



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education & Care

Contracted Provider Core Services Training
Child Care Financial Assistance – Policy
Spring 2025

Housekeeping

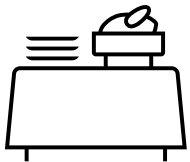


Please feel welcome to ask questions

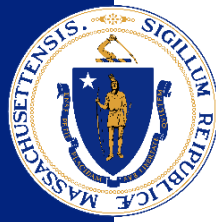
Questions will be gathered for a Q&A document that will be distributed after the training



Please silence electronic devices and step out of the room to take any calls



Lunch will be at noon



Agenda

Child Care Financial Assistance

- Introduction to CCFA
- Child Care Financial Assistance Policy

Lunch

- Child Care Financial Assistance Policy, continued
- Priority Populations

Introductions: EEC Team

- **Bethanie Glass**, Director of Child Care Financial Assistance
- **Elyse Tibbetts**, Priority Access Manager
- **Carmen Quiñones**, Subsidy Policy & Technical Assistance Specialist
- **Financial Assistance Team**
 - Johanna Gonzalez
 - Brenda Hodziewich
 - Brenda Santiago
 - Charline Vaughan
 - Jackeline Fernandez
- **Family Access Administrator**
 - Kelly Castor
 - Onika Jenkins
 - Mary Dennehy-Colorusso
 - Cynthia Smith
 - Ashley Theodat

Training Goals

For Providers



- Understand EEC's expectations for contracted providers on administering Child Care Financial Assistance, working with families and delivering high quality child care

For EEC



- Ensure all contracted providers understand EEC's current Child Care Financial Assistance Policies and how to operationalize them within their program
- Understand and discuss where providers may need additional support

Learning Objectives

- ❑ **Understand** the regulations and policies connected to the family journey: Intake, Waitlist, Eligibility, Initial Authorization, and Reauthorization
- ❑ Learn how to **reduce burden on families** and improve and simplify communication with families as they navigate Child Care Financial Assistance programs
- ❑ Understand how to **execute the policies and processes** associated with Intake, Waitlist, Eligibility, Initial Authorization, and Reauthorization to drive the policies and regulations forward
- ❑ Identify the **materials, resources and supports** available for successful family engagement as a family accesses Child Care Financial Assistance
- ❑ **Broaden understanding** on how the regulations, policies, and procedures impact how you work with families, and how families will work with our partners – you!

Overview of Child Care Financial Assistance



Background and Context: Child Care Financial Assistance

- The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a federal and state partnership authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG).
- States use CCDF to provide financial assistance to low-income families to access child care so they can work or attend a job training or educational program.
- States also use CCDF to invest in quality initiatives, including building the skills and qualifications of the workforce, supporting programs to achieve higher standards, and providing consumer education to parents.
- EEC's Child Care Financial Assistance Programs are primarily funded by CCDF.

Federal policies establish the basic requirements for eligibility for CCDF-funded Child Care Financial Assistance

- Children must be under 13 years of age (up to 16 years with a disability)
- Family's income cannot exceed 85% of State Median Income and countable assets cannot exceed \$1M
- Parents or guardians must be working or attending a job training or educational program, with some options for states to grant exceptions

EEC must follow these policies to use CCDF funding for its Child Care Financial Assistance Programs.

EEC develops its regulations and policies accordingly.

Child Care Financial Assistance

Child Care Financial Assistance is governed by federal and state statute and regulations

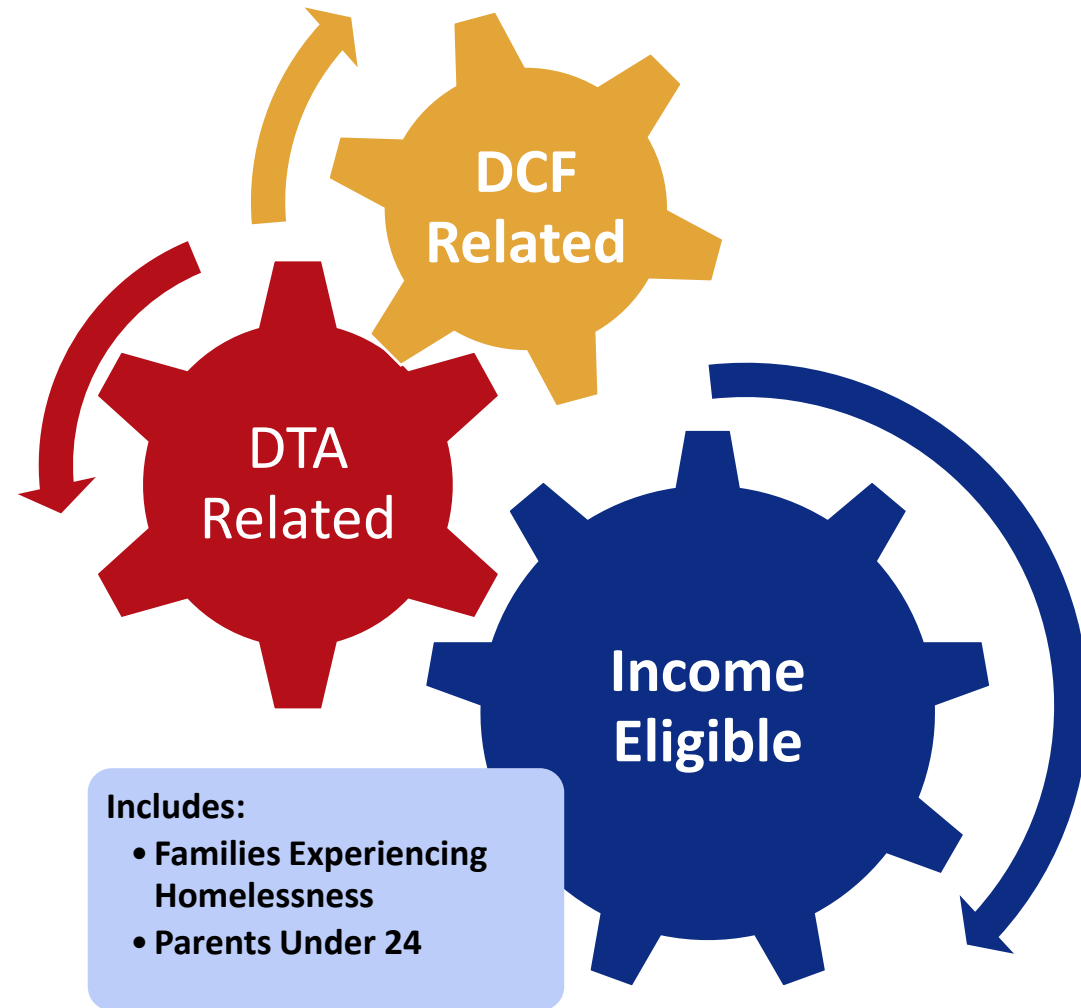
	Purpose	Role of EEC
Federal Statute (CCDBG)	The Child Care Development and Block Grant (CCDBG) establishes the baseline eligibility requirements for Child Care Financial Assistance	Determine policies & processes, define terms, decide on methods for eligibility and care
Appropriations	State Appropriations dictate how we can use funds earmarked for the Child Care Financial Assistance	Ensure spending is in accordance with the law
State Statute (MGL)	Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 15D, § 2, articulates responsibilities for administering Child Care Financial Assistance	Administer federal funds, Child Care Financial Assistance waiting list, and rate structures

Child Care Financial Assistance Programs

EEC administers three Child Care Financial Assistance Programs accessible to families in the form of vouchers or contracted seats.

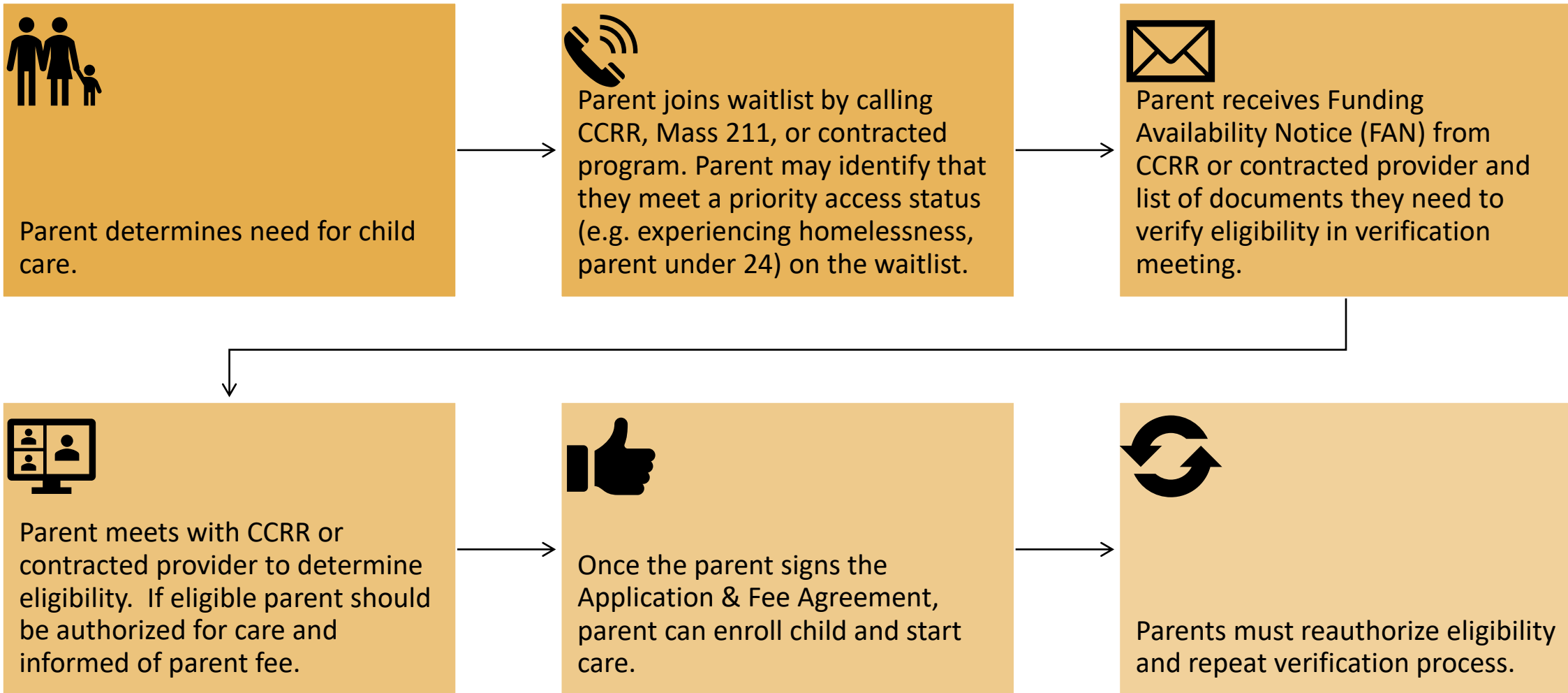
Families access these programs through the EEC centralized waitlist or by referral from an authorized state entity.

Families may journey through different funding streams.

