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ABOUT US

OUR VISION
All children and families in Sacramento County have access to affordable, quality child care and early education services.

OUR MISSION
We empower families and child care professionals with the tools and support services they need to successfully care for children.

OUR VALUES
- Quality care for children
- Families’ right to choose services that fit their family needs
- Support for child care professionals in providing quality care
- Excellence and teamwork in all that we do
- Collaborative work within the community to develop services that support children and families

HISTORY OF CHILD ACTION, INC.
Child Action, Inc. (CAI) is a private, non-profit corporation created in 1976 to promote the education and social welfare of children and families and to advocate on their behalf. Our programs include resource and referral services for families seeking child care, child care subsidies for qualifying families, recruitment and professional development of the child care workforce, and family education and support.

Our goal is to partner with families and assist them in the care and education of their children and to advocate beside them in support of their concerns.

CAI is primarily funded by the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Support Division, to provide subsidies and child care and development services. CAI adheres to all California Department of Education regulations governing child development programs and operates in accordance with all State of California laws governing non-profit agencies.

CAI operates on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal access to services without regard to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, and military and/or veteran status.

RESOURCE AND REFERRAL
CAI is your local child care resource and referral agency and is funded by the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division. We can discuss the type of child care you need, help you find child care near your home, school or job, and determine whether or not you are eligible to receive financial assistance for your child care expenses. We can also give you information about selecting high quality child care programs.

We provide parents with information on a broad range of child care services, as well as ways to assess these services, but we do not make recommendations. We believe that parents are best able to choose the child care that meets their particular family situation.

Parents may contact our Resource and Referral Department for referrals to licensed child care providers. A staff person will talk to you about your child’s needs, strengths, and interests and ask about the type of environment you prefer.
S/he will explain the different types of child care available to you and help you find child care based on your criteria. Our services are offered in English, Spanish and Russian. We also offer enhanced referrals if you are seeking care for a child with special needs.

CLIENT SERVICES
CAI offers child care subsidies and services in Sacramento County through the programs we administer in our Client Services Department. We receive funding from federal, state and local governments, and each of our funding sources has its own rules and regulations regarding eligibility and approvable need for child care. The following programs are administered by our Client Services Department:

- **Alternative Payment Program (CAPP):** Families are enrolled in this program from the Childcare Eligibility List (CEL), a list of eligible families maintained by CAI. Families with children receiving Child Protective Services have first priority, followed by families with the lowest income adjusted for family size. When there are multiple families with comparable income on the CEL, families with children who have exceptional needs are given priority. Families with the same ranking will be enrolled according to who has been on the CEL the longest.

- **CalWORKs Stage 2 Program:** Families are placed on Stage 2 after a parent’s approved activity has stabilized or when the family is transitioning off of cash aid. Clients may continue to receive child care on Stage 2 for up to 24 months after they no longer receive cash aid.

- **CalWORKs Stage 3 Program:** Families on Stage 2 may transfer to this program when they have exhausted their 24-month limit on Stage 2 (referred to as timing out). Stage 3 can continue for as long as the family remains eligible and continues to have a need for care.

In addition to the above programs, CAI serves as the **Single Point of Entry for Providers** to create a seamless transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2. All providers caring for families on Stage 1 (administered by Sacramento County), Stage 2, Stage 3 or CAPP are enrolled by CAI’s Provider Department.

If you meet eligibility and need requirements, you may qualify for a child care subsidy that will cover part or all of your child care costs. In order for your provider to be reimbursed for services, you need to be aware of and follow CAI’s policies and those of the governmental agencies which provide the child care funding. The purpose of this handbook is to explain those policies to you so that your provider can be paid for the care you are eligible to use. It is your responsibility to adhere to these set of rules and guidelines to maintain your subsidy.

ELIGIBILITY AND NEED
To be eligible for CAI’s subsidy programs, the family must be a residing in California and the family and/or provider must reside in Sacramento County. The child(ren) receiving services must be under 13 years of age. If the child is 13 years or older, documentation of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and letter from a licensed qualified professional stating the child is in need of adult supervision in a child care setting are required to qualify for services.

Enrolling families must meet eligibility criteria and have an approved need for child care services. Once approved and certified, families will receive services for no less than 12 months. Eligibility is reassessed every 12 months.

ELIGIBILITY
For a family to receive child care services, the parent must provide documentation of eligibility in one or more categories listed below:

- **Income:** Gross monthly income adjusted for family size that does not exceed 70% of the State Median Income for initial enrollment and 85% of the State Median Income for on-going eligibility.
Income charts can be found at
https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1708.asp (For 70% of the State Median Income)
https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1709.asp (For 85% of the State Median Income)

- **Current Aid Recipient:** Currently receiving cash aid through the Department of Human Assistance
- **Homeless:** A family that lacks a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence
- **Child Protective Services (CPS):** Family must have a written referral from a county welfare department, Child Welfare Services worker that certifies that the child is receiving protective services, and that the family requires care for the child as part of the CPS case plan

**NEED**

Need is defined as any approved activity that parents are engaged in that prevents them from caring for their own children. In a two-parent household, both parents must be able to document a need for care, and their need for care must overlap so neither is available to care for the children. A parent can have more than one need, which may include:

- **Employed:** You have a job or are self-employed
- **Job Seek:** You are seeking employment
- **Vocational Training:** You are in a training or educational program leading to a specific vocational goal
- **Parental Incapacitation:** You are medically or psychiatrically incapacitated, to the extent that your ability to provide care for the child is significantly limited, as verified by a legally qualified professional
- **Seeking Permanent Housing:** Your family is homeless and needs child care services while you look for permanent housing
- **Child Protective Services (CPS):** Your family must have a written referral from a county welfare department, Child Welfare Services worker that certifies that the child is receiving protective services, and that the family requires care for the child as part of the CPS case plan
- **At-risk:** Your family was determined to be “at-risk” of abuse, neglect or exploitation as indicated in a written referral from a legal, medical, or social services agency, or emergency shelter for children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation

**ASSESSMENT AND ENROLLMENT**

CAI’s Assessment Unit serves as the entry point for all families requesting enrollment onto our subsidy programs. All enrolling families must speak with an Assessment Unit staff person and must submit any requested documentation before enrollment can proceed.

