

CDD.1050: Child Care Authorizations and Certificates

Category: Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)

Authority: 33 V.S.A. § 3512; 33 V.S.A. § 3514

Previous revised date: 11/22/2024

Effective date: 09/15/2025

Overview

When a family is approved for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), a child care authorization is created, and a certificate/statement of eligibility is produced. The certificate is the Child Development Division's promise to provide the approved financial assistance amount to the child care provider on behalf of the family.

Updates

This document has been updated to include these changes:

1. Fixed grammatical errors.
2. Reorganized information in section B. Certificates and Scenarios.
3. Added information about the flexibility for creating certificates in B(1).
4. Added information about the hierarchy of certificate assignments in B(2).
5. Added clarifying information about certificates for children who are scheduled to attend a program full time during the summer in B(4)(b).
6. Added clarifying information about when a child may not have a certificate that is aligned with program rules in B(5).
7. Simplified B(7)(c).
8. Simplified B(8).
9. Removed B(9).
10. Removed Section D. Ad Hoc and Certificates.

All changes are highlighted in gray below.

Policy

A child care authorization is created when a primary caretaker has applied for child care financial assistance and has been determined eligible within CCFAP. A child care certificate is created when a child is enrolled with a specific child care program.

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Procedure

A. Authorizations and Certificates

1. Three types of child care authorizations may be created. These include:
 - a. Part time – 25 hours or less.
 - b. Full time – 26 hours or more.
 - c. Extended Care – 51 hours or more.
2. Five types of certificates may be generated. These include:
 - a. Part-time weekly: pays a fixed part-time payment for 1-25 hours of child care.
 - b. Full-time weekly: pays a fixed full-time payment for 26-50 hours of child care.
 - c. Extended care weekly: pays an extended care payment for 51+ hours of child care.
 - d. Variable: pays a full-time, part-time, or extended-care daily rate based upon the number of hours the child attends on that day. When approved codes are entered instead of attended hours, payment will be based on the part-time daily rate. In extenuating circumstances, a request can be made for CDD to pay a full-time daily rate on a variable certificate when codes are used instead of hours of attendance.
 - e. Full time/part time (FT/PT): pays either a full-time or part-time weekly rate based upon the attendance submitted by the provider. This is limited to preschool and school age children only and is only used during the school year. The authorization hours **must** be full time to allow for a full-time payment and the certificate hours **must** be set at 25 with the FT/PT box checked in CDDIS. Providers will only check the “If FT/PT” box in CDDIS if all the following criteria are met:
 - i. The child was enrolled to attend at least 26 hours of care, and
 - ii. During this care, the child’s regular school or program was **not** available to them, and
 - iii. Coded days are being used instead of hours of attendance.

B. Certificates and Scenarios

1. Certificates may be created for any date within the 12-month authorization period provided no additional documentation is needed to verify continued service need.

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- a. *Example:* An application is received and processed in March for a child who is attending a summer program only. The summer certificate may be created in March.
2. When certificates are created for families with a family share greater than \$0, the family share is assigned to certificates based on a hierarchy as follows:
 - a. First, all certificates where the provider is a registered or licensed provider and the schedule is fixed part time, full time, or extended care, are ordered by the age of the child from youngest to oldest.
 - b. Next, all certificates where the provider is an Approved Relative Child Care (ARCC) provider are ordered by the age of the child from youngest to oldest.
 - c. Any remaining certificates will be for registered or licensed providers with a variable schedule. This subset of certificates is ordered by the age of the child from youngest to oldest.
 - d. **Exception:** The family share may be assigned in a different way than the hierarchy in exceptional circumstances as approved by CDD.
3. The eligibility specialist **must not** create certificates for more hours than what is requested by the primary caretaker and **not** more than the child care operating hours.
 - a. *Example:* Family is eligible for full-time care (40 hours); however, the “Tell Us About Your Child Care Provider” section of the application indicates care is needed Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00-2:00 p.m. (18 hours). The authorization is created for 40 hours but the certificate is created for 25 hours.
4. All certificates for preschool and school-aged children who are attending school **must** end at the end of the school year, unless the primary caretaker has indicated on their application or communicated to the eligibility specialist that the child will be attending the same provider during the summer months.
 - a. A summer schedule will be requested for preschool or school-aged children who are eligible and do **not** have certificates for the summer months.
 - b. Certificates for preschool and school-aged children who are scheduled to attend full time during the summer will be created as full-time fixed certificates, **not** FT/PT. This is to prevent issues with providers being paid a part-time rate if the child attends part time hours when they were scheduled to attend full time.
5. Children may **not** have a certificate when:
 - a. It is determined that 24-hour in-home child care is necessary.