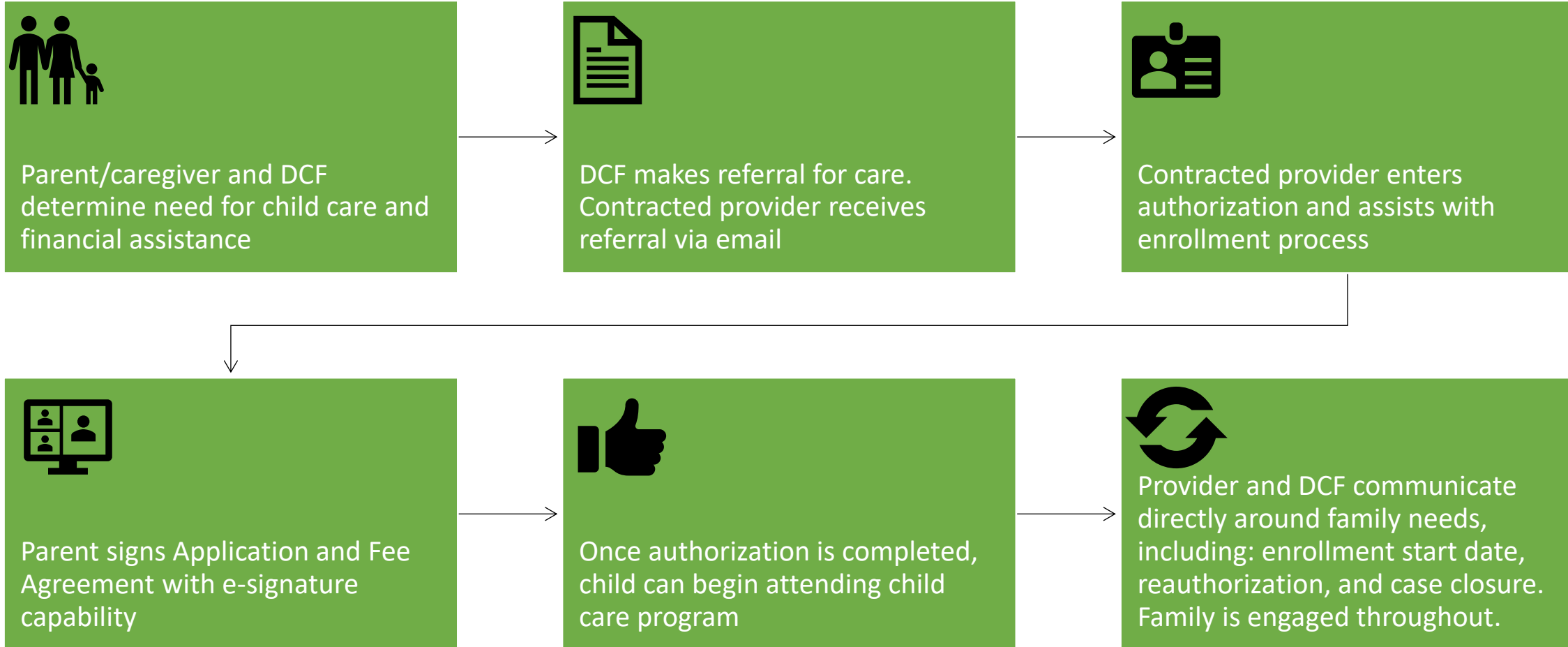


Family Journey

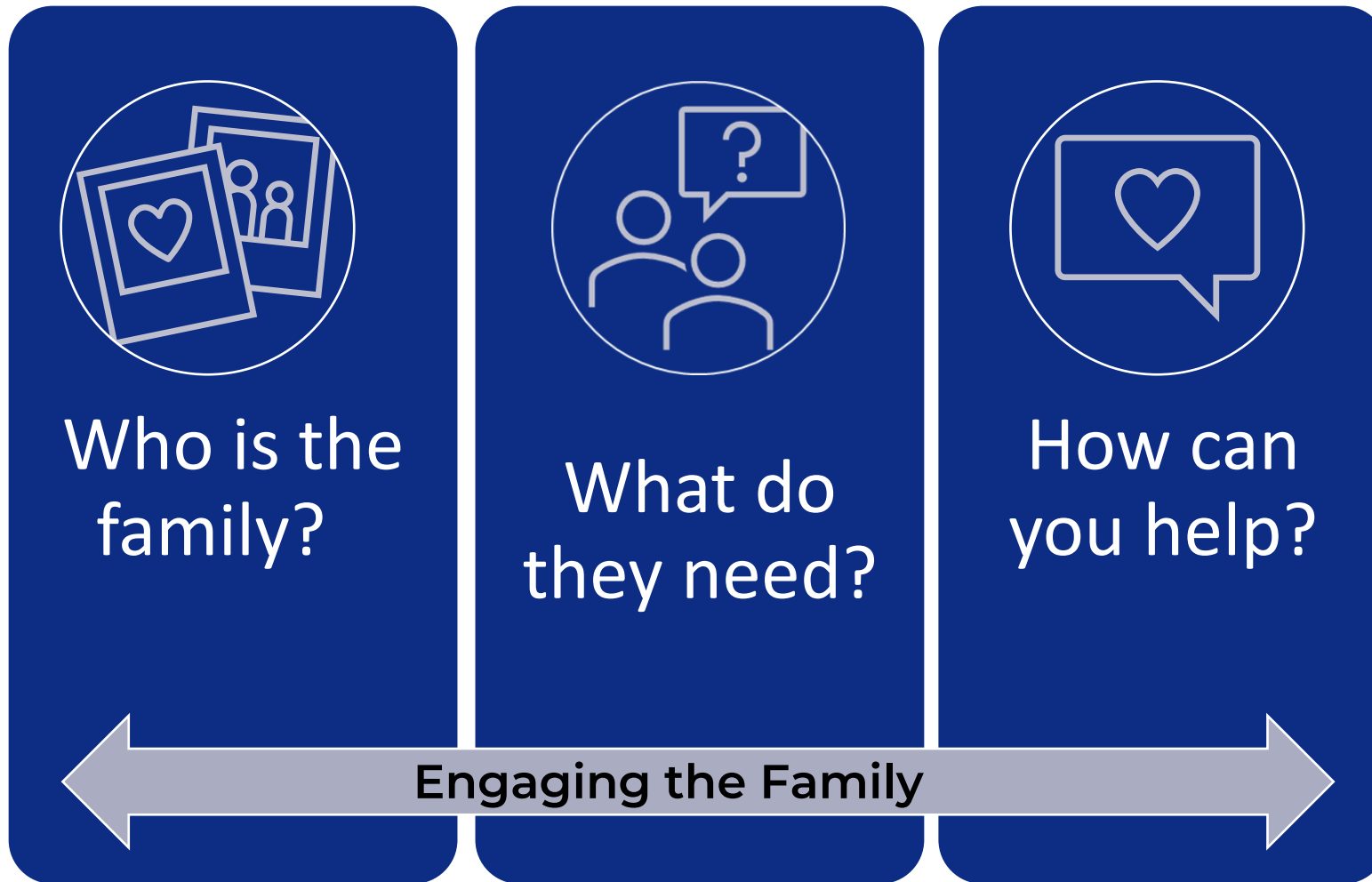
Parent Journey Map: Income Eligible Program



Journey Map for DCF-Related Families

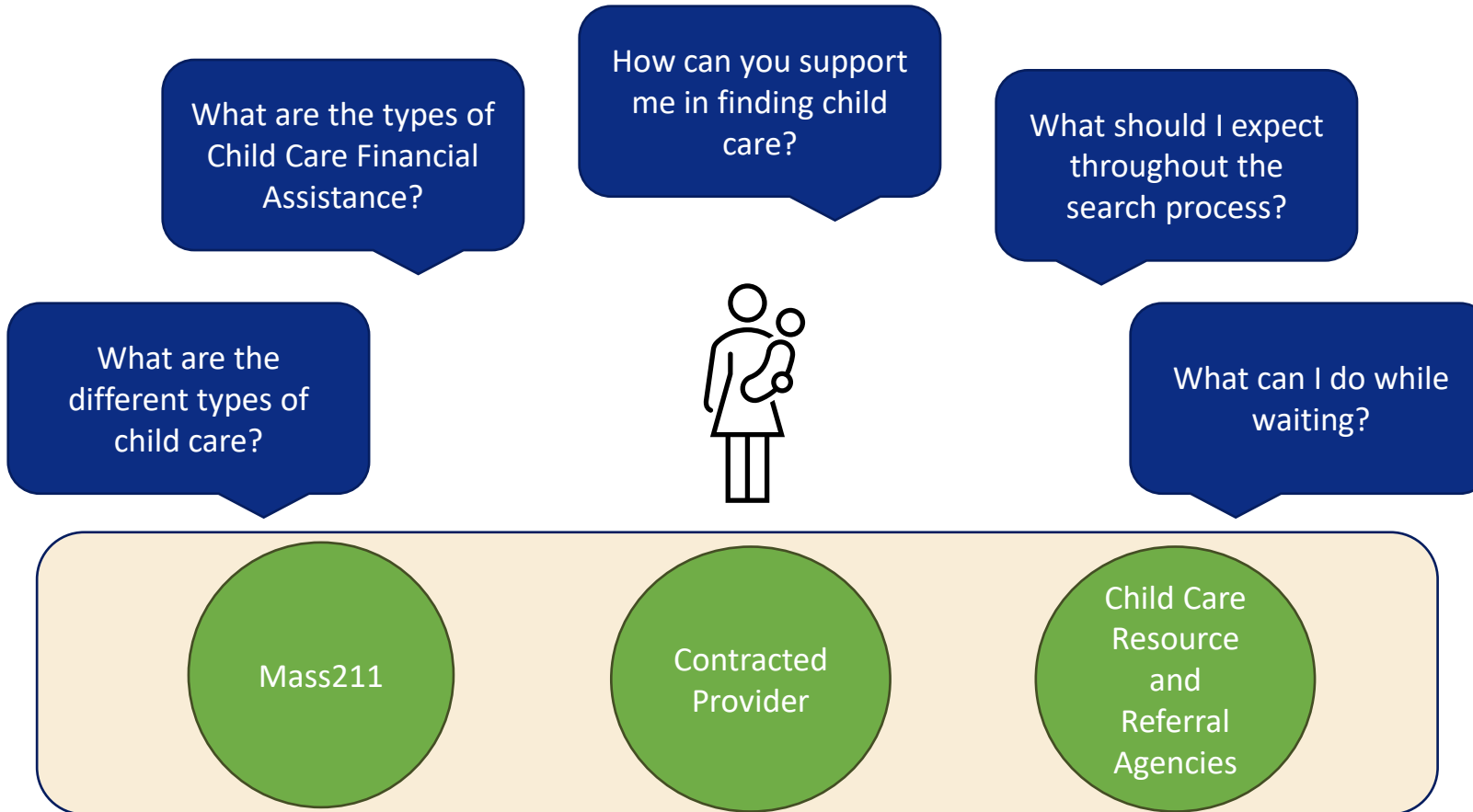


Understanding the Family



Offering Support & Information

Child care is one of the most critical supports for all families and can be difficult to navigate without the proper information and supports. Family Access Administrators should make sure families understand the resources available to them and how the process works.



Child Care Financial Assistance Waitlist

CCFA Waitlist Overview

WHAT IS IT

A statewide list of families in need of assistance to pay for early education and care.

PURPOSE

To provide access to families seeking Child Care Financial Assistance in the form of a voucher or a contracted seat in a child care program once determined eligible.

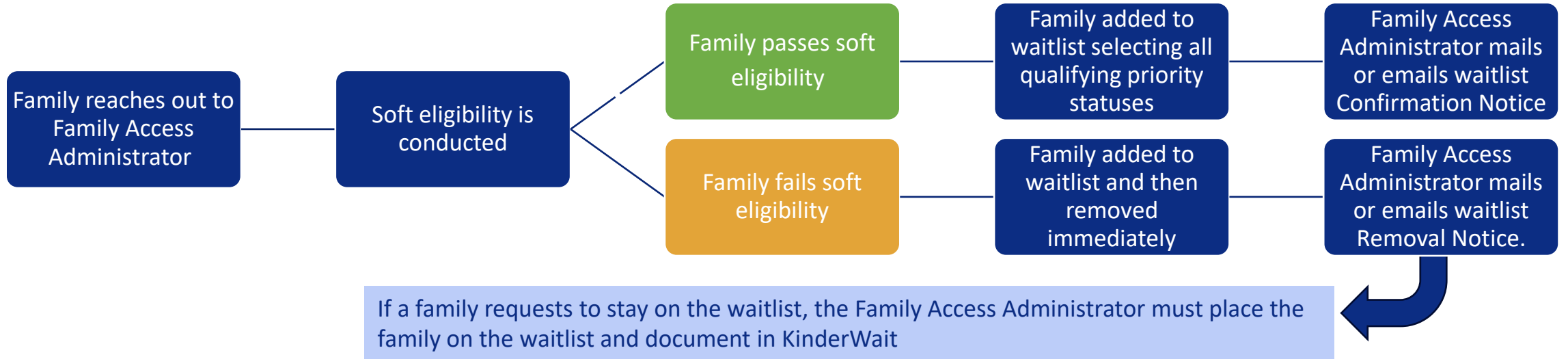
HOW IS IT MANAGED

Statewide, regionally and locally managed by EEC, Mass211, CCRRs and Contracted Providers including Family Child Care systems.

All families seeking access to Child Care Financial Assistance through the Income Eligible program must be placed on EEC's waitlist through the KinderWait system. Exceptions to the waitlist are families with referrals from Department of Transitional Assistance(DTA) and Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Placement on Waitlist: Process Flow

The EEC centralized waitlist for Child Care Financial Assistance is the first step in the process for families to access Child Care Financial Assistance. Families may be added to the waitlist by a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCRR), a Contracted Provider or by calling Mass 211 (dial "2-1-1" from a phone).



Important: Families must not be determined ineligible due to citizenship status alone.



What information is helpful to have as an FAA when enrolling and authorizing a family for CCFA?