Enrollment onto CAI’s subsidy programs is possible through the following avenues:

- **Families currently enrolled on the CalWORKs Stage 1 program:** Families are referred to CAI by the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance when it is determined that a parent’s approved activity has stabilized or when the family has transitioned off of cash aid.
- **Families discontinued from cash aid within the last 24 months:** Families who were discontinued from cash aid within the last 24 months, and who meet eligibility and need criteria, may be eligible for enrollment onto the CalWORKs Stage 2 program. Families may self-refer by contacting the Assessment Unit directly at 1-916-361-0511.
- **Childcare Eligibility List (CEL):** Families who meet eligibility and need criteria and have never been on cash aid, or were discontinued from cash aid more than 24 months ago, can add their name to the Childcare Eligibility List by calling CAI staff at 1-916-369-0191 or by completing the online application at www.childaction.org
- **Out of County Transfer:** Families who are receiving services in another county and who wish to transfer services to CAI’s subsidy program must submit verification of current enrollment in the other subsidy program. The family must meet income criteria for Sacramento County.
An Assessment Unit staff person will review your information to determine whether you meet eligibility and need criteria. S/he will also determine whether additional documentation is required before we can proceed with the enrollment process. All enrolling families must have an enrolled provider before enrollment can proceed. An appointment will be scheduled with a case manager once you have completed this process. CAI will not begin payment until both you and your provider are enrolled on our program.

CHOOSING YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER

PARENT CHOICE POLICY
CAI is a parent choice program which means it is the parent's responsibility to select a provider for her/his children. CAI never places children in the care of providers. The facility chosen by the parent may be licensed or unlicensed but must be operating in accordance with applicable State of California laws or codes.

Once enrolled, parents may change their care setting to meet their needs but they are required to provide CAI with a 10 working day notice. Parents must also give their provider notice in accordance with their provider’s rules.

TYPES OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS
All CAI programs allow care in licensed centers, licensed family child care homes and license-exempt centers. State laws governing subsidized child care programs do not allow some CAI programs to approve sectarian care (licensed care which includes religious training or worship). When choosing the child care that best suits the needs of your children, please consider these types of care:

- **Child Care Center**: A licensed facility which provides child care services for an approved number of children. Each center’s license indicates the number and age groups of children the center may serve. Centers are licensed to serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-aged children or some combination of these age groups.

- **License-Exempt Center**: A child care center that is exempt from licensure because the center is located on school property (private or public), the center is administered by the school, and the majority of children attending the center also attend the school.

- **Family Child Care Home (FCCH)**: A private home which has been licensed for the occupant to provide child care services. The license states the number and ages of children who may be served.

- **Exempt Home**: A private home in which the occupant may provide child care services for children from one unrelated family that does not reside with the occupant.

- **Relative**: Child care provided by the child’s grandparent, aunt, or uncle (by blood, marriage or court decree) in her/his own home, and the child for whom care is provided does not reside with the grandparent, aunt or uncle. CAI requires verification of relationship for all relative providers. Documents establishing relationship could include birth certificates, marriage licenses or court orders. Unless a relative can produce such documentation, s/he is required to be TrustLine-cleared in order to be eligible for child care payments. TrustLine is later defined in section titled “Parents’ Rights to Information About Providers”.

- **In-home**: Care given by a non-licensed provider in the child’s home (whether or not the provider and child are related and including when the provider and the child being cared for live in the same home). In-home care requires an employer/employee relationship between the parent and the provider. The parent is considered the provider’s employer and is legally responsible to pay all required taxes, to carry insurance on the provider (including Worker’s Compensation), to pay required minimum wage (including possible supplementation of CAI payments) and to abide by any other regulations regarding employment. The parent should contact an accountant, attorney or federal and state tax agency to obtain the appropriate rules.
and regulations. The in-home provider is employed solely at the will of the parent and may be terminated at the discretion of the parent. Due to the employee/employer relationship created when using an in-home provider, in-home care is subject to approval by CAI.

CHOOSING QUALITY CHILD CARE
Are you looking for child care, but are unsure about where to begin? Many parents need support when making this very important decision. The CAI Resource and Referral Department is here to help. We have up-to-date information about child care programs near your home, school or job, but more importantly, we provide support and information to help you identify the components of high quality child care and talk with you about your child care options. We have publications to guide you in your decision making. You can also call during business hours to speak with a Resource and Referral Specialist.

