDDIS but a certificate **cannot** be created.

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4. A family **must** report changes to their circumstances following the CDD.1060 Reporting Changes policy once eligibility has been determined and a certificate is created.
5. The Eligibility Specialist may provide an Approved Relative Child Care provider packet to the primary caregiver after eligibility determination has been made and the primary caregiver states that the provider is a relative of the child.
6. Families with specialized service needs may be referred to Children's Integrated Services Specialized Child Care.
  - a. A family can access Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Specialized Child Care through various pathways. Examples of possible pathways include, but are **not** limited to:
    - i. A CCFAP application with the box checked for Family Support Child Care or Child with Special Health Needs.
    - ii. An Eligibility Specialist may refer a family to a Children's Integrated Services Specialized Child Care Coordinator (CIS SCCC) if a family indicates they are experiencing homelessness.
    - iii. An Eligibility Specialist may refer a family to CIS SCCC if a family has indicated a child's citizenship status as "Qualified Immigrant" or "none of the above" and the family indicates they are experiencing stress.
    - iv. An Eligibility Specialist may refer a family to a CIS SCCC if the CCFAP application is denied due to income and the family indicates significant stress.
    - v. An Eligibility Specialist may refer a family to a CIS SCCC if the CCFAP application is approved and the family indicates significant stressors that prevent them from covering the approved family share costs or the child from attending care regularly.
    - vi. A community partner may make a referral on behalf of a family.
    - vii. A family may contact a CIS Coordinator or CIS SCCC to make a referral.
  - b. Depending on the pathway a family is referred to CIS Specialized Child Care:
    - i. The Eligibility Specialist will work with the CIS SCCC to transfer the CCFAP application in a manner that best supports the family.
      1. The Eligibility Specialist **must** obtain verbal consent from the family to transfer the file to a CIS SCCC and complete a CIS Referral Form.

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- a. **Exception:** If the CCFAP application has either the Family Support Child Care or Child with Special Health Needs box checked on the CCFAP application, additional consent does **not** need to be obtained.
2. The Eligibility Specialist will transfer the CCFAP application with all necessary documentation to a CIS SCCC and note this transfer in the CDDIS case comments.
  - ii. The CIS SCCC will work with the family to complete the CCFAP application and any additionally required documents.
7. ~~CIS referral~~
  - a. ~~The Eligibility Specialist may complete the CIS Referral Form, with the primary caretaker's consent, and send it to the CIS Child Care Coordinator.~~
  - b. ~~The Eligibility Specialist will consider a CIS Referral if:~~
    - i. ~~A family is denied CCFAP and wants to pursue Family Support Child Care;~~
    - ii. ~~A family indicates they have a child with Special Health Needs;~~
    - iii. ~~A family indicates significant stressors that prevent them from covering the approved family share costs or if the CCFAP application has been denied due to income;~~
    - iv. ~~A family indicates they are experiencing homelessness;~~
    - v. ~~A family lists a child's citizenship status as 'qualified immigrant' or 'none of the above' and the family indicates they are experiencing stress.~~
  - c. ~~The CIS Child Care Coordinator will process all necessary paperwork, approvals, denials, appeals, and enter data into CDDIS. Refer to the CDD.1135 Family Support Child Care Program policy for more details.~~
8. Eligibility is determined annually, and the family share remains the same during the approved period except as stated in the CDD.1060 Reporting Changes policy.
9. A child retains their eligibility until the next redetermination regardless of any change in age, including turning 13 years old during the eligibility period.
  - a. A child care provider **must** contact their licenser for a variance for children over the age of 13 years old.

## B. Case Management

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1. The Eligibility Specialist / Children’s Integrated Services Specialized Child Care Coordinator (CIS SCCC) **must** note all contact with the applying family in the case comments within CDDIS.
2. Application Processing:
  - a. Each Regional Agency may follow their own internal process to:
    - i. Date stamp paper applications and any additional documentation to verify the date received.
    - ii. Determine who best to be designated the application case owner in CDDIS.
    - iii. **Note:** A CIS SCCC will be the application case owner when only a specialized service need is checked off on the CCFAP application or when it has been determined during application processing that the family would benefit from having the application processed using a specialized service need.
    - iv. **Note:** If an application requires support from a CIS SCCC, the application does **not** need to be denied before transferring to the CIS SCCC.
  - b. The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC **must** enter all applications received in CDDIS
    - i. Refer to the CDDIS Training Manual for step-by-step processes and screen shots.
  - c. The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will calculate the hours for each primary caretaker based on their service need.
    - i. The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will enter the activity type and click “yes” for flexible schedule.
    - ii. The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC may enter one of the following in the hours per week box:
      1. If the service need hours including travel time are between 1-25 enter 25.
      2. If the service need hours including travel time are between 26-40 enter 40.
      3. If the service need hours including travel time exceed 40, enter actual hours.
3. Household Members: The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will
  - a. Determine the number of approved child care hours per week based on the primary caretaker(s) schedule. This number should be the lower amount if there are two caretakers.