Waitlist: Soft Eligibility Screening

All families should receive a “soft eligibility” screening prior to being placed on the waitlist

The screening consists of a short set of questions to collect the minimum amount of information necessary to determine if a family likely qualifies for Child Care Financial Assistance

Families must be asked if they need any special accommodation

The soft eligibility asks questions regarding:

Contact Information

- Name
- Residency
- Citizenship status of the child(ren)

Status

- Immediate
- Priority
- General

Income/Household

- Average monthly income
- Household composition

Soft Eligibility Questions

CONTACT & FAMILY INFORMATION QUESTIONS:

1. What is your first and last name?
2. Do you live in Massachusetts?
3. How many people are in your family? How many parents/children? Ages?
4. Is the child(ren) for whom you are seeking care a US citizen or a legal resident of the United States?
5. Are you single or married? Married but separated
6. Is the caretaker a legal guardian or foster parent, including a grandparent?
7. Is either parent actively deployed to military duty?
8. Does the child(ren) for whom you are seeking care have a disability?

ACCESS STATUS QUESTIONS:

1. Is a parent working in an early education and care program?
2. Is a parent younger than 24 years old?
3. Have you (or are you) experiencing domestic violence?
4. How would you describe your living situation?

Soft Eligibility Questions

ACCESS STATUS QUESTIONS:

1. Is your family homeless, including but not limited to: staying in a shelter, living in a motel/hotel, sharing housing?
2. Within the last 24 months, has your family had an open DCF case?
3. Within the last 24 months, has your family had an open TAFDC (cash assistance) case with DTA? **If the family has had a DTA case they should be referred to DTA for a referral.**

INCOME QUESTIONS BASED ON SERVICE NEED

1. Are you employed? In school or a training program? Disabled? Seeking employment? Retired?
 - If employed: ask hourly rate and how many hours a week are worked
 - If salaried: ask for annual salary and divide by 12 to get monthly amount OR ask if they have their gross pay amount weekly or biweekly
 - If self-employed: ask for average monthly gross income
 - If retired: do they receive a pension
2. Use SMI chart to determine income eligibility

SMI Chart to Check Eligibility and Parent Fee

- 50% SMI for most families
- 85% SMI for:
 - Families with child(ren) with a disability; OR
 - Families where one parent works for an EEC funded or licensed program (Early Childhood Educator Priority)
- Income requirements are waived for families experiencing homelessness
- Parent fees can be estimated based on verbal information from the family by:
 - SMI Parent Fee Chart online: [Mass.gov/guides/child-care-subsidy-management-and-ccfa](https://www.mass.gov/guides/child-care-subsidy-management-and-ccfa)
 - EEC's online calculator: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/while-getting-child-care-financial-assistance>

Tips for talking with families:
Talk about SMI as their
**Maximum Monthly Income
(before taxes)**

Child Care Financial Assistance Eligibility Chart		
Household Size	Maximum Monthly Income (before taxes)	Maximum Monthly Income If your child has a disability or you are an ECE provider (before taxes)
2	\$4,468	\$7,595
3	\$5,519	\$9,382
4	\$6,570	\$11,169
5	\$7,621	\$12,956

Waitlist Priority Statuses

Immediate

- Families experiencing homelessness
- Families with a young parent
- Families experiencing domestic violence
- Families with a parent working in early education and care program
- Families with a sibling already receiving child care financial assistance

Priority

- Families with a child or parent with a disability including parents participating in substance abuse treatment and/or rehabilitation
- Families whose eligibility for another child care financial assistance program is ending
- Families with a legal guardian, including a grandparent
- Families with a parent who is actively deployed to military duty

General Priority

- Families with no priority code

Continuity of Care

Families who are ending child care financial assistance for a particular EEC program (DCF/ DTA) but still qualify for assistance

Waitlist Communication Notices

Family Access Administrators must ensure that families receive written communication informing them of waitlist placement status. Notices issued through KinderWait are:

1. Confirmation Notice

To be sent within 24 hours of adding family to waitlist by email and mail

- Confirms the number of children placed on the waitlist
- Confirms the date each child's name was placed on the waitlist
- Provides the family with a Household ID (HHID) to be used when referring to their application
- Requests the family to review the information they have provided and to contact a Family Access Administrator to report any changes

2. Renewal Notice

Sent to all families on waitlist longer than 12 months with no updates

- Requests the family to update information within 15 days
- Requires a response from family to prevent removal from waitlist

3. Removal Notice

Informs family they are no longer eligible for waitlist due to failing to update waitlist record, exceeding income eligibility, no longer a Massachusetts resident, failing to respond to funding availability, or no longer interested in receiving Child Care Financial Assistance

- When families are sent a removal notice they should also be sent a Request for Review Form
- Two separate attempts, by different modes, must be made by the Family Access Administrator before a family's status is changed to terminated

4. Funding Available Notice

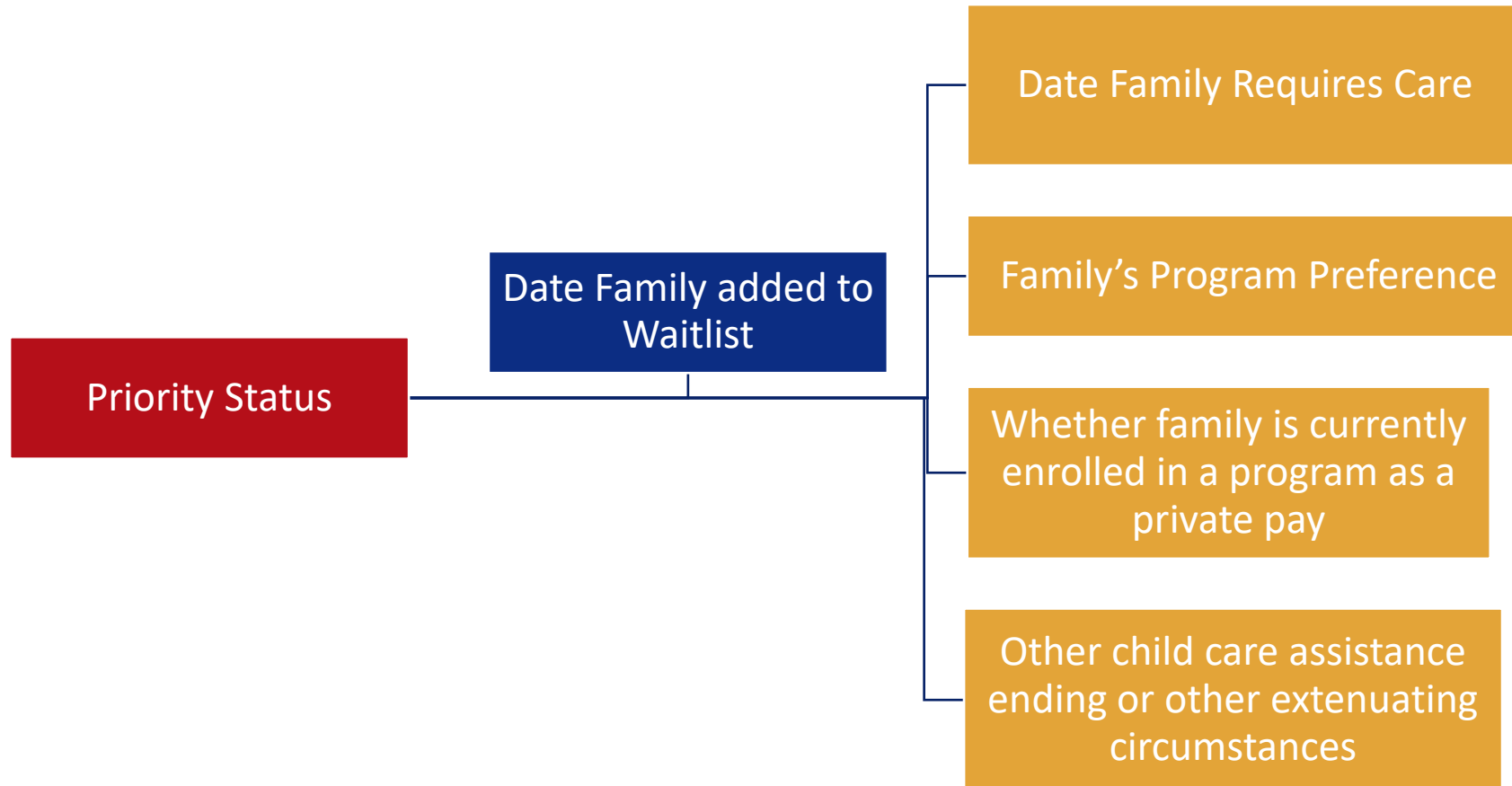
Informs the family that funding is being offered

- Families must respond within 15 days
- Child care is offered on a first come first serve basis, as 5 letters are generated per every available seat

Family Access Administrators must email and mail notices to confirm a family's status on the waitlist.

Choosing Families from the Waitlist

When funding becomes available, Family Access Administrators will offer Child Care Financial Assistance to families based on the family's preference and then pulling a query from the waitlist based on:



Contracted providers must have open available contracted seats to offer funding for Child Care Financial Assistance.

Funding Offered

1. FUNDING AVAILABILITY NOTICE (FAN) SENT

- Change status to “Pending” and enter a note in the family’s record that a FAN was sent and by what mode (email or mail)
- Families have 15 days to respond as stated in the FAN
- If the family does not respond within 15 days, you need to contact the family by another mode of communication.
 - Before a family’s status is changed to terminated, the FAA must make at least two separate attempts using different modes of communication to reach the family (e.g. phone call, email, text, mail).

2. FAMILY RESPONDS TO FAN

- **Family is interested in the funding offer**
 - Change the status to “Pending pre-enrolled” and enter a note in the family’s record of the communication.
 - FAA does an eligibility check to ensure the family is still eligible and lets the family know the documentation that is required.
 - The family has 30 days to submit required eligibility documentation
 - Once all documentation has been submitted by the family, the FAA has 10 days to review and enter the documentation into CCFA to authorize the family’s care.
- **If the family is not interested in the funding offer**
 - Change the status back to “Active” and enter a note in the family’s record of the communication.
 - Parent should be reminded that when they are ready for child care, it may not be available at the time. The family will remain on the waitlist with their original application date.
 - The FAN needs to be processed in the record under the section Refused/Denied Care, why the family refused
- **If the family is not interested in care any longer**
 - Change the status to “Terminated” and enter a note in the family’s record of the communication
 - Send the family a Removal Notice with a Request for Review
 - The FAN will need to be processed in KinderWait (discussed with communications)

3. FAMILY DOESN’T RESPOND TO FAN

- Two separate attempts, by different modes, must be made by the FAA before a family’s status is changed to terminated
- Change the status to “Terminated” and enter a note in the family’s record
- Send the family a Removal Notice with a Request for Review
- The FAN will need to be processed in KinderWait under the section Refused/Denied Care, why the family refused

Managing the Waitlist

It is essential to remove families from the waitlist and terminate the child's status to ensure accurate waitlist data and FAA's must:

- Make two separate attempts to reach a family before removing them from the waitlist using different modes of communication (e.g., phone call one day, email the next day).
- Explain the process to request to be put back on the waitlist
- Add a family back to waitlist if requested within 30 business days of the removal

Waitlist Removal Reasons

- Moved out of MA
- Child over 13 (unless disabled)
- Over income limit
- No longer needs assistance
- No response to funding availability
- No response to notifications from FAA about waitlist status
- Failed to update waitlist information
- Requested removal from waitlist

Tips and Reminders for Offering Funding

- ✓ Good practice is to look at seat availability for the upcoming month (i.e., child aging out from one age group to another, children transitioning from one program type to another and children ending care with your program)
- ✓ When the search results populate, you can review the family notes, to be sure the family isn't waiting for a preferred program or future date and call the families.
- ✓ A good practice is to send FANs and to call families, as this will speed up the process of filling available seats.
- ✓ When speaking to families emphasize the importance of timely responses to a FAN. Contracted seats are filled on a first come first serve basis.

Eligibility

Eligibility Overview

Family Access Administrators must determine and document an income eligible family's eligibility for Child Care Financial Assistance after a family has responded to the FAN. Family Access Administrator completes a soft eligibility check and then verifies the information through a review of supporting documentation. Eligibility is determined once everything is entered in CCFA (the system).



Determination of a family's eligibility must be made no later than 10 business days following the day the family provides ALL necessary documents. The first business day following the Family Access Administrator's receipt of complete documentation is day 1 of the 10-day processing timeframe.

Eligibility Verifications Documentation

1

*** Verification of
Identify of Parents**

2

***Age of Child**

3

*** Verification of
Citizenship or Immigration Status
of the Child Seeking Care**

4

**Verification
of Household Composition**

5

**Verification of
Massachusetts Residency**

6

Verification of Assets

7

Verification of Income

8

**Verification of
Service Need**

Reminder:
Family's documentation
must be used to verify
multiple eligibility
requirements

*Refers to foundational documentation that does not change and does not need to be updated once submitted

1 Identity of Parents

Documentation of each parent's identity in the household must be provided at initial authorization. Proof of identity only needs to be submitted once, even if the family changes programs or has a break in authorizations.