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- b. A primary caretaker is providing child care for other families (other than licensed child care providers or registered family child care home providers).
 - c. A child has been suspended from school.
 - d. A primary caretaker is able and available to provide adequate and necessary care and supervision.
 - e. Regular public school programs are available for the eligible child.
 - i. **Exception:** Children may be eligible for a part-time or full-time certificate when a public school program is **not** considered available to the eligible child.
 - 1. **Example:** The public school is unable to accommodate the preschool or school-aged child's needs, the child is five years old and eligible for kindergarten, or the child is enrolled in an independent school or a home study program.
 - ii. The primary caretaker may submit a request for an exception to be made to their eligibility specialist. The request **must** include why a certificate is needed. CDD will review and approve these exceptions on a case-by-case basis.
6. Two fixed part time certificates on a part time authorization (25 hours) is **not** allowed.
7. Two fixed part time certificates are allowable when all the following criteria are met. Eligibility specialists **must** document these situations in the CDDIS case comments.
- a. The child is eligible for full time or extended care,
 - b. The child is scheduled to regularly attend both programs every week, and
 - i. If they are **not** scheduled to attend a program every week, a variable certificate will be created for a specific short term time frame as needed instead of a fixed part time certificate.
 - c. The primary caretaker has indicated that more than one provider is needed. ~~Due to the primary provider's limited hours of operation, capacity or due to transportation~~
 - i. ~~Exception: if a primary caretaker indicates a need for an additional provider due to another reason, the eligibility specialist may contact the CDD grant monitor for clarification.~~
8. A fixed certificate for full-time and a fixed certificate for part-time care is allowable when the following criteria are met. (Eligibility specialists **must** document these situations in the CDDIS case comments.)
- a. The child is eligible for full time or extended care, and;

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- i. **Note:** Two full time certificates are **not** allowed with extended care hours.
 - b. The child is scheduled to attend each program every week, and;
 - i. If they are **not** scheduled to attend a program every week, a variable certificate will be created as needed instead of a fixed part time certificate.
 - c. The primary caretaker has indicated that more than one provider is needed.
9. ~~If a child is authorized for extended care hours (51+) and the child attends two different child care providers, a fixed full time certificate and a fixed part time certificate may be created. Two full time certificates are **not** allowed with extended care hours/~~
10. A full-time certificate can be created for a school-age child if the primary caretaker(s) is working the second shift and the provider is licensed or registered for the hours requested. Eligibility specialists **must** document these situations in the CDDIS case comments.
11. When custody is shared between two primary caretakers and each caretaker has an eligible authorization, **two** part-time certificates may be created for the same provider. Two full-time certificates and/or a full-time certificate and a part-time certificate may **not** be created for one provider.
12. Variable certificates are to be used temporarily. Eligibility specialists may only issue when a fixed certificate **cannot** be generated and/or when the child's attendance with the provider is sporadic.
- a. *Example:* A child is attending an alternate child care provider due to their regular child care provider being closed.
13. Any situation that occurs, other than those listed above, **must** be approved by CCFAP grant monitors.
14. Child care certificates are based upon the primary caretaker's authorized hours. Certificates are **not** based upon a provider's needs. If the primary caretakers approved schedule is part time, the certificate will be part time even if the provider states they only accept full-time certificates. The provider and primary caretaker will need to determine if the child can attend part time and/or if there is additional payment from the primary caretaker needed for hours that are **not** authorized through CCFAP. Alternatively, the primary caretaker could choose a different provider that does accept part time certificates. ~~provider's full time rate.~~
15. Certificates can only be created for providers that are either licensed, registered, or certified for payment with the State of Vermont.

