



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and Fraud: Questions and Answers for Child Care Centers

What is the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)?

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides financial assistance to families with low incomes. It helps parents pay for child care while they work and learn job skills to support their families. It also helps children prepare to enter school and makes sure they are in safe care when not with their parents.

What are the Child Care Assistance Program laws?

Child care providers and families who use CCAP must follow CCAP's laws. Failure to follow CCAP laws could result in serious consequences. Some of these laws are listed below. You can find more of the program's laws in the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Child Care Provider Guide ([DHS-5260](#)). If you have questions about CCAP laws, contact the county.

Billing

Providers can only bill for days and times when children are authorized by CCAP. **It is against the law to bill CCAP for days when a child DOES NOT attend, unless you bill those days as absent days or holidays.**

For more information, see [Minnesota Statutes, section 119B.13, subdivision 7](#) and [Minnesota Rules, part 3400.0110, subpart 9](#).

Absent Days

CCAP will pay for up to 25 total absent days per calendar year (not to exceed 10 days in a row).

Centers can only bill CCAP for absent days if:

- The child was absent AND
- Your policy is to bill ALL families for absent days AND
- The scheduled hours are marked on your attendance records as an absent day AND
- Your center is open and care is available.

If a child is absent for part of a day, the payment for that day will be for the amount of care that is scheduled for that day, and the day will not count toward the 25-day limit.

After a child uses all of his/her absent days for the year,

- The family can continue getting CCAP
- CCAP will pay for days when a child attends child care
- CCAP will not pay for any days when a child does not go to child care at all
- The family is responsible for any absent days that CCAP does not pay.

Holidays

CCAP will pay for up to 10 holidays per year if:

- You are closed and not providing care AND
- You charge all families for these days AND
- The holiday falls on a day when the child is authorized and scheduled to be in attendance.

If you are open on the holiday, but the child is absent, you must bill the day as an absent day.

Other cultural or religious holidays may be substituted for 10 recognized state and federal holidays if the parent or provider notifies the county of the substitution prior to, or within, 10 days after the holiday.

Attendance Records

You must keep daily attendance records for six years at the place where care is provided.

These attendance records MUST:

- Be immediately available upon request of the county, tribe, or the Department of Human Services (DHS) even if the owner, director, or controlling individual is not at the center.
- Be a true record of the days and times each child arrives at and leaves your center. Records must include the date of service, child's full name, and sign in and out times. Each day the child attends, the person picking up or dropping off the child should be the one to sign the child in and out.

For centers that transport children to and from child care, the parent or guardian is still required to sign the children in and out at the time the bus picks up and drops off the children at their home.

Reporting Child Absences

You are required to report the following attendance information:

- When a child has been absent for more than seven days in a row
- When a child attends less than half of its authorized hours or days for a four-week period
- When you believe that child care will be ending
- When child care has ended.

When a child's attendance drops to less than half of its authorized hours or days for a four-week period, you must report this in the Comments section of the Billing Form.

Employing Parents Who Receive CCAP

CCAP cannot pay for children to attend a child care center where their parents work if more than half of the children attending the center are receiving CCAP and are children or dependents of center employees. For more information about this law, see the "Child Care Assistance Program Payments for Children of Center Employees - Questions and Answers for Providers" form ([DHS-6960A](#)).

What if I don't follow the law?

Failure to follow CCAP laws could result in serious consequences, such as:

- Being disqualified from serving as a provider for all programs administered by DHS
- Having to pay back money that CCAP paid, and/or
- Receiving a fraud determination (see below for more information).

What is fraud?

Fraud means that you knowingly gave the government false information to get public assistance for yourself or someone else. "Public assistance" includes programs like CCAP, cash assistance, SNAP, and Medical Assistance.

It's very important that you provide **true, complete and current** information to the county and DHS.

Know what you are signing

When you sign a form as a provider, either a paper or an electronic form, you are stating to the government that all of the information you provided is true and accurate. You agree that any misrepresentations or failure to provide accurate information can result in possible administrative, civil and criminal sanctions against you, as well as the owners, license holders, controlling individuals and/or the provider/entity.

Fraud penalties

If you commit fraud, you may lose your right to be a provider for any DHS program. You may also have to:

- Pay back the money or public assistance benefits that you wrongfully received
- Pay additional fines to the court
- Go to jail or prison.

Who can I call to report fraud?

People who are dishonest about information related to public assistance benefits cause serious trouble for themselves and others. If you think someone is cheating or breaking the law, please help by reporting it. To report suspected fraud, contact the DHS Fraud Hotline:

- 800-627-9977 toll-free outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area
- 651-431-3968 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area
- Online at: <https://fraudhotline.dhs.mn.gov/>

You do not have to give your name when you report fraud.

651-431-3809

Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

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LB3-0001 (3-13)



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