



WELFARE RIGHTS & ADVOCACY SERVICE

Child Care Payments – changes from 2 July 2018

From 2 July 2018, Child Care Subsidy (CSS) will replace the current Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate payments. CSS will be paid directly to the Child Care Service provider.

Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) will replace Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB), Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA) and Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB).

Am I eligible for Child Care Subsidy (CSS)?

You will only be eligible for CCS if:

- you use an approved Child Care Service;
- your child is 0 -13 and not attending secondary school;
- your child is up to date with their immunisations;
- you and your partner meet the income test;
- you and your partner meet the residency test; AND
- you and your partner are participating in an approved activity or have an exemption - this will determine the number of hours you can be paid CSS.

What do I need to do?

You should receive a letter from Centrelink advising you what to do if you currently receive:

- Child Care Benefit for approved care
- Child Care Rebate

You will need to complete a Child Care Subsidy Assessment.

How do I complete a Child Care Subsidy assessment?

You can access the CCS Assessment by signing into your Centrelink online account through myGov.

Then select *Complete your Child Care Subsidy assessment task*.

You will need to answer all the questions which can include:

- an estimate of your family income for 2018/19;
- you and your partner's hours of work, training, study or other activity approved for Child Care Subsidy;
- Travel time between the Child Care Centre and work, training, study, or other approved activity;
- school level of your child;
- confirmation of your child's enrolment details;
- information about whether you or your partner are a Grandparent Carer, receiving Carers Payment/Allowance or have a severe disability.

You may also need to provide Centrelink with some more details, such as:

- you and your partner's Tax File Number (TFN);
- other evidence as required.

Note: If you have not completed an online Child Care Subsidy Assessment before 2 July 2018, your child care payments will cease and you will need to lodge a new claim for Child Care Subsidy. If this happens then you will only receive CCS from the date you lodge the claim.

What happens if I don't have an online Centrelink account?

You can either set up a MyGov Account on the internet and then register for a Centrelink online account or ring the Centrelink Families line on 13 6150.

If you are unsure how to set up a Centrelink online account and need help you can either go to your local Centrelink Office, ring myGov Help Desk on 132 307 or go in person to:

myGov Perth
Shop 15, Wesley Quarter
770 Hay Street Perth CBD

What happens if I use a registered Child Care provider?

If you use a registered child care provider then you will no longer be paid Child Care Benefit after the 2 July 2018 and you will not be eligible for CSS.

If you are not sure whether you are using a registered child care provider you need to check with Centrelink.

If you want to receive CSS you will need to organise for your child to attend an approved child care service.

Information about approved child care services can be found on the MyChild website at: <https://www.mychild.gov.au/> or you can telephone 1800 670 305.

Can I claim CSS as a lump sum at the end of the 2018/19 financial year?

Lump sum claims for Child Care Payments will cease after the 2017/2018 financial year.

You can still claim Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) as a lump sum for approved child care you used before 2 July 2018. You and your partner will need to complete your 2017/18 tax returns and lodge your lump sum claim before 30 June 2019.

Note: If you have not lodged your 2016/17 lump sum claim for child care payments you and your partner will need to do your 2016/17 tax returns and lodge your lump sum claim *before 30 June 2018*.

You will also need to claim Child Care Subsidy using your Centrelink online account through myGov *before 2 July 2018*. If you're eligible, Centrelink will subsidise your child care fees from 2 July 2018.

What happens if I start using an approved Child Care Service before 2 July 2018?

If you start using an approved child care service from April 2018 you will be able to complete a combined online CCB/CCS or CCS application from April 2018. If you are assessed as being eligible you will receive CCB until 1 July 2018 and then receive CCS from 2 July 2018.

What is Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)?

ACCS is a payment that is a top up payment in addition to the CCS which will provide targeted additional fee assistance to people who:

- meet the eligibility requirements for CCS (see above) and
- are an eligible grandparent receiving an income support payment, or
- are transitioning from certain income support payments to work, or
- are experiencing temporary financial hardship.

ACCS replaces a number of existing payments including Grandparent Child Care Benefit, Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance and Special Child Care Benefit.

You must be assessed as eligible for CSS *before* you can apply for ACCS.

ACCS will usually cover a large percentage of child care fees. ACCS will be paid directly to the Child Care Service.

If you currently receive:

- **Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB)** you may be eligible for ACCS (Grandparent). You need to complete your CCS assessment and then if eligible you will need to apply for ACCS (Grandparent) *before 2 July 2018*.
- **Jobs, Education Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA)** you may be eligible for ACCS (Transition to Work). You will need to complete your CCS Assessment and if you are eligible you then need to apply for ACCS (Transition to Work) *after 4 June 2018 and before 2 July 2018*.
- **Special Child Care Benefit for temporary financial hardship** you may be eligible for ACCS (Temporary Financial Hardship). You will need to complete your CCS Assessment and then if eligible either you or your Child Care Service will need to apply for ACCS (Temporary Financial Hardship) from 2 July 2018.
- **Special Child Care Benefit for child at risk** you may be eligible for ACCS (Child Wellbeing). You will need to complete your CCSA and then if eligible you or the child care service will need to apply for ACCS (child wellbeing) from 2 July 2018.

Further information

Department of Human Services website:

What you need to do to get Child Care Subsidy if you currently get a child care payment at:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/enablers/what-you-need-do-get-child-care-subsidy-if-you-currently-get-child-care-payment>

Child Care Subsidy at <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

Centrelink online account help - claim Child Care Subsidy at:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/centrelink/claim-child-care-subsidy>

About myGov at: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/about-mygov>

Register for an online account at: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/enablers/register-online-account>

Centrelink online accounts at:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/centrelink-online-accounts>

Department of Education and Training website, *Transitioning to the New Child Care Subsidy* at:

<https://www.education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage>

Please note: This information contains general information only and is accurate at 10 May 2018. It does not constitute legal advice. If you need legal advice about social security entitlements, please contact your local Welfare Rights Centre/Advocate. Welfare Rights Centres are community legal centres, which specialise in social security law, administration and policy. They are entirely independent of Centrelink. All assistance is free. Contact Welfare Rights & Advocacy Service on (08) 93281751 or by email at welfare@wraswa.org.au