Any ONE with Photo

- US or foreign passport
- US or foreign driver's license
- Employment Authorization card
- Work ID
- School ID
- Any other ID with a photo



Any TWO without Photo

- US or foreign birth certificate
- Public benefits award letter
- School ID or school records
- Medical records

Family Access Administrators will accept an expired document as proof of identity if the document is otherwise sufficient to establish a parent's identity, regardless of when the document expired. To be otherwise sufficient, the information on the document must match the information on at least one other document used for verification of the parent's eligibility.

2 Household Composition and Age of Child

A family's household composition will be determined by what the family reports on their CCFA application or list on household composition form. Household composition refers to the persons living in the residence, including:

- All parents or caregivers;
- All dependent children (including both applicant and non-applicant children); and
- All dependent relatives who reside in the same household.

4

Families must provide documentation to verify the relationship of the parent(s) applying for Child Care Financial Assistance for each child under the age of 18, or under the age of 24 if the child(ren) is a full-time student and is financially dependent on the parent(s)

Examples of allowable verifying documents:

- Birth certificate
- Hospital birth records
- Guardianship documentation
- Court documents
- Tax forms

***In most cases the documentation verifying relationship also verifies age of child**

3

Citizenship & Immigration : Child Only

To qualify for Child Care Financial Assistance, each child for whom care is requested must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible immigrant and documentation is required to verify the citizenship or immigration status for the child only.

A parent or caregiver's citizenship status is not needed and should not be requested when applying for child care financial assistance. Parents only need to verify identity and relationship to the child.

Examples of allowable verifying documents:

- U.S. Birth certificate
- U.S. Passport
- Permanent Resident Card (Green card)

FAA's should inform families that:

- Receiving Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) will not hurt your immigration status. Applying for or receiving CCFA will not put you at risk of being considered a public charge. All information given to EEC is confidential and is not shared with immigration officials.
- CCFA is considered a benefit for children, not adults. Even if you, as a parent or caregiver, are not a U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant, it is safe for you to apply for and receive CCFA for an eligible child.

Note: No family will be denied Child Care Financial Assistance based only on their inability to demonstrate the child's citizenship or immigration status without final review by EEC. Please send questions to EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov.

5 MA Residency

Child Care Financial Assistance is only available to residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Proof of Massachusetts residency must show the parent's or caregiver's current primary address is located within MA.

Post Office Box addresses are not accepted as proof of residency.



Some acceptable verifications:

- Utility bills dated within last 45 days
- Current lease
- Tax documents
- Housing documentation
- Car registration
- Documentation verifying homelessness
- Health Insurance documents
- Other documents

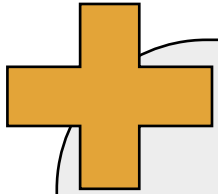
6 Assets

A family's assets must be below \$1 million dollars to be eligible.

- This is verified through self-declaration on the Child Care Financial Assistance application or Household Income Statement.
 - No other documentation is needed from the family.
- Asset limit applies to all households, including those headed by caregivers/guardians.
 - *This does not apply to families experiencing homelessness or working with DTA and DCF.*
- Any family certifying that they possess \$1 million or more in assets shall be denied Child Care Financial Assistance.

7 Countable vs Non-Countable Income

Only countable income sources are used when calculating a family's income.



Countable Income

- Wages
- Self-employment income
- Alimony
- Lottery earnings
- Retirement income
- Unemployment benefits
- Workers' Compensation
- Net rental income
- Dividends or income from trusts or estates

Non-Countable Income

- Child support, including in-kind support
- Social Security Income or SSDI
- Veteran's Disability Benefits
- Income from legal guardians, foster parents, caregivers, dependent children
- Income from household members not included in the reported household composition
- Income from relatives or unmarried partners that do not share a common child
- DTA benefits (SNAP/TAFDC)
- Rental allowance and other rental assistance or housing stabilization funds
- Income from mileage or cell phone reimbursement
- Federal and state tax credits

7 Household Income & Calculation Overview

Family Access Administrators will determine income eligibility by measuring the household's countable gross monthly income and family size against the percentage of the State Median Income (SMI).

Families whose countable gross monthly income for their family size is **at or below 50% of the SMI** are income eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance. Families may remain eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance if the total gross household income remains at or below 85% of the SMI.

- Gross income is income before any deductions.
- All countable income, including gross earned and unearned, received by the household are included in determining eligibility.

Families with a child with a disability and families with a parent who is working in an early education and care program may be eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance if their household income at the time of their initial authorization does not exceed 85% of the SMI.

Family Access Administrators must work with families to present their household income in a way that is in accordance with EEC policy and allows flexibility for a family's unique circumstances.

7 Calculating Income

- Families may submit proof of income received within the last 26 weeks
- Pay stubs submitted do not have to be consecutive.
 - 4 out of 26 weeks if weekly.
 - 2 out of 26 weeks if bi-weekly/bi-monthly.
 - 1 out of 26 weeks if monthly.
- Self-employed families only need to report one month of income.
 - Proof of receipts and expenses are not required.

7 Calculating Income with Paystubs

Gross Monthly Income if paid WEEKLY:						Gross Monthly Income if paid BIWEEKLY:			
Step 1: Add pay stubs (4 pay stubs out of most recent 26-week period)						Step 1: Add pay stubs (2 pay stubs out of most recent 26-week period)			
Example:	Paystub 1	Paystub 2	Paystub 3	Paystub 4	Total	Example:	Paystub 1	Paystub 2	Total
	\$750 +	\$800 +	\$750 +	\$800	= \$3,100		\$1,500 +	\$1,550	= \$3,050
Step 2: Divide total by 4 to get the average weekly income						Step 2: Divide total by 2 to get the average biweekly income			
Example: $\$3,100 / 4 = \775						Example: $\$3,050 / 2 = \$1,525$			
Step 3: Multiply by 4.33 to get the gross monthly income						Step 3: multiply by 2.17 to get the gross monthly income			
Example: $\$775 \times 4.33 = \$3,355.75$						Example: $\$1,525 \times 2.17 = \$3,309.25$			
<i>If all weekly paystubs are the same, take ONE gross weekly paystub and multiply by 4.33 (use 4.33 because there are additional pay periods through the course of a calendar year)</i>						<i>If all biweekly paystubs are the same, take ONE gross biweekly paystub and multiply by 2.17 (use 2.17 because there are additional pay periods through the course of a calendar year)</i>			

Calculating Income - Lump Sum Payment

Take the amount received, divide it by 12 to calculate a monthly amount.

7 Calculating Income with Minimum Wage

Family Access Administrators must confirm that a parent is making minimum wage as part of a review of income documentation. Under EEC regulations, eligible paid employment is a position that pays no less than the minimum wage in the State wherein the employment takes place. Refer to individual State minimum wage guidelines to verify.

Payment Method	FAA Action	Example
Pay Stubs	Ensure parent is receiving minimum wage based on dates of employment covered by paystub	A parent is paid \$300 by paystub for 20 hours of work. $\$300/20 = \15 is minimum wage.
Cash or Personal Check	Refer to Employment Verification Form (EVF) or hire letter to confirm service need hours	A parent is paid \$300 by personal check for 30 hours of work. $\$300/30 = \10 is below minimum wage. To enter into CCFA, the value of the check must be divided by the minimum wage to calculate the service need ($\$300/\$15 = 20$ service hours).
Tips	Review paystub which show the full minimum wage when tips and wages are combined	A weekly paystub from employment in a restaurant in June 2024 shows 25 hours at the tipped employee rate of \$6.75 per hour for a total of \$168.75. The paystub also shows \$234 in tips. $(\$168.75 + \$234) / 25 = \$16.11/\text{hour}$

If the parent's minimum wage is not meeting state guidelines, a Provisional Authorization should be issued under Seeking Approved Activity. The Family Access Administrator should work with EEC and the family to resolve the issues during authorization.

8 Service Need

Service need is defined as the amount of time a parent is participating in an approved activity. This includes employment, education, or training activity or for another service need reason. Each parent residing in the household must demonstrate a service need.

Parents who do not have an approved activity and who do not meet the service need requirement at time of initial authorization or reauthorization may be granted a provisional authorization of 12 weeks to seek an approved activity and will be eligible for full time care. Please refer to the Provisional Policy.

Full Time Service Need

An average of 25 hours or more per week



Part Time Service Need

An average of 20-24 hours per week.

Travel Time

Families with a service need of at least 20 hours may add up to 5 hours of travel time if applicable and not receiving transportation services

Note: Families may not receive a total of more than 50 hours of care per week for full time care and no more than 30 hours per week for part time.

Types of Service Need

To receive child care services, parent(s) must be

Working part or full-time, attending school, or participating in job or educational training

Employment

- Employed
- Self Employed
- Active Military
- Retired
- Pathway to Full Time Employment
- Early Education Staff

Education

- High School Program
- High School Equivalency Program
- College or University Program

Training

- Vocational Training Program or Work Study

Parental Leave (previously called maternity or paternity leave)

In need of care to support family stability due to their life experiences or working with other state agencies

Families experiencing homelessness

- As defined McKinney-Vento definition
- Referred by EOHLC

Families with a disability

- Disability of a parent
- Disability of a child (*combined service need*)

Protective Services

- Experiencing domestic violence (or has experienced)
- Substance abuse and participating in treatment

Or seeking an Approved Activity

Employment - Service Need

Activity Description:

The parent is working and earning at least the minimum wage in the state where the employment takes place is an eligible service need activity.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent earns an income equal to or greater than the minimum wage in the state wherein the employment takes place
- The number of hours the parent works per week.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Pay stubs** - Digital or paper copies of paystubs from the most recent 26 weeks. Please note: the paystubs do not need to be consecutive.
 - If hours are not listed on pay stubs, parent can supply any reasonable documentation to show schedule (actual schedule, letter from employer)
- **Employment Verification Form (EVF)** - Form for a parent that has new employment and is unable to provide sufficient paystubs. Form may also be used at initial authorization when a parent is working part-time, but will increase to full-time if they have child care.
- **Letter from Employer:** A letter from an employer on company letterhead that includes information about the parent's paid employment, income, and hours worked weekly.

Self-Employment

Activity Description:

Self-employment is the earning of income directly from one's own business, trade, or profession, minus allowable expenses.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent earns an income equal to or greater than the minimum wage in the state where the self-employment takes place; and
- The number of hours the parent works per week.

Service need hours from self-employment will be verified by dividing the net profit from self-employment income by the number of weeks the income was intended to cover. The weekly amount is then divided by the minimum wage amount as determined by the State where the employment takes place, in order to determine the number of hours for which the parent is eligible to use towards establishing a service need of self-employment.

Documentation provided for the verification of a family's service need of employment should also be used to verify a family's income, whenever possible to reduce the number of documents a family must provide.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Self-Employment Earnings Form:** provided to prove self-employment as a service need, families may self-certify by providing a signed and dated Self-Employment Earnings Form that includes a description of their work, and amount of
- **Paystubs:** Digital or paper copies of pay stubs that are most representative of the parent's self-employment
- **Tax Documentation:** Current tax return, current profit and loss statement or any other documentation that reasonably establishes that the parent participates in full-time or part-time self-employment, independent contracts, gig work, or other non-traditional work arrangements.

Military

Activity Description:

This service need qualifies families with a parent who is active in the U.S. military, including the National Guard, and deployed or activated to a combat zone, hazardous duty zone, or venue for preparation for deployment to a combat or hazardous duty zone. Families with a service need of Military will qualify for a 12-month authorization for full-time care.

In a two-parent household, the **second parent does not need to have their own service need**. If the primary or second parent (if part of household) does have any other service need, it must be entered and a parent fee assessed if applicable.

FAAs will confirm a parent's status with the following documents for this service need:

Military orders that confirm parent is in the U.S. military and is currently deployed or activated to a combat zone, hazardous duty zone, or venue for preparation for deployment to a combat or hazardous duty zone

Reminder – Ensure parent reports any change in guardianship if deployed to ensure continuity for child

Retired

Activity Description

Being age 65 or older and retired is an eligible service need activity. Families with a parent who is 65 years or older will qualify for full time care with a service need of Retired.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent's age is 65 years or older

Families will be required to submit income information, and a parent fee may be assessed.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- Photo ID;
- Passport;
- Birth Certificate;
- Any other document that reasonably establishes that the parent's age is 65 years or older.

Pathway to Full-Time Employment

Activity Description:

A parent's employment or employment and education/training hours are ***at least 15 but less than 25 hours per week (and not eligible for travel time)***

FAA must explain the service need as a means to support the parent's ability to increase their hours, gain additional skills or look for full time work.