PROVIDER PARTICIPATION CRITERIA FOR PAYMENT REIMBURSEMENT
State regulations specify certain criteria that providers must meet in order to be reimbursed for child care services. We feel it is important for you to know what these requirements are so you can assess whether or not your child care provider meets Child Action, Inc.’s requirements as well as your child care needs. These criteria are:

- Be licensed or exempt from licensure
  - For licensed providers, CAI must have a copy of the current license in our files in order to make payment.
- Provide care in Sacramento County or provide care to families residing in Sacramento County
- Operate on a nondiscriminatory basis, giving equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, national origin or ancestry
- Have a pre-printed rate sheet showing the usual and customary rates the provider charges to all families (all licensed providers)
- Allow parents, during normal business hours or when their children are in care, unlimited access to their children and written records regarding their children
- Complete a W-9 form for Internal Revenue Reporting
- Be at least 18 years old
- Be free of active or contagious tuberculosis
- Not be convicted of any crime involving violence against or abuse or neglect of children regardless of the provider’s relationship to the child
- Submit relationship verification or have TrustLine clearance (License-Exempt Providers)
- Not be a member of the child’s assistance unit or counted in the family size
- Agree to maintain confidentiality regarding all children and families receiving services
- Report if location of care changes and/or if provider’s address changes
- Report when ownership of facility changes (child care center)
- Report when provider is no longer licensed (child care center and FCCH)
- Submit any requested documentation (e.g. address verification, employment verification). Because all documentation must be verified, it must include a contact person’s name and phone number.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER
You have hired someone to care for your children and entrusted that provider with their care and well-being. The better you communicate with the provider, the better care s/he will be able to provide for your children. We strongly recommend that you visit the child care site and discuss with the provider all issues related to your child’s care, including:

- Days and times when the provider is available to provide care
- The rate(s) the provider charges for child care for the days/hours you need
• Additional services the provider may offer (such as meals, snacks, transportation) for which you will have to pay
• Any additional costs the provider might expect you to pay
• How you want discipline handled and whether the provider agrees
• Specific needs of the child:
  o Is the child on any medication? If yes, what kind and what time during the day does s/he receive the medication?
  o Does the child have any food allergies?
  o Does the child have any specific health or cognitive needs?
• Emergency information:
  o Who should be contacted in the case of an emergency? If you cannot be reached, who should be notified?
  o Where should the child be taken in an emergency?
  o What type of medical insurance does your family have?
  o Who is authorized to pick up the child from care? (Child Action, Inc. requires each parent to fill out an Authorization for Pick-Up form specifying who the parent authorizes to pick up the child; only people 18 years or older may be listed on this form.)

CHILD ACTION, INC.’S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROVIDER

All providers are considered independent contractors unless care is provided in the child’s home. When care is provided in the child’s home, the provider is considered the employee of the parent.

Providers enrolled on CAI’s program are not and will not become employees, partners, agents or principals of CAI. Providers are not entitled to the rights or benefits afforded to CAI employees, including disability or unemployment insurance, workers’ compensation, medical insurance, sick leave, or any other employee benefit.

CAI does not inspect or warrant the condition of providers’ facilities or the quality of supervision the children receive. CAI assumes no responsibility for injury or damages arising from the performance of our agreement for services. Parents and providers agree to indemnify and hold harmless CAI, its officers, and its employees from costs, suit or liability allegedly arising from the provision of child care services.

PARENTS’ RIGHTS TO INFORMATION ABOUT PROVIDERS

There are laws of which you should be aware that serve to protect your child’s safety and well-being. Additionally, you have certain rights as a parent on our program.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a Federal law which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Providers are required to offer reasonable accommodations to enable children with disabilities to be fully included in their program. An accommodation is considered reasonable if it does not cause undue hardship to the provider.

Megan’s Law provides the public with internet access to detailed information on registered sex offenders. Parents can visit the Department of Justice “Registered Sex Offender” database at www.meganslaw.ca.gov

Oliver’s Law requires all child care resource and referral programs and alternative payment programs to advise every person who requests a child care referral of his or her right to view the licensing information of a licensed child day care facility.
Parents who choose a licensed provider have the right and responsibility to view any licensing information regarding site visits to their provider’s facility or records related to any substantiated or inconclusive complaints about the child care provider that they select to care for their children. This information is public and licensed providers are required by State law to make these records accessible to parents. In addition, state law requires licensed providers to give parents a Notification of Parents’ Rights form.

For information about licensed providers, parents may call the Office of Community Care Licensing at 1-844-538-8766 (toll-free). CAI strongly recommends that parents review a potential child care provider’s licensing history before placing their children in care.

Parents who choose a child care program exempt from licensure (such as a parent co-op, recreation program, or community-based program) should ask the program staff about their complaint policies.

Parents who choose a non-licensed child care provider have the ongoing responsibility to see that their provider continually meets required basic health and safety standards.

CAI does not pay any provider convicted of a crime against a child, regardless of the relationship between the provider and child being served. CAI uses public web services such as Megan’s Law and SacCourt to verify a provider’s record. We also receive reports from Department of Human Assistance’s Integrity Unit regarding providers convicted of crimes against children.

TRUSTLINE
State law requires all non-licensed child care providers (other than the child’s aunt, uncle or grandparent by blood, marriage or court decree) to be TrustLine cleared before they can be enrolled on CAI’s program. These providers must complete a TrustLine application form, be live-scanned (electronically fingerprinted), complete a Criminal History form, and have a background check by the California Department of Social Services completed and cleared before being reimbursed for any services. The background check can take as little as a few days or as long as a year or more, depending on the circumstances. TrustLine registration is granted once a provider clears the background check.

State law prohibits CAI from paying providers whose TrustLine application is in process, closed, denied or revoked. Therefore, if your provider’s TrustLine application is not cleared, no payment can be made. Additionally, Department of Social Services notifies CAI when a provider’s TrustLine clearance is subsequently closed, denied or revoked. When that happens, payment to the provider will stop immediately.

Parents can check if a provider is registered (cleared) on TrustLine by calling 1-800-822-8490. You will need to provide the provider’s full name and driver’s license number.

PROGRAM REGULATIONS & POLICIES

ESTABLISHING YOUR BASIC FAMILY DATA FILE
Parents attend an initial enrollment appointment to complete an application for child care services. To establish their basic family file, enrolling parents must provide CAI with documents and forms that establish their family size, need and eligibility for child care services.

