



## POLICY ADVISORY (UPDATED)

*Field Operations 2024 - 6*

**Policies:** Interim Enrollment and Attendance Policies for Income Eligible, Department of Children and Families (DCF), and Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) Child Care Financial Assistance

**Effective Date:** April 1, 2024

**Policy links:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/interim-income-eligible-child-care-financial-assistance-program-policies-october-1-2023/download>; <https://www.mass.gov/doc/interim-dta-related-child-care-financial-assistance-program-policies-october-1-2023/download>; <https://www.mass.gov/doc/interim-dcf-related-child-care-financial-assistance-program-policies-october-1-2023/download> (translations available: <https://www.mass.gov/collections/child-care-financial-assistance-policy-guidance-and-resources>)

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### OVERVIEW

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) updated the Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) enrollment and attendance policies in October 2023, moving from attendance based reimbursement to enrollment based reimbursement. Providers must ensure that families have an authorization and child care placement, and the child is attending care before they can be reimbursed. To support these changes, EEC updated our Child Care Financial Assistance System on February 27, 2024, with new enrollment codes.

### APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all early education and care providers who accept state child care financial assistance.

### KEY UPDATES

Key updates to the interim attendance and enrollment policy include:

- Providers will now be reimbursed based on authorization and placement, whether it is full-time or part-time.
- EEC now allows full-time reimbursement for school-age early release days, regardless of the number of hours the child attends the program. A new closure type has been added to the CCFA system for this.
  - For school-age early release days, family access administrators need to enter these days as closure days on the provider schedule.
  - EEC is working to accommodate school-age children who attend two different programs.
  - **Early release days may be billed full time or part time at the discretion of the program. This change is in recognition of programs who are caring for children for a**



longer day. Programs must decide internally if billing part time or full time is reflective of the care being provided on these days.

- Parents will be required to pay their parent fee on early release days based on full time or part time care as identified by the program, **including any absences. Provider must inform parents on how parent fees are assigned for full time or part time care on early release days.**
- The effective date for billing full time for Early release days was March 1, 2024, however, providers do not have to implement this process right away. EEC urges programs to review this new policy with families prior to the implementation.
- Programs who bill full time for the Early Release day, will be required to add the Early Release days to the provider schedule in CCFA.
- Providers can only bill for children receiving financial assistance “enrolled and attending.”
- EEC added additional intermittent codes to better support flexibility in parents’ schedules.

New Enrollment Code Chart: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/eec-ccfa-enrollment-codes-as-of-march-2024/download>

#### *How to Calculate Payments for Reimbursement:*

1. Applicable daily reimbursement rate minus required parent fees = daily reimbursement rate
2. Utilization multiplied by the daily reimbursement rate = reimbursement

Utilization is defined as the number of financial assistance enrolled seats multiplied by the number of service days in a given month.

Service days include:

- Enrolled days (present and absent),
- Approved closure days,
- Approved holidays/professional development days, and
- Approved emergency closures.

## **RESOURCES**

EEC is hosting **two training sessions** for family access administrators, as well as a drop-in session the week of 3/18. RSVP:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSet8w7nfFIJ8Q7tvHKjshIQOPUwSdoJaXXC5wdOEYg8w2vJig/viewform>

#### *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **1. Can we still use the “enrolled not attending” policy?**

No. Families receiving child care financial assistance must have an authorization and placement in place and the child must be attending care before a provider can be reimbursed.



**2. I am a provider who has a preschool child authorized for full-time care and a corresponding placement is full-time at a program. How do I bill if the child attends an Early Intervention Program for three (3) hours, two (2) days a week and attends my program before and after?**

If the family is authorized for full-time child care and the placement is full-time, the enrollment based attendance allows for the provider to be reimbursed full-time for this child.

**3. When can I be reimbursed full-time for school-age children?**

On days when school is in session, EEC will pay for before and/or after-school rates or part day rates for family child care providers serving school-age children. EEC does not pay for school-age child care services received during the school day, even if a school department provides remote, home, or hybrid school.

On days when school **is not** in session, EEC will pay providers full-day rates for children with intermittent placements. This includes:

- Early Release days
- School Vacation days and School Holidays (provider is open)
- School Closure Days
- Summer and Winter Breaks
- Days that the early education and care provider was scheduled to provide full day care under one of the eligible categories above but had an emergency closure, pursuant to the Emergency Closure policy.

School-age children that have an occasional care placement for when school is not in session, reimbursement will be paid to the occasional care provider.

NOTE: A child attending public kindergarten is considered a school-age child. Providers serving families with 5-year-old children who are enrolled in preschool (instead of kindergarten in the local school district) will be reimbursed at the preschool rate, minus any parent fees.

*Key Reminders*

- Providers will bill based on the child's enrollment (the hours agreed upon between the parent and provider), including schedule changes.
- Providers may enroll, and EEC will pay for, financial assistance for a family starting the beginning date indicated on the family's voucher or on the signed Financial Assistance and Fee Agreement for a child in a contracted slot.
- Child care services provided beyond the family's authorized end date, as indicated on the family's voucher or signed Financial Assistance and Fee Agreement, will not be paid for.

For assistance with the implementation or interpretation of these interim policies, contact EEC at [eeccsubsidymanagement@mass.gov](mailto:eeccsubsidymanagement@mass.gov).



## **OBSOLETE**

The new enrollment-based attendance codes replace the previous attendance codes. The enrollment-based attendance replaces the previous reimbursement policy that allowed for families to be “enrolled and not attending.” EEC no longer allows billing for children receiving financial assistance “enrolled and not attending.”