- If a parent uses this service need, it may not be used at the next reauthorization by that same parent.
- In a two-parent household, both parents could qualify for this service need at the same time or during different authorizations.
- If a parent reports a decrease in hours through change reporting after they have been authorized for Employment, FAAs would not add this service need

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent earns an income equal to or greater than the minimum wage in the state wherein the employment takes place
- The number of hours the parent works per week.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Pay stubs** -Digital or paper copies of paystubs from the most recent 26 weeks. Please note: the paystubs do not need to be consecutive.
 - If hours are not listed on pay stubs, parent can supply any reasonable documentation to show schedule (actual schedule, letter from employer)
- **Employment Verification Form (EVF)** - Form for a parent that has new employment and is unable to provide sufficient paystubs. Form may also be used at initial authorization when a parent is working part-time, but will increase to full-time if they have child care.
- **Letter from Employer:** A letter from an employer on company letterhead that includes information about the parent's paid employment, income, and hours worked weekly.

Early Education Staff

Activity Description:

A family with a parent who is currently working at or for a licensed or funded early education and care program (center based and FCC educators).

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent earns a wage or salary working directly for a licensed or funded program early education and care or school aged program
- The number of hours the parent works per week.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Pay stubs** -Digital or paper copies of paystubs reflecting 1 month from the most recent 26 weeks. Please note: the paystubs do not need to be consecutive.
 - If hours are not listed on pay stubs, parent can supply any reasonable documentation to show schedule (actual schedule, letter from employer)
- **Employment Verification Form (EVF)** - Form for a parent that has new employment and is unable to provide sufficient paystubs. Form may also be used at initial authorization when a parent is working part-time, but will increase to full-time if they have child care.
- **Letter from Employer:** A letter from an employer on company letterhead that includes information about the parent's paid employment, income, and hours worked weekly.

Requests for Family Child Care providers to care for their own child(ren) must be sent to the EEC Subsidy Mailbox (EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov) to determine eligibility at this time.

Education- Full-time High School Program

Activity Description:

Participation in a full-time high school program will be considered a full-time service need, regardless of the program schedule.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- Parent's name.
- Statement that the parent is enrolled in a full-time high school program.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- Written statement from the school verifying enrollment; or
- Copy of transcript showing anticipated date of high school graduation.

Families will be required to submit income information, and a parent fee may be assessed.

Education, High School Equivalency (e.g., GED or HiSET), or ESOL program

Activity Description:

The service need for parents participating in a qualified GED, vocational, or ESOL is 2.5 hours of service need for each hour spent in the education or training program per week.

The service need hours are calculated by multiplying 2.5 by the number of hours per week spent in the education or training program.

For example, if the parent participates in a training program for 10 hours per week, the service need hours would be calculated as $10 \times 2.5 = 25$ hours, which would qualify the parent for full time care.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent is enrolled in a high school equivalency program or ESOL program
- The number of hours the parent is enrolled in classes

Review the following document to confirm this service need:

- A written statement from the school or training program verifying enrollment and the number of hours per week.

Families will be required to submit income information, and a parent fee may be assessed.

An accredited college or university program

Activity Description

A parents education leading to an Associate's or a Bachelor's degree or a graduate program or advanced professional training (*at reauthorization only*, a graduate program or advanced professional training to continue a previously authorized education or training service need).

- Participation in at least 10 credit hours of college coursework will be considered a full-time service need, regardless of the delivery of instruction (i.e., online classes vs. In-person classes). This includes participation in accelerated semester coursework that requires longer classroom hours but for a shorter length of time (i.e., class schedule reflects eight hours per week or more for five weeks).
- Participation in less than 10 credit hours of college coursework, service need hours will be determined by multiplying the number of credit hours of college coursework the parent is enrolled in by 2.5.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent is enrolled in college coursework at an accredited college or university, leading to an associate or bachelor's degree.
- The number of credit hours of college coursework the parent is enrolled in; and

At reauthorization only to continue a previously authorized education or training service need, the number of credit hours of graduate level coursework or advanced professional training hours the parent is enrolled in.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- Written statement from the administration of the college/university program, specifically noting the number of credits for which the student is enrolled.
- Copy of transcript showing anticipated date of graduation; or
 - Copy of degree.
 - Copy of official college transcript.
 - Copy of e-transcript with the authentication page attached.

Training/Vocational training program/Work Study

Activity Description

Service need hours for Training Programs (including required practical internships, and clinical experiences such as student teaching, YouthBuild, AmeriCorps, and CommonwealthCorps) are calculated by multiplying 2.5 by the number of hours per week spent in the vocational training program.

Family Access Administrators must verify:

- The parent's name;
- Statement that the parent is enrolled in an eligible training program; and
- The number of hours per week the parent attends the training program.

Review the following document to confirm this service need:

- A written statement from the school or training program verifying enrollment and the number of hours per week.

Educational & Training Program Lists

Below are some links to Education and training programs that families may use. This is not an extensive list as options for program are subject to change.

- **MassHire Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)** - jobquest.dcs.eol.mass.gov/jobquest/Training.aspx
- **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Adult Education Program Directory** - www.doe.mass.edu/acls/directory.html
- **Nurse Aide Registry Program:** https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-how-to-become-a-certified-nurse-aide-in-massachusetts?_gl=1*1q6efnc*_ga*NjM5OTgwNzc4LjE3NDUzNTIwNDA.*_ga_MCLPEGW7WM*MTc0NTUyMTkzOC4xLjAuMTc0NTUyMTkzOC4wLjAuMA..v
- **EMT training institution:** https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-an-accredited-emt-training-institution?_gl=1*c03k10*_ga*NjM5OTgwNzc4LjE3NDUzNTIwNDA.*_ga_MCLPEGW7WM*MTc0NTUyMzc4MS4yLjAuMTc0NTUyMzc4MS4wLjAuMA..
- **Vocational training program:** (www.mass.gov/orgs/division-of-professional-licensure)
- **Apprenticeship program:** www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-to-become-an-apprentice).

Parental Leave

Activity Description:

Parents who are on a temporary leave from employment, education, or training for reasons connected to the birth of a child, the placement of a child in the family, or the care of a child, a 12-month authorization for full-time care.

- This service need can be used at initial authorization or reauthorization for one parent in a household.
- If a parent has additional service needs, they must be entered, including employment
- All countable income must be entered, including Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) benefits, and a parent fee assessed, if applicable.
- If the parent reports the parental leave within an active authorization, this service need may remain until their reauthorization. They may continue to be eligible for this reason at reauthorization based on their documentation.

FAAs must confirm the parent's name, the start and expected end date of leave,

ONE of the following documents for this service need:

- letter from employer/educational or training program;
- letter from doctor/adoption agency;
- document showing paid medical leave; or
- signed self-attestation that the parent is on parental leave.

Homelessness Service Need

Activity Description:

All families experiencing homelessness, including families considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness (as defined under Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (See 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2))), will qualify for a full-time service need in lieu of employment, education, or training.

Family Access Administrators must confirm:

- The parent's name; and
- A homeless referral form, shelter letter, or
- Other documentation as defined by EEC.

Families will not be required to submit income information and will not be assessed a parent fee.

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- A written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency;
- A written referral from a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth;
- A written referral or other supporting documentation from a Head Start Program;
- A written referral from a transitional shelter; or
- A signed self-attestation that the family is homeless.

Seeking Approved Activity (Provisional)

May be used when:

- Parent(s) do not have or cannot verify their service need within 30 days of initial authorization
- Parent(s) do not have or cannot verify their service need when their authorization end date is 30 days or sooner during the reauthorization process
- Activity, or combination of activities, not including employment, is less than 20 hours per week
- Activity, or combination of activities, including employment that are less than 15 hours per week, including Self-Employment (See Pathway to FT Employment)
- Parent reports loss of service need during 12-month Authorization
- FAA/Parent has submitted Disability of Parent paperwork and it is being reviewed by EEC

Families are eligible for 12 weeks of Seeking Approved Activity/Provisional, with two total per 12-month Authorization, including 2 parent households

Parent with a Disability (approved by EEC)

Activity Description:

A family with a parent(s) who may be unable to participate in employment or education or training program due to a physical or mental disability or it can be combined with another service need. Families may qualify for full or part time care with a service need of Parent with a Disability.

Family Access Administrators must confirm:

- Parent's name;
- Completion of documentation

Review the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Disability of Parent Form:** A completed Disability of Parent form. The form must include the information stated above AND
- **Letter from Health Care Profession:** A written statement on professional letterhead from an approved medical professional verifying the disability. The written statement must include the information stated above.

All documentation received for verification of Parent with Disability must be reviewed and approved in writing by EEC prior to qualifying as a service need.

EEC will issue a decision to the family and Family Access Administrator. The email communication to the FAA will state the following:

- if the family was approved
- the length of time the service need was approved for
- and if the family is eligible for full or part time care.

Parent with a Disability with Provisional

EEC Special Need of Parent Approval (SNOP) Process:

- If parent is requesting to apply for SNOP the FAA provides disability of parent form
- Parent has 30 days to get completed by medical professional.
- Parent submits to EEC Subsidy Mailbox ASAP
 - Once EEC verifies receipt of the SNOP Application, the FAA may approve a provisional authorization

If the parent has not submitted disability forms to EEC on day 30, the FAA must work with parent to determine whether they are seeking another activity or if they are delayed in getting SNOP form completed, and FAA may approve Provisional. Parent must be counseled on the Provisional limits.

Disability of Child

Activity Description:

Families with a child with a documented physical or mental disability, including a physical, mental, emotional, or medical condition, may qualify for full time care with a service need of Child with a Disability

Family Access Administrators must confirm:

- The parent(s) has also qualified for a part-time service need of employment, training, or education; and
- The documentation provided indicates at least a part time need for child care services; or

Review ONE of the following documents to confirm this service need:

- **Disability of Child Form:** Completed with requested documentation
- A written statement on professional letterhead from a certified physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, licensed clinical social worker, licensed professional counselor, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant verifying the disability;
- A current Individualized Education Programs (IEP);
- A current Documentation of Early Intervention (EI);
- A current 504 Plan; or
- A current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Children between 13-16 years must complete this process to remain eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance

Protective - Substance Use Disorder Treatment or Rehabilitation

Activity Description:

A parent participating in a substance abuse treatment or rehabilitation program.

Family Access Administrators must confirm that a parent is participating in a substance abuse or rehabilitation program.

FAAs must work with the parent to obtain:

1. a self-attestation of the parent's treatment plan **and**
2. the following documents to confirm service need:
 - *Written statement on professional letterhead from a certified medical authority or treatment program staff which includes the name and type of program, start and expected end date, and hours per week.*

Protective – Domestic Violence

Activity Description:

Families who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence may qualify for a full-time service need and full-time care, regardless of whether the parent(s) is working or attending an education or training program. Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used to maintain power and control over an intimate partner or family member.

FAAs must work with the parent to obtain:

- a signed self-declaration attesting to the situation of domestic violence involving the parent and/or child

ONE of the following documents to confirm service need:

- Court, medical, psychological, criminal, child protective services (DCF), social service, school or police records;
- Documents that show that the applicant parent has obtained an order of protection or has taken other legal steps to end the domestic violence;
- Evidence of seeking a safe place such as a shelter; or
- A letter reflecting that the parent participates, or has participated, in domestic violence counseling services, including support groups.

Combining Service Need Activities

If the family has more than one service need, the total of the service need hours from all service needs combined will determine if the family qualifies for full or part time care.

Service Need Employment (2 jobs)

- **Job 1:** averages 15 hours a week
- **Job 2:** averages 10 hours a week
- **Service need** = 25 hrs./week and the family qualifies for full time

Service Need: Job and Seeking Activity

- **Job 1:** averages 8 hours a week
- **Seeking:** 17 hours a week
- **Service need** = 25 hrs./week and the family qualifies for full time Provisional

Service Need Protective:

- **Education:** 10 hours a week, i.e., enrolled in 4 credits (4 x 2.5 = 10 hours)
- **Protective hours:** 15 hours
- **Service need** = 25 hours a week and the family qualifies for full time care

Service Need: Pathway to Full Time Employment

- **Job:** average hours 5 hours a week
- **Education:** 10 hours a week, enrolled in 4 credits (4 x 2.5 = 10 hours)
- ***Pathway hours: Enter 1 hour to trigger Service Need, Service need** = 20 hours a week and the family qualifies for full time care

*If a parent's employment or employment and education/training are ***equal to 20-24 hours, and they are eligible to add travel time***, full time service need may be met that way. You would not use PFTE.

Transportation

To be eligible for transportation a family must meet the following requirements:

- The family has no car;
- There is no public transportation available;
- The family's work schedule would not allow time to get the child to care;
- The child(ren) or parent has a disability that prevents them from walking or being transported by stroller, carriage, or other similar means; and
- The child(ren) or parent has a disability that prevents transportation via personal or public transportation

Parent must complete the Parent Transportation Request form
(required for IE, PU24 & FEH)

Required Documents for Child Care Financial Assistance for IE File

For a list of acceptable documents for each document type.