Family size
1. Full name, address and telephone number for each parent in the household
2. Names, gender and birth dates of all children under the age of 18 in the family, whether or not they will be served by the program
3. Supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family, which may include:
   a. Birth certificates or school/medical records
   b. County welfare records
   c. Court orders regarding custody or child support
   d. Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

This information will establish your family size and will be a part of the parent fee calculation, if applicable.

NOTE: While the above information establishes family size, children receiving services must reside with the parent(s) on the program for any periods of time for which child care subsidies are paid.

**Verification of Eligibility and Need**
You must supply CAI with documentation of both your eligibility and need. All documentation must be verifiable and must include a contact person’s name and phone number, when applicable.

**Income**
CAI calculates income from various sources to determine a family’s eligibility for the program. Income sources may include, but are not limited to:

- Wages, tips, bonuses, commissions and other earnings, including any self-employment earnings
- Child and/or spousal support
- Cash aid
- Social Security Administration benefits (SSA), Unemployment Benefits Intercept (UBI), work study or financial aid, foster care grants
- Disability benefits, worker’s compensation, retirement benefits, pensions, inheritance, allowances for housing/automobiles, insurance/court settlements, etc.

Families must supply CAI with documentation of all income sources for their family. Gross monthly income adjusted for family size cannot exceed 70% of the State Median Income for initial enrollment and 85% of the State Median Income for on-going eligibility. The 85% income ceiling, adjusted for family size, will be noted on the income worksheet you sign during your appointment.

**Employment**
If you are employed, you must submit:

- A signed release authorizing CAI to contact your employer, which includes:
  - Employer’s name, address, telephone number and usual business hours
  - Hours of the day and days of the week worked
- Wage stubs showing gross income and pay period dates. (A letter from an employer may temporarily substitute for a wage stub. The letter must be on business letterhead and include gross wages, pay period, work hours, and must be signed by the employer, personnel officer or supervisor. To verify hours worked, you may also be required to submit your time sheets.)

If you are self-employed, you must submit:

- Completed Self-Employment Declaration form that includes a description of the employment and the hours of the day and days of the week worked
- Additional documentation of income and hours worked which could include appointment logs, client receipts, job/mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, etc.
- Copy of business license or workspace lease/rental agreement (if applicable)
- Relevant business records

If your employment is in your home, the nature of your work must preclude the supervision of your children. You will be asked to provide justification for your need for care if your children are over the age of five.
Family child care home (FCCH) providers are not eligible for subsidized services because their work does not preclude the supervision of their own children. If you are employed as an assistant in a licensed large family day care home, you must provide the following:

- Copy of FCCH license
- Signed statement from licensee that you are the assistant
- Proof that your fingerprints are associated with the FCCH
- Written verification of payroll deductions taken from your wages (such as a wage stub)

**Seeking Employment (also referred to as Job Seek)**
If you are seeking employment, you must complete a Job Seek Declaration form which includes:

- Plan to secure employment
- Days and number of hours that child care is needed

The period of Job Seek eligibility is limited to less than 30 hours per week, no more than five days per week, and no less than six months.

**Vocational Training**
If you are a student you must submit:

- A completed Vocational Training/Education Verification form which includes:
  - Name and address of the school or program being attended
  - Date that the current educational term begins and ends
  - Statement of your vocational goal and the anticipated completion date of all required educational activities needed to meet your goal
  - Class schedule that lists current courses, the number of units per class, and the days of the week and times of each class
  - Signature and stamp of the registrar of the school or institution
- Report cards, transcripts or other records documenting progress toward completion of your vocational goal
  - Students who do not show adequate progress toward their vocational goal will no longer be eligible for child care services under this need
- All coursework for which you are receiving child care must be related to your vocational goal (Submission of an approved educational plan may be required)

You are eligible to receive subsidized child care while attending school or a training program for a maximum of six calendar years from your first date of services as a student (even if services are not used continuously). Anyone who has a Bachelor’s Degree is limited to receiving child care services for a maximum of 24 semester units post degree.

**Parental Incapacity**
If you are unable to care for your children due to physical or psychiatric limitations, you must submit a Statement of Incapacity form completed by a legally qualified professional which includes:

- A statement that the incapacitation prevents you from caring for your child for some part of the day
- Days and number of hours that you are unable to care for the children
- Name, address, telephone number, license or credential number, and signature of the legally qualified professional rendering the opinion of incapacitation

**Seeking Permanent Housing (also referred to as Homeless)**
If you are seeking housing, you must complete a Declaration of Seeking Permanent Housing which includes:

- Plan to secure a fixed, regular and adequate residence
- Days and number of hours that child care is needed
Scheduled care is approved for less than thirty (30) hours per week and for no more than five (5) days per week.

**Other Information Needed to Complete Your Family Data**
- Needs Assessment and Referral form
- Authorization for Pick-Up form
- Pre-admission Health History—Parent's Report
- Pre-admission Health History—Physician's Report
- Client Demographic Sheet
- Provider information
12-MONTH ELIGIBILITY
Once enrolled, families receive child care services for no less than 12 months, unless the initial need status is Job Seek. During this 12 month period, you are eligible to use the scheduled care approved at initial enrollment. If you need to increase care, we will require documentation of the increased need. If you need to decrease care, you will need to submit a form requesting the decrease. The information below is a guide to when you need to communicate changes to your case manager.