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- a. If the provider is in CDDIS and a certificate is **not** able to be created, the eligibility specialist will check for license start date and rate agreement.
 - b. If the provider is **not** registered, licensed, or certified for payment, the eligibility specialist **must** notify the primary caretaker and explain the provider requirements.
16. **Note:** If a child changes age categories during the eligibility period, two authorizations will be created for the child. The authorization will change on the Sunday after the child's birthday.
17. **Exception:** Authorizations for income-exempt children are only created when the rest of the application is denied.
- a. *Example:* If an application is approved for all children, authorizations are created for all children; however, the exempt child(ren) will **not** have a family share assigned. The eligibility specialist shall create two applications, one for the child(ren) with an override and one for the child(ren) without an override, to authorize children who are exempt and **not** exempt.

C. Early Ending Certificates

1. Before early ending a certificate, the eligibility specialist will verify if a family share is owed on the current authorization.
 - a. If there is a family share, the eligibility specialist will follow the ~~Ad Hoc~~ guidance for early ending certificates and creating new certificates if needed.
 - b. If there is no family share, certificates can be early ended on the Saturday prior to the start of new certificates or the Saturday after the child(ren's) last day of attendance.
2. The eligibility specialist will early end a certificate when a notice is received due to the provider checking the box 'The Child No Longer Enrolled' and after communicating with the primary caretaker. The eligibility specialist shall confirm the following information with the primary caretaker:
 - a. The last day of care with the current provider,
 - b. If notice was provided,
 - c. The date notice was provided, and
 - d. If a new certificate is needed for a different provider.
3. The eligibility specialist may early end the certificate and document the action in the comments section of CDDIS if a response from the primary caretaker is **not** received. The 12-month authorization will remain open.

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4. If the primary caretaker reports their child is no longer attending or has a change in child care providers or change in child care schedule, the certificate may be early ended and a new one created to accommodate the changes.

~~D. Ad Hoc and Certificates~~

- ~~1. eligibility specialists will refer to CDDIS training materials for when the Ad Hoc process is necessary to correctly assign the family share.~~

E. Universal Prekindergarten (Act 166)

1. Child care certificate hours are based on the primary caretaker and their family's authorized hours (25, 40, or actual hours beyond 40), the hours the child(ren) are at the child care program and the operating hours of the child care program.
2. If the child is enrolled in a universal prekindergarten program, the eligibility specialist **must** select the Act 166 button on the application in CDDIS and determine the number of hours to be deducted from the certificate.
3. *Example scenarios:*
 - a. A primary caretaker is authorized for 40 hours per week and their child attends pre-k at a full day/full week childcare program. A full-time 30-hour certificate is created.
 - b. A primary caretaker is authorized for 25 hours per week and their child attends pre-k at a full day/full week child care program. A part-time 15-hour certificate is created.
 - c. A primary caretaker is authorized for 40 hours per week. Child attends pre-k at an elementary school for 10 hours per week; however, these hours are **not** during the primary caretaker's authorized work hours. The child then attends the childcare center while the primary caretaker is working. A 40-hour certificate is created.
 - d. A primary caretaker is authorized for 40 hours per week; however, the childcare program is open less than 40 hours per week. The pre-k hours are deducted from the provider's total operating hours and the hours remaining determine the certificate hours.
 - i. *Example:* Provider operates from 8:00-2:00 (30 hours per week) and provides the pre-k program for 10 hours per week. A 20-hour certificate is created.
 - e. Child care program is only open for universal prekindergarten. No CCFAP certificates are created.