Any item listed as “Recommended” should be collected from, or provided to, a parent if possible.

An authorization or reauthorization must not be denied for a parent failing to submit or sign a “Recommended” item.

Document Type	Income Eligible Initial Authorization	Income Eligible Reauthorization
Foundational Documentation		
Picture ID	X (if not already on file)	Maintain in file from initial
MA Residency Documentation	X	X (only if there is a change from prior authorization)
Relationship Documentation (birth certificates, etc.)	X	Maintain in file from initial
Child Citizenship/Immigration Documentation	X	X (only if there is a change from prior authorization)
Authorization Specific Documentation		
Service Need Documentation	X	X
Income Documentation	X	X
Required Forms		
Application & Fee Agreement	X	X
Child Care Financial Assistance Agreement	X	X
Household Composition Statement	X	X
Household Income Statement	X	X
Parent Contact Information Form	Recommended	Recommended
SMI Calculation Worksheet	Recommended	Recommended

Group Activity

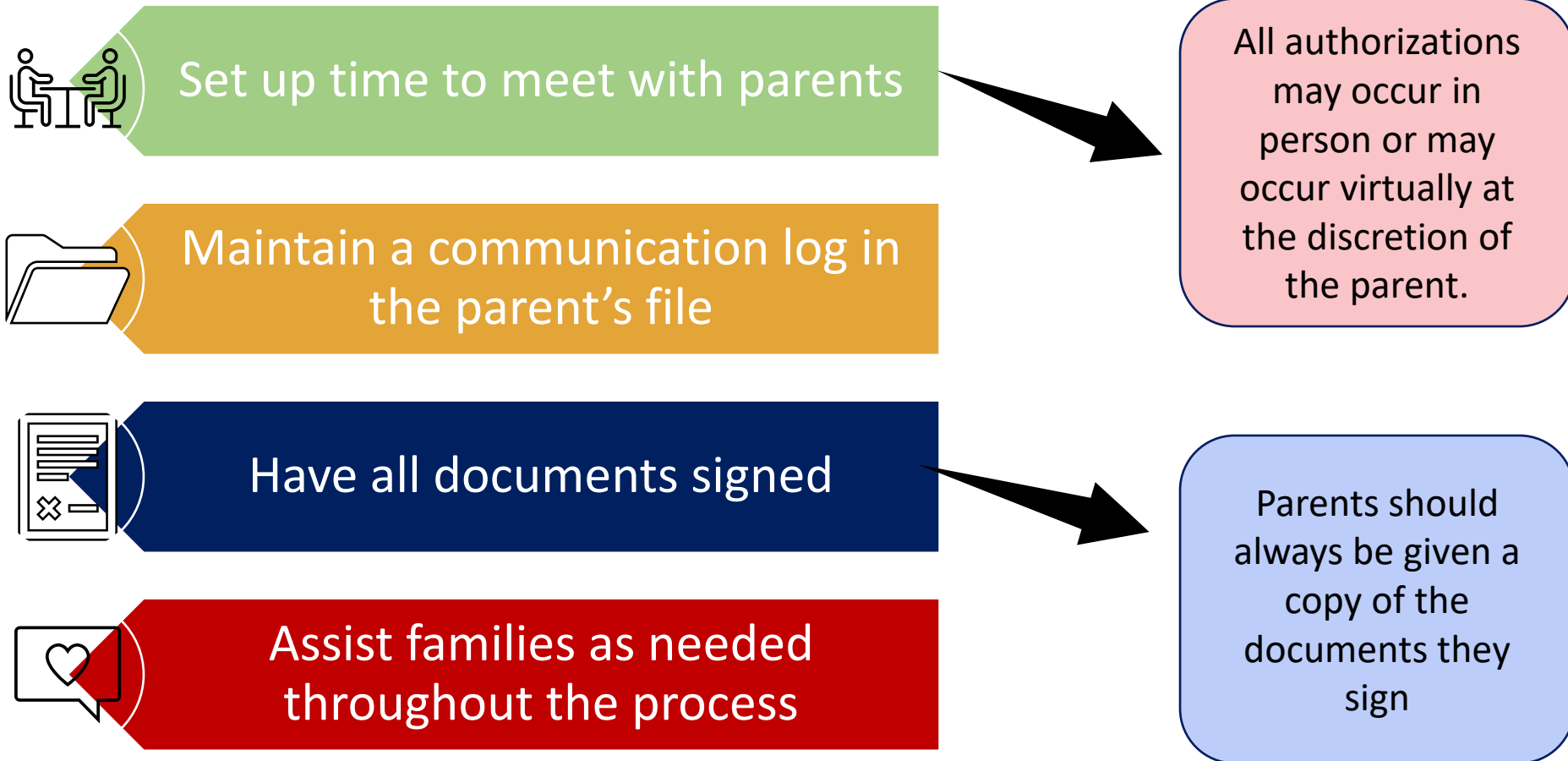
Each group will have a family case to review.

- Each group will have to determine:
 - What services needs this family if eligible for?
 - How would you counsel a family?
 - Which service need would you recommend and why?
 - What documentation do you need to collect?

Initial Authorization

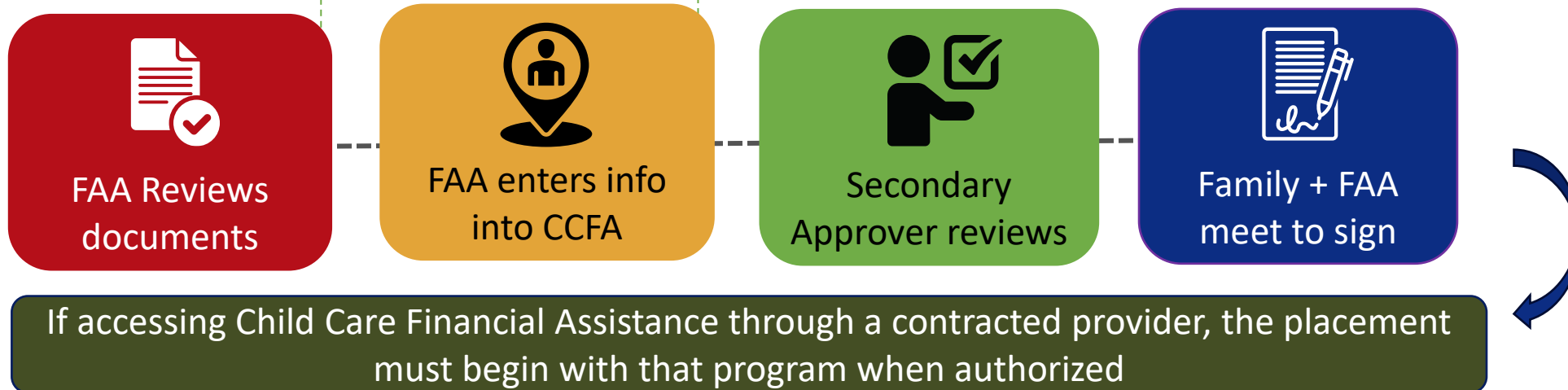
Documentation & Communication with the Family

Communicating with the family throughout the eligibility determination process is important. Family Access Administrators should:



Initial Authorization

Family Access Administrators must work with families to ensure they submit all required documentation and complete forms and to meet the authorization requirements and timeframe .



Authorization Periods

An authorization period is the length of time that a family is authorized for Child Care Financial Assistance. The standard authorization period is 12 months.



Families who provide documentation to verify they meet all relevant eligibility requirements will qualify for a standard 12-month authorization for Child Care Financial Assistance.



Families who do not provide documentation to verify they meet all relevant eligibility requirements may qualify for a 12-week provisional authorization for Child Care Financial Assistance.

Families must be allowed 30 days to provide documentation before a 12-week provisional authorization is issued.

12-Month Authorization

Once a family is determined eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance and is issued a 12-month authorization, the family may access care anytime during that 12-month period. This allows for more flexibility around parent choice and continuity of care for families who may transition in and out of child care based on their needs.

- If a family is determined eligible by a contracted provider, they must be placed at the program offered and attend care
- For children that are authorized for care and do not start FAA should reach out to the family to understand why the child did not start. If the family is no longer interested in care at that program, the family should be counseled on their options (e.g. going onto waitlist). A FAA should allow 3-5 days for a family to respond to outreach before deleting the authorization & placement. Documentation must be kept on file.
- **Family Access Administrator are only able to authorize future placements for families enrolling into their summer camp program.**

12-Month Authorization with Provisional at Initial

Income Eligible families seeking initial authorization may be eligible for 12 weeks of Provisional through Seeking Approved Activity. Families must wait 30 days after initial contact to gather documentation before the provisional authorization can be issued.

Important Reminders:

- Provisional Authorization may not be completed without the placement starting at the same time, to ensure that a family receives child care for the duration of their Seeking Approved Activity period.
- Family Access Administrator must educate families on their eligibility for CCFA and authorization requirements expectations
- A Provisional Authorization is a 12-week sub authorization under a 12-month master authorization in the CCFA system.
- If a family cannot verify a service need at the end of the 12-week provisional, the master authorization will end on day 30

What Entity Authorizes A Family

When a family receives Child Care Financial Assistance through voucher and contract placements or multiple contract placements with different Contract Providers, a single Family Access Administrator must be identified.

Funding Source	Children's Enrollment	Single FAA
Income Eligible (including Parent Under 24 and Homeless)	Two separate Contracted Providers	CCRR
Income Eligible (including Parent Under 24 and Homeless)	Two separate locations of care that are both under the same Contracted Provider umbrella	Contract Provider
Income Eligible (including Parent Under 24 and Homeless)	One Contracted Provider and one Voucher Provider	CCRR
Income Eligible (including Parent Under 24 and Homeless)	One or more Voucher Provider	CCRR
DTA-Related Child Care (including Transitional and Post-Transitional)	All scenarios	CCRR
DCF-Related Child Care	All scenarios	Authorizations are per-child by the Contracted Provider or CCRR

Transferring Authorizations

The family's single authorization shall remain in place through the end of the authorization period, even if the family changes Family Access Administrator, changes from a contracted seat to voucher, or moves to a different geographic area.

In such circumstances:

- A. Original Family Access Administrator shall enter a termination with the reason "Voluntary Termination/Change of Provider" to end the child's placement but keep the authorization open.
- B. If a parent is moving and needs assistance finding a provider, the Family Access Administrator shall refer the parent to the CCRR in the parent's new geographic area to provide assistance.
- C. Original Family Access Administrator shall facilitate the transfer of the parent's file, including foundational documentation and last authorization (all required forms and supporting documentation) to the new Family Access Administrator.
- D. All parties shall work to ensure a smooth transition of the parent's Child Care Financial Assistance.

Tips and Reminders for Initial Authorization

- ✓ Take time to explain the process and answer any questions, using family friendly language and providing translation services, if needed.
- ✓ Educate families on when to report changes
- ✓ Parents can submit documentation in advance or bring the documents to the appointment (if parents forget a document, they can submit it after the appointment, however, they must be informed of the need to submit timely)
- ✓ Ensure all documents submitted electronically are fully legible, printed and included in the family's file
- ✓ Have flexibility in receiving documents (e.g., email, fax, drop-off and more)
- ✓ A wet signature is not required on any document
- ✓ Once the authorization is complete, the Family Access Administrator will contact the family to review and sign the forms and to answer any questions.
- ✓ The Family Access Administrator will provide the family with copies of all signed documents.

Parent Fees

Parent Fee Overview

A **parent fee** is the amount of money a parent may be required to contribute to the cost of child care, supplementing the financial assistance they receive from the state. Parent fees will be determined based on the household size and the countable gross income.

Exemptions

- Families experiencing homelessness
- Receiving DTA-Related and DCF-Related child care
- Households headed by non-parent caregivers or guardians

Part-Time Care

- Families with children enrolled part-time only pay 50% of the full-time parent fee

Siblings

- Fees are discounted when there are multiple siblings enrolled

Re-Assessment

- Families are assessed a fee at authorization and reauthorization. The fee cannot exceed the family's originally assessed fee until the parent's next reauthorization, even if there are changes to the family's income during an active authorization

Households with income at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level will not have a parent fee.