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<th>Change</th>
<th>Action</th>
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| Your schedule has changed | • Reporting change is encouraged, but not required  
• Child care hours will continue at the same level approved at your most recent certification  
• CAI will only change your child care hours if requested  
• Verification that supports the requested change must be submitted before child care hours are updated |
| Your income has changed | • Reporting change is required if your new income exceeds 85% of State Median Income  
• Income is calculated only at enrollment, recertification, or at your request to assess a possible lower parent fee  
• Income submitted is only used to determine eligibility (whether or not it exceeds 85% of State Median Income) or lower your parent fee  
• Your parent fee will not be increased during your 12-month period |
| You lost your job | • Reporting change is encouraged, but not required  
• Child care hours will continue at the same level approved at your most recent certification  
• CAI will only change your child care hours if requested  
• Verification that supports the requested change must be submitted before child care hours are updated |
| You have a break between school semesters, quarters, or modules. | • Reporting change is encouraged, but not required  
• Child care hours will continue at the same level approved at your most recent certification  
• You may use child care during all school breaks  
• CAI will only change your child care hours if requested |

Your case manager still needs to hear from you for the following changes:
- Your family household adjusted income exceeds 85% of State Median Income *You must report this change within 30 days*
- You moved or plan to move
- You changed contact information such as your phone number or email address
- You would like to request a new child care provider
- You want to add/remove a child from the program
- You no longer want to use child care services
- You want to increase child care hours. We will need documentation to verify the increase prior to processing the change.
- You want to decrease child care hours. We will need this request in writing.
- You want to have your income assessed to determine if your parent fee can be lowered. You will need to submit income verification.
ESTABLISHING ON-GOING ELIGIBILITY AND NEED (RECERTIFICATION)
You must be recertified once every 12 months. This process is similar to the initial enrollment and is used to determine your continued eligibility for the next 12 months.

PARENT FEES
Parents may be required to pay a portion of their child care costs, referred to as the parent fee. Parent fees are assessed for each month the child is enrolled in care. Parent fee amounts are established by the State of California and determined by the family’s gross monthly income, adjusted for family size, and whether the child is enrolled for full time (130 hours or more per month) or part time (less than 130 hours per month) care as defined by the California Department of Education.

Parent fees are billed according to the child who is scheduled to use the most hours in any enrolled month, regardless of the number of children enrolled on the program.

Parent fees are not related to the cost of care. If the parent changes providers and the child remains enrolled for full time care, the parent fee will not change, regardless of the amount the new provider is charging.

Parent fees are billed and collected in advance. Bills are mailed each month during the week of the 15th and will state the next month’s fee for which the parent is being billed. The balance stated on the bill is due on the first of the month. Parent fees are considered delinquent if they are not paid in full by the seventh of the month.

EXAMPLE: Your monthly parent fee is $42.00 full time/$21.00 part time. Your child is enrolled for seven hours of care each day, Monday-Friday. On February 15th, you are sent a bill for the care your child is scheduled to use in March. March has 21 weekdays (21 days X 7 hours/day = 147 hours), so you will be charged $42.00 for the month of March because your child is scheduled to use 130 hours or more. Your parent fee payment is due on March 1st. If payment has not been received by March 7th, the payment is considered delinquent.

HOW TO MAKE PAYMENT
CAI accepts checks, money orders and online payments; cash is not accepted. Checks and money orders must be remitted in person during regular business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.), or sent via US Mail to our office, located at 9800 Old Winery Place, Sacramento, CA 95827-1700. To pay online, you will need a CAI Parent Portal account. To establish this account, contact your case manager. Once you have activated your Parent Portal account, you may use it to pay your parent fees via PayPal.

Checks or PayPal transactions that are returned for insufficient funds are subject to fees. In addition, if your check is returned, we will no longer accept checks from you for payment.

DELINQUENT PARENT FEES
If CAI does not receive the parent fee payment in full by the seventh of the month, we will issue a Notice of Action for disenrollment from the program. The notice will state the amount of unpaid fees, the fee rate and the period of delinquency. Disenrollment from the program will be nineteen 19 calendar days from the date the notice is issued if payment is not made. If you receive this notice, you may request to establish a reasonable Delinquent Fee Repayment Plan prior to the effective date on the Notice of Action to avoid disenrollment from the program. To remain on the program you must pay all current fees when due and comply with the provisions of your repayment plan (which means that you must pay current parent fees and repayment plan payments on time).

Child Action, Inc. reserves the right to submit unpaid parent fee debts to a collection agency to recover funds from parents who have been disenrolled from the program and/or who are 90 days behind in their parent fee payments.
HOW WE PAY YOUR PROVIDER

ATTENDANCE REPORTING
The California Department of Education (CDE) requires parents to maintain a daily in and out record (attendance form) for each child on CAI’s program. Refer to the sample attendance form.

- CAI issues an attendance form for each child for each month. Only care for the specified month (which is printed on the attendance form) should be documented on the attendance form. Care for two months should never overlap on one attendance form. If your provider has not received an attendance form by the time care has started, contact your Child Action, Inc. case manager immediately.
- Attendance forms should be kept with providers and are the only form of documentation accepted for billing
- Attendance forms must be completed daily at the actual time of drop-off and pick-up. Whoever is designated to bring the child to care and to pick up the child from care must write the exact time on the attendance form, circling AM or PM. Providers should never complete attendance forms for the parent unless the provider is designated to take the child to school or to pick the child up from school.
- The hours recorded on the attendance form must be the exact hours the child was actually in care. It is a violation of state regulations for providers to ask parents to record hours in advance.
- If the hours of care differ from those on the child care schedule (CCS), the appropriate reason code should be used to explain the discrepancy. If the CCS no longer reflects your child care needs, call your case manager to discuss the changes needed.
- When care has ended for the month, the provider and the enrolled parent (not an authorized pick-up person) must sign the attendance form, verifying the accuracy of the hours entered on the form. It is a violation of our policies for providers or parents to pre-sign attendance forms. Providers and parents cannot sign for each other and should sign using their legal signatures.
- If you make a mistake on the attendance form (for example, write the wrong date), you should cross out the error and initial it, and fill in the correct information. Do not use white out.
- If you use care that is not authorized on the child care schedule, you may be responsible to pay for that care.
- Providers are encouraged to bill their customary charges on the attendance form.