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- i. This number transfers to the child's authorization.
  - b. Enter the child care hours using the maximum hours that can be authorized based on the primary caretaker(s) schedule.
    - i. **Note:** The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will check for overlapping caretaker's schedules and the child's school schedule before authorizing child care.
  - c. Enter the total hours for the child in "approved number of hours" field.
  - d. Document the number of hours that are specific to "Child with Special Needs" in the "Additional Child Care Hours Needed" field if the case has at least one child that has additional hours of care due to being a "Child with Special Needs."
  - e. Check the box associated if a child receives Universal Prekindergarten (Act 166) funds. This is a recordkeeping field only.
4. Income & Expense: The Eligibility Specialist will
  - a. Enter all income and allowable expenses for the family.
    - i. If a primary caretaker has more than one source of income or allowable expense, list each source separately.
      1. *Example:* Child support paid out or education savings plan.
    - ii. **Note:** Special attention is necessary when deciding if income is received weekly, biweekly, twice a month, or monthly.
  - b. View the calculation of total countable income to verify the amount is correct in CDDIS.
5. Consent to Exchange Information:
  - a. The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC may only exchange information with people or organizations the family has given consent to exchange information with. Refer to CDD.1185: Subpoenas, Client Requests for Information, and Consent to Exchange Information policy for further guidance.
6. Missing Document Notice, when applicable:
  - a. An Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will issue a Missing Document Notice through CDDIS when an application is entered and additional information is required to determine eligibility.
  - b. A family will have 10 business days from the Missing Document Notice issue date to return the requested information.
    - i. If a primary caretaker states that they are unable to get the documentation by the specified due date, an Eligibility Specialist /

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CIS SCCC may grant additional time and make a note in CDDIS case comments.

- c. The Missing Document Notice in CDDIS **must** be used for all requests for information. CDDIS allows multiple Missing Document Notices to be generated under an application.
    - i. **Note:** Desktop letters requesting information should **not** be used.
  - d. If an Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC sends a Missing Document Notice to the primary caretaker and the requested information is **not** received by the specified due date (10 business days from the date of notice creation), the Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will “reject” the application within 5 business days of the due date.
  - e. For CDDIS step-by-step instructions, follow training guidance on sending a Missing Document Notice in CDDIS.
7. Submission of Application/Eligibility Determination: The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will
- a. Determine eligibility after the application is complete.
    - i. Application outcomes available include:
      1. Eligible
      2. Denied
      3. Rejected
  - b. Refer to the CDD.1045 Application Denial Process policy if the eligibility determination is anything other than “Eligible.”
  - c. Enter the start date, end date, and redetermination date of eligibility on the determination eligibility page if the outcome is “Eligible.”
    - i. The start and end date **must** be 12 months apart.
    - ii. The start date **must** begin on a Sunday and the start of the service period.
      1. The Sunday start date is determined by the week that the child is starting care.
    - iii. The end date **must** be the Saturday of the end of the service period that ensures a full 12 months (365 days or more) of eligibility.
    - iv. *Examples:*
      1. Child begins care on July 18, 2022 – eligibility dates are 07/17/2022-07/29/2023.
      2. Child begins care on July 27, 2022 – eligibility dates are 07/24/2022-07/29/2023

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- d. **Exception:** The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC may override the approval on the eligibility determination page to override the family share for a child when one or more children in an application are adopted or receive a Reach Up Child Only grant.
8. Creating Authorizations: The Eligibility Specialist / CIS SCCC will
- a. Save the eligibility determination.
  - b. Follow CDD.1050 Child Care Authorizations and Certificates policy for certificate creation processes.