The family must be provided an Application and Fee Agreement which details their parent fee upon the completion of the authorization process

Ways to Calculate Parent Fees

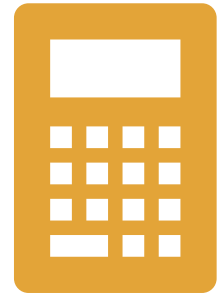
1. CCFA (the system): once information is entered, CCFA calculations will serve as the official parent fee value

2. EEC's online calculator: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/while-getting-child-care-financial-assistance>

- Enter the family's size and monthly countable household income

3. SMI Parent Fee Chart online: [Mass.gov/guides/child-care-subsidy-management-and-ccfa](https://www.mass.gov/guides/child-care-subsidy-management-and-ccfa) (see instructions below)

1. Read down the column until you come to the correct income bracket for the family's gross monthly income.
2. Then read directly across to the right until you are under the "Monthly Parent Fee Percentage" column to get the percent of income for the family's fee level.
 - a. *A Family of two (parent and child) making \$1,800 per month will be in Fee Level 2. The Monthly Parent Fee Percentage for Fee Level 2 is 4.0%.*
3. Identify the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of this size.
 - a. The poverty threshold can be found in the Parent Fee Table as the upper income limit of Fee Level 1 in the column of the appropriate family size.
4. To determine the parent fee, subtract the poverty threshold from the family's monthly income, and multiply the resulting amount by the appropriate percentage identified for the Family's Fee Level.
 - *Example: Family of two (parent and child) making \$1,800 per month*
 - *Gross Monthly Income: \$1,800*
 - *100% of FPL Income for Family Size of 2: \$1,703*
 - *Income Differential: \$1,800 – \$1,703 = \$97*
 - *Multiply 4.0% times \$97 for a monthly fee value of \$3.88.*
 - *Divide by 22 for a daily fee value of \$0.18.*



Parent Fee Discount Process:

A discounted daily and/or weekly fee applies to families who receive Child Care Financial Assistance for more than one child. Families whose child attends a program for a half-day will pay half of the full-day parent fee amount.

To verify that a family is eligible to receive a discounted fee for siblings, the FAA must :

- Check in CCFA for placements with other Family Access Administrators;
- Identify the Family Access Administrator with whom the sibling is placed;
- Confirm the sibling's enrollment status by contacting the identified Family Access Administrator directly;
- Contact other Family Access Administrators to adjust enrollment order for other children, if necessary; and
- Add a placement for the new child with the correct enrollment order.
 - Youngest child receiving financial assistance: full fee
 - Second youngest child receiving financial assistance: one half of full fee
 - Each additional child receiving financial assistance: one quarter of full fee
- If one child leaves care, that child's Family Access Administrator must inform other agencies from whom the parent receives Child Care Financial Assistance so that enrollment orders for other children are adjusted.
- A child whose family is receiving Child Care Financial Assistance to enroll in care on an occasional basis (i.e., summer only or school closures only) will be considered as an older sibling when determining the family's parent fee.

Changes to Parent Fees

Once a parent fee amount is determined at authorization or reauthorization, the parent fee amount cannot be increased before the next reauthorization unless there was an error in the prior calculation or the parent fee was previously reduced.

The parent fee can be decreased in the period between authorization and reauthorization:

**If the family's gross
income decreases**

**If there was an error
in the prior calculation**

**If a family reports a
change that affects
their parent fee**

Family Access Administrators will follow instructions for each kind of parent fee change scenario. Changes in parent fees take effect the business day following the day all documentation is received.

Change Reporting

Temporary Changes Reported at Reauthorization

A change to a parent's circumstances that may be reported immediately but must be reported at reauthorization. These changes include:



- Income changes that **do not** exceed 85% SMI



- Any time-limited absence from a parent's approved activity due to an illness or need to care for a family member
- Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons
- Any reduction in work, training, or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education
- Any other end of a parent's approved activity that does not exceed 12 weeks
- Any change in residency within the Commonwealth

Non-Temporary Changes

A change to a parent's circumstances that must be reported within 30 days of the change. **It is important to remind parents that failure to report changes may lead to losing their child care assistance.** These changes include:



The family's income exceeding 85% SMI



Changes in household composition for more than 30 total days in a 12-month authorization. This does not include the birth of a child.



A change *to an out of MA address*



Changes in child custody arrangements



A change in the family's contact information



Loss of employment or end of participation at a job training or education program that lasts for more than 12 weeks

Note: When a parent reports a loss of service need during a 12-month authorization period their activity must be changed to Seeking Approved Activity. FAAs must counsel families on the limit of two 12-week Provisionals per household during a 12 month authorization.

Voluntary Reporting

Parents may report changes that benefit the household, such as an increase in the level of care or a reduction in the parent fee.

If a parent who is authorized for part time child care, reports a change in service need that would allow full time child care, AND wishes to change to full time care:

- A 12-month authorization shall not be shortened for anything less than the issuance of a new 12-month authorization.
- The parent must present full documentation showing a full-time service need as well as all other documents required for reauthorization.
- Once all required documentation has been received, a new full 12-month authorization of the household will be issued.



What are ways you can support families who are on Provisional to find a Service Need?

Provisional Authorization Ending

FAAs must use the CCFA Dashboard (Provisional Authorizations tab) to review sub-authorizations with Seeking Approved Activity that are expiring, without a subsequent authorization

FAAs must make two separate attempts using different modes of communication to reach the family (e.g., phone call one day, email the next day) to notify the family

FAAs will provide families with a Notice of Denial 2 weeks prior to the end of their placement if they have not verified their service need by that point



If a family has a verified service need at the end of their provisional period, they will be able to continue the remainder of their 12 month authorization under the new service need.



If a family does not have a verified service need at the end of their provisional period, they must be counseled on their ability to use 2 provisional authorization within a 12 month authorization.



FAA should also refer the family to resources to support them with finding a Service Need (education, work, etc.)

Provisional Ending After Loss of Service Need

FAAs must use the CCFA Dashboard (Provisional Authorizations tab) to review sub-authorizations with Seeking Approved Activity that are expiring, without a subsequent authorization

FAAs must make two separate attempts using different modes of communication to reach the family (e.g., phone call one day, email the next day) to notify the family

Notice of Denial must be issued 2 weeks prior to the end of the Provisional Authorization

FAAs will provide families with a Notice of Denial 2 weeks prior to the end of their placement if they have not verified their service need by that point

If a family does not have a verified service need at the end of their provisional period, their placement will end

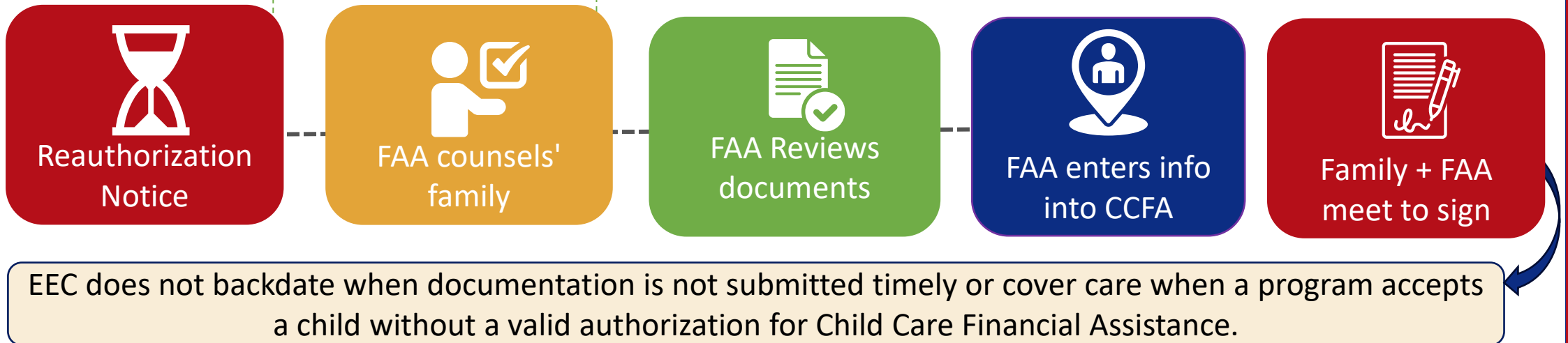
The family has 30 days from their placement end date to provide documentation to have their eligibility redetermined for Child Care Financial Assistance

If the family does not submit documentation to have their eligibility redetermined within 30 days, CCFA will end the Authorization

Reauthorization

Reauthorization Overview

- Family Access Administrators must work with the family to complete a reauthorization timely for continued Child Care Financial Assistance.
- Family Access Administrators must work with families to ensure they submit all required documentation and complete forms to meet the authorization requirements.
- Contracted providers must educate families on EEC rules and their responsibilities while receiving CCFA, while also supporting enrollment in the child care program



Reauthorization Notification Reminders

Family Access Administrators must work with the family to complete reauthorization for continued Child Care Financial Assistance. Failure to submit the documentation required to determine their continued eligibility will result in the expiration of Child Care Financial Assistance.

Family Access Administrators Actions:

- Reauthorization notices must be sent at least 60 days prior authorization end date
- Using two separate attempts and different modes of communication
- A Notice of Denial will be issued 14 days prior to the end of the authorization if the reauthorization is not complete
- If the family fails to reauthorize prior to the end of the expiration date care will end.
- The family has 30 days to complete reauthorization after care ends before being placed back on the waitlist.
 - The authorization will start the day after all required documentation has been submitted
- If the family completes reauthorization and the seat is no longer available, the family will receive a voucher,
- A family can reauthorize even if there is not a current placement, as long as the family is within the time frame to reauthorize.

EEC does not backdate when documentation is not submitted timely or cover care when a program accepts a child without a valid authorization for Child Care Financial Assistance.

Preparing a family for Reauthorization

Family Access Administrator must review the information in the current authorization once contact is made with the family for any changes and what current documentation will be needed.

- Send a list of documents the family needs to submit along with a date the documents are due by.
 - If contact is made verbally, then send a follow up e-mail with the information discussed with the family.
- Send EEC forms to the family by the most convenient method for EEC forms to be completed.

The FAA must work with the family to submit the required documentation at reauthorization timely:

- ✓ **Family's income**
- ✓ **Service need**
- ✓ **Family composition** New documentation will be required to add or remove a household member.
- ✓ **Residence** Documentation will only be required if there is a change of address

For each reauthorization, families must demonstrate that their income does not exceed 85% SMI and that they continue to meet all other requirements

If parent does not have a service need, they must be counseled and given up to 30 days before the end of their authorization. A reauthorization may not be approved with Provisional more than 30 days before the current authorization end date.

Please note: The FAA who did the initial authorization of a family who no longer has a placement with the program is responsible for the reauthorization

Group Activity - Reauthorization

Each group will have a family case to review.

- Each group will have to determine:
 - Which service need(s) is this family is eligible for?
 - How would you counsel a family?
 - Which service need would you recommend and why?
 - What documentation do you need to collect?

Attendance & Breaks in Care

Attendance

An absence is defined as any day that a child is authorized to attend an early education and care program but is not in attendance. The family must inform the provider when a child will be absent.

Children are expected to attend their early education and care program in accordance with the selected program's attendance policies. Providers must create policies that include how to counsel families when absences occur.

Providers are required to implement methods of tracking child's attendance and maintain these records at their program. Attendance must be recorded in accordance with the child's enrollment schedule.

Approved Break in Care

There may be times when children do not need placement in care, or will not be able to attend care for an extended period of time.

An Approved Break in Care is available to assist families who receive Child Care Financial Assistance if their child(ren) will not attend care for an extended period time, including but not limited to:

- An extended illness or medical procedure;
- A break in care for the summer;
- A visit to a non-custodial parent; or
- An extended vacation.

An Approved Break in Care is available to families authorized for 12 months of Child Care Financial Assistance. Families authorized for a 12-week provisional authorization are not eligible for an Approved Break in Care.