If a child is absent or does not use scheduled care, the parent or authorized pick-up person must fill in the “Reason Code” box with one of the codes listed below:

| C | Provider was closed | S | • Child/family member sick; at Dr.’s appt, funeral; or absent from care for another medical reason
|   |                     |   | • School-age child was sick and used more hours than scheduled on a school day
| M | Minimum school day  | A | Child did not use care because child/parent on vacation, visiting a relative, or another non-medical reason

1. The “C” code is to be used when a provider is closed and unavailable to provide care for all or part of a scheduled day of care
2. The “S” code is to be used when:
   a. A child is absent from care or uses fewer hours than scheduled due to a medically-related reason
   b. A school-aged child is ill on a school day and is in care for more hours because of the illness
3. The “M” code is to be used for school-aged children only. It explains why a school-aged child used more hours on a school day (but within the approved hours on the CCS). It can also be used to explain why a kindergartner’s school hours and child care hours change on a minimum day.
4. The “A” code is to be used when a child is absent from care or uses fewer hours than scheduled due to a non-medical reason.
ATTENDANCE FORM SUBMISSION
The attendance form must be complete, accurate and received by CAI no later than 5:00 p.m. on or before the 15th of the month following service. If the 15th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, forms must be returned no later than the last working day before the 15th in order to be processed by the end of the month. Attendance forms received after the 25th of the month following services may not be paid.

Attendance forms may be submitted in person during regular business hours (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) or sent via US Mail to our office, located at 9800 Old Winery Place, Sacramento, CA 95827-1700.

METHODS OF PAYMENT
CAI makes payment to providers through our Direct Deposit Program which electronically transfers money into the financial account of their choosing.

Providers have different choices for Direct Deposit:
- Checking Account
- Savings Account
- Reloadable Prepaid Debit Card Account (your personal prepaid debit account or one issued through CAI)

The reloadable prepaid debit card allows providers who do not have a bank account to participate in the Direct Deposit Program. This card is a pre-approved bank account accessed through an ATM/debit card. The card may be used at virtually any ATM and at nearly any merchant location where PIN-based debit transactions are accepted. No credit check is necessary.

STOP CHECK PAYMENT POLICY
Although CAI uses direct deposit to pay providers, occasionally circumstances require us to issue a check. If the check is lost, CAI will only process a stop payment request 30 days after the check was issued. We will reissue a new check five days after receiving confirmation from the bank that the stop payment was processed.

CAPS
The State of California conducts regular surveys of providers throughout the state to determine the average cost of care per region. Based on these figures, they set ceilings on the amount that agencies such as ours can reimburse for child care. We refer to these ceilings as the CAPS. CAI can pay the provider’s rate as long as it does not exceed the CAPS. If a provider’s charge is over the CAP, the provider may collect the difference from the parent. CAI is not responsible for the parent’s balance of payment. The payment from CAI shall be considered the full payment obligation incurred by Child Action, Inc.

NON-REIMBURSABLE CHARGES
Your child care provider may have policies or charges for services for which CAI cannot pay. Payment not made by CAI is the responsibility of the parent.

CAI does not pay for the following charges:
- Transportation charges
- The cost of tuition, books or educational materials at private schools
- Late fees
- Field trips
- Meals
- Time when the child is suspended from care
- Notice time when care is not used
CAUSES FOR NONPAYMENT
CAI is bound by the regulations that govern all alternative payment programs. The regulations stipulate the conditions under which we can or cannot reimburse child care providers. Under these regulations, CAI may not reimburse providers:

- In advance of services rendered
- Until they have completed all the necessary paperwork for reimbursement
- Unless the parent has enrolled on our program and has a written CCS approved by CAI
- If the information in the provider’s file is not current
- If attendance forms are incomplete and/or not signed
- If the parent or provider refuses to sign the attendance form
- If any information on the attendance form is false or inaccurate
- If attendance forms are received after the 25th of the month following care
- If the days/hours on the attendance form are not within the care authorized on the CCS
- If the child is suspended from child care
- If the parent or CAI ends the agreement for services with the provider
- If the provider’s license is revoked or suspended, or if the provider’s TrustLine is denied, revoked or closed
- If the provider has been convicted of any crime involving violence against, or abuse or neglect of children
- If the provider has submitted any false information or if the parent has submitted any false information for the provider
- If the provider charges a subsidized family a higher rate than a non-subsidized family

CAI does not pay for any bills incurred before a family is enrolled on our program or after CAI’s services end.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR ABSENCES
CAI hopes that children enrolled on our subsidy program use care consistently based on their scheduled care to maximize the benefits of their early learning and care experience. However, we also understand that life situations arise that may affect your child’s attendance with his or her provider. The policies below describe the payment consequences when care is not used consistently on scheduled days.

Broadly Consistent Policy – for Licensed Providers
CAI considers a family’s use of child care to be broadly consistent with the certified scheduled care if:

- The hours of care used in the month do not change the reimbursement from full time to part time, or vice versa
- The hours of care used in the month do not change the parent fee from full time to part time, or vice versa

CAI staff will not follow up with families who are using care that is broadly consistent with their certified schedule. For families with inconsistent child care usage, CAI staff will follow up with the parent to discuss a potential schedule change that is more reflective of the family’s child care needs.

Absence Policy – applies when care is not used during scheduled days
For Centers and Family Day Care Homes

- CAI will pay the first 10 days coded as “C” on the attendance form per fiscal year
  - For centers CAI will collect the days the center is scheduled to be closed and pay the first 10 C days scheduled
  - For FCCH providers, if a scheduled day is a federal holiday and the day has no hours or code entered, CAI will pay the day as a C day
CAI will pay for up to two consecutive weeks of absences if they occur at the end of the month. If absence days span more than two consecutive weeks at the end of the month, our staff will follow up with the family before processing payment. If parents do not notify CAI of their intent to resume care after two consecutive weeks of absence, the subsidy will be considered abandoned and a Notice of Action will be issued to disenroll the family from the program.

