

FAMILY FEES PROCESS

What is a Family Fee?

In providing subsidized child care, there is an expectation that families share in the cost of child care. Family fees help to expand services to other families in need of subsidized child care assistance. A family fee schedule is prepared by the Department of Education/Child Development Division and it is based on the family's adjusted gross monthly income and family size. Family fees are on a sliding scale and are applied when a family reaches 50% of the state median income. As changes occur in either the family's adjusted gross monthly income or family size, the family fee may change. Therefore, it is imperative that families report changes within five (5) days of the occurrence.

Regardless of the number of children a family may have in care; a fee is assessed based on the schedule of the child who receives care for the longest period each day. A fee is assessed and collected based on the approved child care hours. No fee reduction is made in consideration of any absences – best interest days, excused or unexcused.

The Family Services Specialist will verify the daily fee and send a Notice of Action (NOA) to the parent and a **Family Fee Notice (FFN) to the child care provider.***

- * For families with a child using two or more child care providers and all providers are caring for the children on the same days, the child care provider who provides the greatest number of child care hours will receive the FFN and he/she will be responsible for collecting all the family fees.
- * For families using more than one provider and the providers are providing care on different days, each provider will receive a FFN and each is responsible for collecting family fees for the days of care they provide.

How does the Child Care Provider collect the family fee?

The child care provider will receive a FFN stating the effective date, the name of the family the fee will be collected on, and the amount of fees to be collected for full-time care and part-time care.

Full-time care = six or more hours of approved child care used per day

Part-time care = less than six hours of approved child care used per day

The amount a parent owes for a particular month is determined by multiplying the daily family fee times the number of child care days in the month (keeping in mind the number of full-time days and part-time days).

Parents must pay their family fees monthly, IN ADVANCE, directly to the child care provider. For example, family fees must be collected at the end of September for child care services they are scheduled to use in October.

The provider shall not collect family fees for Days of Non-Operation (DNO) such as a provider's vacation day, staff development day, or a holiday when the facility is closed for business. In cases of DNOs the parent will pay the Family Fee to the Back-Up Provider, if a Back-Up Provider is used.

The total amount of family fees owed by the parent to the provider will be deducted from the provider's check issued by SFCS for that month – **whether the provider collected the payment or not.**

As soon as the fee is paid, the provider must sign the "Family Fee Statement" on the back of the monthly Child Care Attendance Form (CCAF) certifying receipt of family fees, the amount paid and date paid.

What happens if a parent does not pay the family fees that are due?

Family Fees will be considered delinquent if the Family Fee Statement is NOT completed and signed by the child care provider. In addition, the CCAF is considered incomplete and not payable, which results in the provider's payment being delayed until after the Family Fee Statement is completed.

If the provider does not collect family fees for the month, the provider must write an explanation in the Family Fee Statement as to why the fees were not collected. In this situation SFCS will pay the provider (minus the family fee) and start the delinquent fee process.

Upon determination of delinquent fees, a **Delinquent Family Fee Notice** will be mailed by SFCS to the parent (a copy will be mailed to the child care provider). The parent is given ten (10) calendar days from the date the Delinquent Notice was issued, to pay the provider the delinquent amount, or to make a payment arrangement with the provider. On the 11th day, if no Family Fee Statement or Payment Arrangement has been received by SFCS, services will be terminated. A Notice of Action (NOA) terminating services will be mailed to the parent, as well as a Notice to the Provider (NTP).

If the parent pays the family fees before the termination date, the child care provider must sign and submit, a **"Family Fee Statement"** certifying receipt of the family fees, the amount paid and the date paid. This receipt must be in our office on or before the termination date.

Families will be given an opportunity to make a family fee payment arrangement to pay delinquent family fees to their child care provider. The **"Delinquent Family Fee Payment Arrangement"** must be agreed upon, completed and signed both by the parent and the child care provider. A copy of the payment arrangement must be received by our office on or before the termination date in order for services to continue. The parent must continue to pay their current monthly family fees in addition to their Delinquent Family Fees Payment Arrangement obligation in order for services to continue. ★

If the completed Family Fee Statement or Delinquent Family Fee Payment Arrangement is received in our office on or before the termination date, the Family Services Specialist will issue a NOA and NTP notifying the parent and the child care provider that child care services will continue. Therefore, the NOA and NTP terminating services will be rescinded.

- ★ If the parent is delinquent on his/her Delinquent Family Fee Payment Arrangement or their current monthly family fees, a NOA and NTP terminating services in two (2) weeks will be issued. In order to continue child care services without interruption, the parent **MUST** pay the delinquent balance and current fees **IN FULL** prior to the termination date.

Example of the Family Fee Process:

Mr. and Mrs. Thornberry have two children. Based on their gross monthly income and their family size, they have a family fee of \$3.00 for each day of full-time care and \$1.50 for each day of part-time care. This family is approved to use child care on weekdays only (Monday – Friday). Eliza is their youngest child, and she uses child care services the most each day. There are 22 weekdays in September; however, on Monday, September 6th the provider will have a planned Day of Non-Operation, beyond the allowable 10. (The provider will be closed for business that day). Since Eliza is scheduled to be in child care for twenty-one (21) full-time days, on or about August 29th, Eliza's child care provider, will collect \$63.00 (21 full-time days x \$3.00/day = \$63.00) for the family's September fees. On the back of the Child Care Attendance Form, in the **"Family Fee Statement"** section, the provider certifies that she collected fees in the **amount of \$63.00**, for the **month of September**. The provider **signs** and **dates** the statement.

In October, SFCS receives the September Child Care Attendance Form and according to the Attendance Form, Eliza was in child care for nineteen (19) full-time days and she was absent for two (2) days due to illness (excused absences). The family must still pay the family fee for the two absences due to illness, because SFCS still needs to pay the provider. As SFCS processes the September Attendance Form, we deduct the amount of (\$63.00) from the child care provider's check to be issued on October 15th.

Example: Provider charges \$20.00 for every day of full-time care and \$15.00 for every day of part-time care
 $\$20.00/\text{day} \times 21 \text{ full-time days} = \$420.00 - \$63.00 \text{ (family fees)} = \357.00 .
The total amount to be paid to the provider by SFCS is \$357.00 for the month of September.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please call our office at (707) 863-3950 and ask to speak to your assigned worker.