For Exempt and Relative providers
Reimbursement will be based on the actual days and hours for which services were provided up to the maximum certified scheduled care.

EXTENDED ABSENCE (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) POLICY
Families are allowed to use care based on their certified need for no less than 12 months. This is true even if you are no longer in the activity for which child care was approved at enrollment or at recertification. There may be instances, however, when a family may choose to temporarily stop child care services. In these cases, parents may request a leave of absence from the program. The request can be for one, some or all of the children in the family. Parents may request a leave of absence from the program for up to 16 weeks.

To apply for a leave of absence, you must contact your case manager. You must provide dates of your leave and the reason for the leave. All leaves must be requested in advance. Once approved, you may not resume services prior to the end-date of your leave unless you contact your case manager to request this in advance.

Providers are not required to hold child care slots; therefore, it is important that you also speak with your provider about your plans to take a leave of absence.
HOW TO VOICE CONCERNS

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
If a parent or provider has a complaint regarding any of CAI’s services, policies, practices or staff, s/he is directed to discuss the matter with the appropriate department supervisor. If the grievance is not resolved at this level, it will be referred to the department manager. It is our goal to resolve grievances at the manager’s level; however, parents and providers may escalate the matter to a department director and then to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is unsuccessful in resolving the issue, the complainant may request a meeting with CAI’s Board of Directors or a subcommittee of the Board.

FAIR HEARINGS (APPEAL PROCESS)
In accordance with California Department of Education, if child care services are changed or discontinued, parents are issued a Notice of Action in advance that states the effective date and reason for the action. If you disagree with a Notice of Action for any reason or do not agree with a judgment and/or decision we have made regarding your eligibility for services, you are entitled to a fair hearing. Procedures for requesting a fair hearing are on the reverse side of any Notice of Action.

If you elect to have a fair hearing, Child Action, Inc. will continue to pay for child care during the fair hearing process.

COMPLAINT PROCESS
If a community member has a complaint regarding any law or regulation enforced by the California Department of Education, they may submit a letter alleging the violation of the law or regulation to the Early Education Support Division (EESD) Appeals Coordinator.

California Department of Education
Early Education and Support Division
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

OTHER POLICIES

FRAUD POLICY
The California Department of Education requires CAI to inform all families receiving subsidized child care services that if child care funds are obtained by providing fraudulent or incomplete information or by willingly omitting information, CAI shall actively pursue legal channels to recover the funds paid for child care services.

Any fraudulent, false or misleading information provided to CAI regarding residence address, usage of care, income, or need status will be grounds for disenrollment and will be cause for CAI to recover funds. As a state- and county-funded program, CAI retains the right to share information or to verify documentation supplied by the parent or provider with any applicable State or County agency including, but not limited to, Department of Human Assistance, Licensing, Child Protective Services or the District Attorney’s office.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF SERVICE
The use or disclosure of any information maintained in the basic data file is limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of CAI’s program. As a state- and county-funded program, CAI retains the right to share information or verify documentation supplied by the parent or provider with any applicable State or County agency including, but not limited to, Department
of Human Assistance, Community Care Licensing, Child Protective Services or the District Attorney’s office.

No other use of this information shall be made without the parent’s prior written consent unless it is subpoenaed by a court of law. Enrolled parents have access to the information in their family’s file.

DISENROLLMENT FROM THE PROGRAM

PARENT DISENROLLMENT
Parents who choose to end child care services with CAI should notify us two weeks in advance and should notify their child care provider in accordance with the provider’s policies regarding termination of services. Parents could be responsible for payments if they end care without notice in accordance with their provider's policies.

Parents may be disenrolled from CAI’s program for any of the following reasons:
- Failure to establish an approved need for services at certification or recertification
- Failure to submit verifiable information regarding eligibility or need for services, or any other required documentation, by the assigned due date
- Eligibility period ends and there is no approved need for care
- If on Stage 2 and receiving aid, eligibility period ends and there is no new referral from DHA at recertification
- Failure to be recertified
- Failure to adhere to any rules established by CAI
- Providing CAI with fraudulent, false or misleading information or documentation
- Using abusive or vulgar language, attempting to bribe, coerce, extort any CAI employee or client, or threatening any CAI employee or client
- Your family’s gross monthly income adjusted for family size exceeds 85% of the State Median Income
- Failure to pay parent fees by the due date or failure to fulfill the conditions of a repayment plan, if applicable
- Failure to accurately fill out attendance forms on a daily basis
- Falsifying information on attendance forms, or refusing to sign attendance forms
- Failure to use child care services that child(ren) are enrolled to use
- No approved provider
- Child(ren) reaches State age eligibility limits

Parents who are disenrolled from the program because they failed to report a change in on-going income that exceeds 85% of the State Median Income adjusted for family size, within 30 calendar days or who reported false or misleading information, may be required to pay back money to CAI in the amount paid out for care the family was not eligible to receive. Parents may be ineligible for continued services unless the debt is paid in full.

PROVIDER DISENROLLMENT
State laws require that CAI take action should any of the following conditions occur:

License Expiration/Revocation/Suspension/Probation for any licensed facility
- Revocation/Suspension: If a provider’s license is revoked or suspended, CAI will cease to reimburse the provider as of the date of the revocation or suspension. The parent and the provider will be notified in writing that payment has been terminated and the reason for the termination. In order to continue receiving services from CAI, the parent will have to select a
different provider. A provider who has a license revocation or suspension cannot be reimbursed by CAI as a non-licensed provider regardless of her/his relationship to the children.

- **Probation:** If a provider is placed on probation, CAI will notify the parent of the provider’s probation status and explain that the parent has the option to select another provider or remain with her/his current provider. CAI will not approve services for new families with this provider during the probationary period.

**Change of Location**
- **Licensed Providers:** Child care licenses are not transferable. Any time a provider moves, s/he must apply for another license. When the new facility is licensed, CAI requires a new Provider Information Sheet, Provider Statement of Understanding, and copy of the new license. In order to continue receiving subsidy payments, the provider must notify CAI prior to moving. If there is a time lapse between the provider’s new and old license, no payment can be made for that time.
- **Non-Licensed Providers:** If care is provided in the parent’s home, CAI must be informed if/when the parent moves. If care is provided in the provider’s home, the provider must notify CAI prior to moving. In both cases, we will require that the provider update forms necessary in her/his file.

**Change of Ownership**
- Any time a child care center changes ownership through a sale, transfer or any other means, the center must be re-licensed. The Provider Statement of Understanding and Provider Information Sheet are not transferable. CAI cannot issue payment if we do not have a new license, a new rate sheet, a new Provider Statement of Understanding and a new Provider Information Sheet.

**TrustLine Denial/Revocation/Closure**
- State law prohibits CAI from paying a provider whose TrustLine application is denied or closed. In addition, if a provider’s TrustLine is ever revoked, we will stop payment immediately. If a provider’s TrustLine is denied, closed or revoked, CAI will not issue payment regardless of the provider’s relationship to the children.
  - **Denied:** Usually indicates that the provider’s application has not been approved because the provider has been convicted of a felony that would preclude her/him from safely caring for children.
  - **Revoked:** TrustLine application was previously approved but has been revoked, usually because the provider has committed a felony after the initial approval.
  - **Closed:** The application cannot be approved, usually because part of the application is missing.

**Unresolved Financial Obligations**
- A provider, who has incurred a debt to CAI either as a provider or a parent on the program, will not be enrolled or reimbursed by CAI until the debt has been paid in full.
SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS
(Programs available in Sacramento County)

- **Child Development Programs:** Full-day child care programs for children, ages birth through twelve and older for children with special needs, whose families meet an income requirement and have a need for child care in order to work, attend school or complete job training programs. These developmental programs, operated by school districts and not-for-profit organizations, offer comprehensive care that meets educational, social, emotional, nutritional and health needs of children.
  - **Child Action, Inc.:** Programs administered by Child Action, Inc. (an Alternative Payment Program) provide parents with child care certificates and allow them to select their own licensed or exempt providers. They may choose a child care center, a family child care home, a relative provider or a provider who is not licensed but meets the criteria for non-licensed providers. Parents are placed on specific programs based on their need and eligibility. All parents must meet eligibility requirements and be engaged in an activity (employment, training, looking for work or medical incapacitation) that requires them to have child care. Families may also be referred for services from Child Protective Services.
    - **Stage 2 and Stage 3** are administered by Alternative Payment Program agencies under contract with the California Department of Education. (Child Action, Inc. administers Stage 2 & 3 in Sacramento County)
    - Families are placed on Stage 2 after a parent’s work or work activity has stabilized or when the family is transitioning off of aid. Clients may continue to receive child care in Stage 2 up to 24 months after they no longer receive aid.
    - Families transfer to Stage 3 when they have exhausted their 24-months limit on Stage 2 (referred to as timing out). Stage 3 can continue for as long as the family remains eligible for child care programs and continues to have a need for care.
  - **Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN):** Beanstalk, the FCCHEN in Sacramento County, offers sliding fee and free programs in licensed centers and family child care homes. Beanstalk centers provide school readiness (preschool) with full day school and part day options and before/after school programs. Beanstalk has flexible hours with sites located throughout the greater Sacramento area (income eligibility is required).
- **Migrant Child Care:** Full-day child care programs for families who are migrant and seasonal agricultural workers. These programs operate seasonally and are typically located in Migrant Housing Projects.
- **Campus Child Care:** Child care for income-eligible parents enrolled at the University of California, California State University and California Community College systems. Each campus serves different age ranges.
- **State Preschool:** Program that provides part/full time preschool education to children (primarily 3 and 4 year olds) in families with income eligibility.
- **Head Start/Early Head Start:** Early infant or preschool education and parenting education program operated by Sacramento Employment and Training Agency or the school districts. With some exceptions for children with disabilities, families must be income eligible. Head Start serves families with children between three years and the mandatory school age. Early Head Start serves families with children 0-36 months. For a listing go to www.headstartprogram.us/city/ca-sacramento
- **California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs):** Recipients of the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) grant program are required to engage in work or work preparation activities. Child care is provided with state and federal funds in three stages. Stage 1 is administered by the County of Sacramento and begins when a participant enters the CalWORKs grant program and begins a welfare-to-work plan developed by the Department of Human Assistance (DHA). DHA refers families to resource and referral agencies to assist them in finding child care providers.
CONTACT US

Main Office
9800 Old Winery Place, Suite A
Sacramento, CA 95827-1700
1-916-369-0191

Free Child Care Referrals are available online, by phone or walk-in. Child care referrals are free to all families in Sacramento County.
Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., no appointment needed

Provider Department
9812 Old Winery Place, Suite 21
Sacramento, CA 95827-1732
1-916-369-0191

For providers who are currently caring for children paid for through CAI’s subsidies or providers who will care for children subsidized by CAI

Fax Numbers
Assessment 1-916-361-7421
Administration 1-916-361-0477
Client Services 1-916-369-0314
Community Services 1-916-369-0318
Human Resources 1-916-857-1507
Provider Department 1-916-363-1139

Visit us online at www.childaction.org