During an Approved Break in Care:

- Child care services and Child Care Financial Assistance are put on hold for up to 90 days.
- The family does not continue paying their parent fee.
- EEC will not continue to pay for children on an Approved Break in Care.
- The provider is not required to hold the child(ren)'s child care seat.
- If the seat is no longer available at the family's current provider, the family will be allowed to transfer their financial assistance to a new provider of their choosing and resume care without having to place their name back on EEC's income eligible waitlist.
- Once a Family Access Administrator is informed by a provider or family that the child(ren) will be absent from care for an extended period of more than 10 days, the Family Access Administrator must reach out to the family to inform them of all options available to meet their needs, including offering an Approved Break in Care

Returning from an Approved Break in Care

If a family is returning prior to the end date of their authorization:

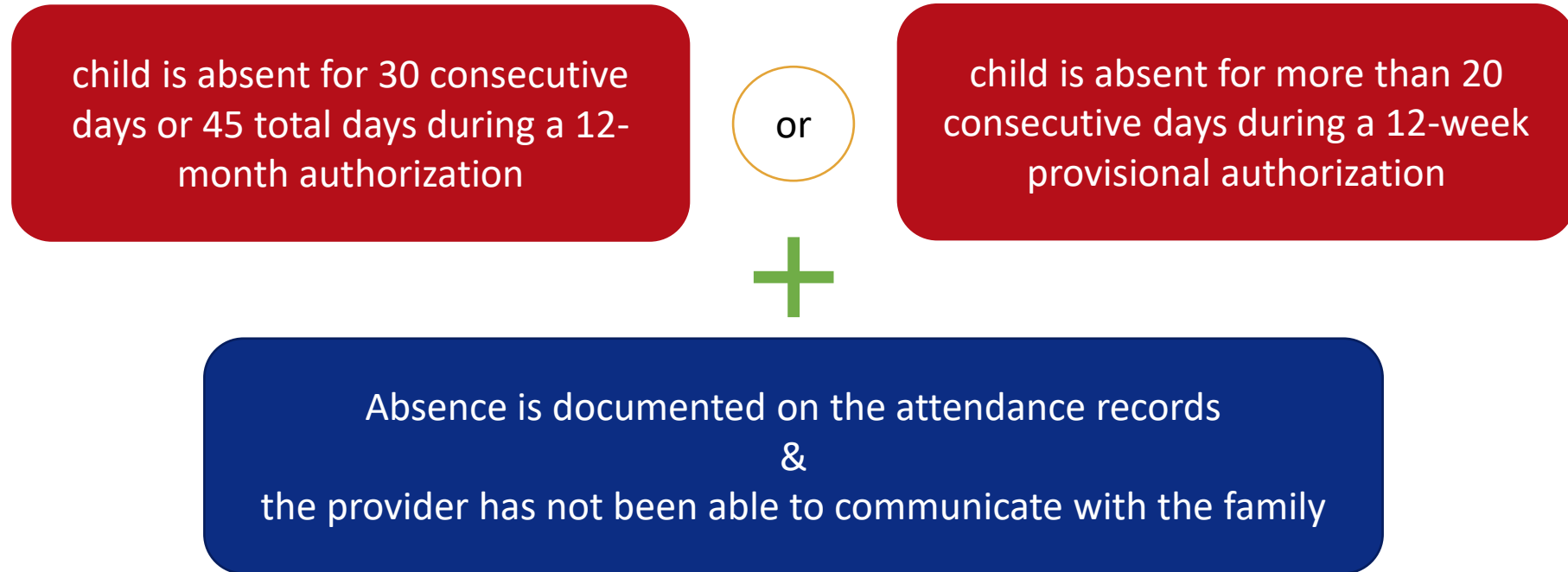
- The family will resume under the current authorization and is not required to reauthorize
- The family will return to care using the same service need and income on the authorization prior to the Approved Break in Care
- The Family Access Administrator will ask the family if there have been changes during the Approved Break in Care

If the family reports a change, it will be entered in CCFA on the family's current authorization

- The Family Access Administrator will counsel the family on the change and how it may or may not affect the family's authorization
- Families must ensure that they complete timely reauthorization, even if on an Approved Break in Care or not using child care services during a 12 month Authorization to remain eligible for CCFA.
- FAAs must ensure parent understands their Authorization end date, and works with family to complete the redetermination to prevent any lapse in eligibility.

Non-Approved Break in Care

Non-approved break in care is defined as



Parents must be educated that they may choose to stop using child care services, but can maintain their CCFA benefit, as long as they continue to reauthorize.

Non-Approved Break in Care

If a child(ren) has 30 consecutive excessive unexplained absences during a 12-month authorization, or more than 20 consecutive excessive unexplained absences during a 12-week provisional authorization, as documented on the attendance records, and the provider has not been able to communicate with the family, this is considered a non-approved break in care. The Family Access Administrator should contact the parent(s) to assess the family situation and discuss available options. An Approved Break in Care can be offered to a family before the end of the 30 consecutive days for a 12-month authorization.

The FAA should:

- Reach out to the family after one week and every week thereafter of consecutive absences, and counsel the family on the option of an Approved Break.
- Document the family's file of the number of times and types of communication made with the family.
- Inform the Family Access Administrator from the CCRR or Contracted Provider regarding the family status and communications with the family
- The provider can issue a termination in accordance with EEC's Denial and Termination policies and procedures If communication with the family continues to be unsuccessful.

Terminations on child's placement can be issued in the following circumstances

- 30 consecutive unexplained absences, a two-week termination notice may be issued on the 31st day.
- 45 non-attended days including unexplained absences, a two-week termination notice may be issued on the 46th day.

Please note: the CCFA authorization must not be ended

Changing Providers

A family may choose to withdraw their child(ren) from their current early education and care provider at any time and enroll with a different provider.

- The Family Access Administrator will work with the family to understand their concerns with their existing provider and use that information to help find a program that better meets the family's needs.
- The family is responsible for paying all parent fees owed to the previous provider.
- The family must provide two weeks' notice of the withdrawal to the provider.

A family may withdraw their child(ren) from care immediately if the provider agrees to waive the two weeks' notice requirement or if the family has concerns about the health and safety of their child(ren) and files a complaint with EEC's Regional Licensing Office.

The provider should inform the relevant Family Access Administrator of the parent's request to ensure the family receives assistance in locating a new placement.

- If the child(ren) is enrolled with a contracted provider and there are no other contracted seat placements available, the family should be referred to a CCRR to obtain a voucher and find a provider.

The Family Access Administrator will work with the family until the child(ren) is enrolled with a new provider.

Denial and Terminations

Request for Review Process

All families have the right to request a review by EEC of the Family Access Administrator's decision. During this review, the family will have an opportunity to explain their circumstances.

1

FAA issues a notice to the family

2

Parent fills out the Request for Review Form

3

Request for Review and Notice submitted to EEC for review

4

Financial Assistance Specialist issues a decision

During the review process the family may continue their Child Care Financial Assistance to ensure continuity of care, if the Request for Review is received on or before the end date of the notice. This will be confirmed by the assigned EEC Financial Assistance Specialist.

1

Notice of Denial or Termination of Financial Assistance

All families have the right to request a review by EEC of the Family Access Administrator's decision. During this review the family will have an opportunity to explain their circumstances.

A family must be issued a **Notice of Denial** when they are initially applying for Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA), or at reauthorization.

A family must be issued a **Notice of Termination** within an authorization period or at reauthorization.

Reasons for Denials

A family must be issued a **Notice of Denial** when they are initially applying for Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA), or at reauthorization

Denials Reasons	When to Use
Lack of service need	Doesn't have a qualifying service need
Failure to meet financial eligibility	Exceeding income or asset limits
Failure to submit required documentation	Insufficient documentation of eligibility
Substantiated fraud	Intentionally providing false or misleading documentation
Disqualification pursuant to 606 CMR 10.12	A sanction identified by EEC
Residency outside of the Commonwealth	Family no longer resides in Massachusetts

Reasons for Terminations

A family must be issued a **Notice of Termination** within an authorization period or at reauthorization.

Termination Reasons	When to use
Lack of service need	Doesn't have a qualifying service need
Income above 85% SMI	Exceeding income limits
Did not follow EEC or provider policy **	This applies to placements
Substantiated fraud	Intentionally providing false or misleading documentation
Residency outside of the Commonwealth	Family no longer resides in Massachusetts
Intentional Program Violation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did not report non-temporary change• Did not report income correctly• Did not give the information EEC requested• Did not pay fees**

***Termination related to parent fees only applies to the placement, NOT the Child Care Financial Assistance*

Tips for Completing Notice of Denial or Termination of Financial Assistance

- **Before completing form**

- The FAA must counsel and support the family and make certain the Denial/Termination is warranted and there are no other options (family qualifies for another program, submit different verifications, qualify under a different service need, etc.)
- Review documentation thoroughly
- Enter Information into CCFA

- **Informing Parent**

- Parent should be informed of the reason and must review the information on the Denial or Termination with the family, and given a RFR form
- The FAA will explain the parent's right to appeal and the Request for Review process, as well as how to fill out and submit request, documentation needed and what to expect for next steps
- FAA should support in completing it if possible

Parent Completes Request for Review

A parent has 30 days to complete and submit the RFR to EEC for review.

- To keep child care during the review process, a the RFR **must** be received **no later than** the Denial or Termination date, and also meet the eligibility criteria, including paying all undisputed fees and continuing to attend the program.
- The RFR can be mailed, faxed or emailed to EEC for review.
- FAA should assist the parent with completing RFR if needed
- RFR should be given to parent in their preferred language

Request for Review and Notice submitted to EEC for review

When a RFR is submitted to EEC, EEC will have 60 to complete the RFR process and issue a decision. During the RFR process the Financial Assistance Specialist may request additional information from the FAA and/or the parent. FAA must submit requested documentation within 3-5 business days.

Please note:

- FAA will be notified when a RFR is received
- Care may continue during the RFR process at the family's discretion, and if the RFR is received no later than the Denial/Termination date.

EEC issues a Decision

When the RFR is completed, the FAA can expect the following:

- EEC will issue a decision to the family and copy the FAA.
 - **If the decision is in the family's favor**, the letter will include next steps. This notice may be sent via email.
 - **If the decision is not in the family's favor**, the family may be provided with a Request for Hearing (if applicable) and instructed on how they can appeal the decision. This notice may be sent by email, but must also be sent via USPS

Hearing Process

1. A Parent that would like an informal hearing to dispute the decision issued by the Financial Assistance Specialist must submit a written request to the EEC General Counsel within **14 days of the date** of the written decision from EEC.
 - If the request for the hearing is submitted within 14 days, child care may continue.
2. The family will be informed of the right to have special accommodations made for the hearing process.
3. Parent must complete the **Request for Hearing Form** that was included with the decision.
4. The informal hearing will be **held within 60 days** of EEC's receipt of the Request for Hearing.
 - The family will be given the option of choosing whether the hearing will be in person (at any EEC Regional Office), virtual, or telephonic.

Policy Variance

What is a Policy Variance?

In certain situations, a family may request an exception to the Child Care Financial Assistance policy requirement. Variances are an option for families when lack of access to or loss of Child Care Financial Assistance would result in extreme hardship for the family or would place an already at-risk child in greater harm.

Types of Variances

- **Extraordinary circumstances** include but are not limited to: death, severe illness of an immediate family member, or other family crisis that impacts the family's ability to comply with EEC financial assistance policy
- **Extenuating circumstances** where loss of Child Care Financial Assistance would jeopardize a child's kinship care arrangement who otherwise would be in the care and custody of the Department of Children and Families; or
- **Unforeseen catastrophic event or natural disaster**, such as flood or fire, that results in a family's immediate need for temporary assistance to stabilize the family or comply with EEC financial assistance policy

Request

Completed policy variance form
sent to EEC

Reviewed

EEC will review and approve/deny

Questions? Contact EEC by emailing EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov

Parents Under 24

How are families connecting with you?

Directly:

- Already in your program
- Connected through community
- Walked into office seeking services

Outreach:

- KinderWait search
 - "Child of a Teen Parent"

Reminder!

Providers must determine if a family already has a KinderWait record. All families must have an active record in KinderWait to access CCFA.

Eligibility Verification for PU24

1

Verification of
Identity and Age of Parent

2

Verification of
Household Composition and Size

3

Verification of
Massachusetts Residency

4

Verification of
Citizenship or Immigration Status
of the Child Seeking Care

5

Verification of Assets

6

Verification of Income

7

Verification of
Age of Child

8

Service Need:
Education/Training/Work

Reminder:

Family's documentation
must be used to verify
multiple eligibility
requirements

Important Reminders

Parents Under 24

- Parents under 24 must be enrolled in a full-time high school program, or a high school equivalency (GED) program or must have their diploma/equivalency
- Parents who have their HSE must be participating in an approved higher education, training, and/or work activity
- Providers must be aware of the local education and training resources and support parents in goal setting and participation
- Parents who have a change in activity, income, family size or composition or turn 25 years-old will continue to be eligible until their next reauthorization. At that time, families will be reauthorized under a different CCFA type if they continue to meet EEC eligibility rules

Families Experiencing Homelessness



How are families connecting with you?

Directly:

- Already in your program
- Connected through community
- Walked into office seeking services
- Sent by a CCR&R

Through a Partner:

- Verification letter from shelter, school or other agency
- Referral from EOHLC

Outreach:

- KinderWait search
 - "Child of Homeless Family"

Reminder!

Providers must determine if a family already has a KinderWait record.

All families must have an active record in KinderWait to access CCFA, unless they have an EOHLC referral

Eligibility Verification for FEH

1

Verification of
Identity of Parents

2

Verification of
Household Composition and Size

3

Verification of
Massachusetts Residency

4

Verification of
Citizenship or Immigration Status
of the Child Seeking Care

5

Verification of
Age of Child

6

Service Need:
Met through FEH status

Reminder:

- Family's documentation must be used to verify **multiple** eligibility requirements
- Families experiencing homelessness are **not required** to provide income or asset verification

Verifications of Homelessness

The following documents can be used to verify a family's homelessness status:

- Written referral from EOHLC
- Letter from other shelter, legal, medical or social service agency
- Letter from local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth
- Letter or other supporting documentation from a Head Start Program
- Signed self-attestation that the family is homeless

Important Reminders

Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Families will be eligible for full-time care; no additional service need required
- Service need and activity is entered in CCFA as “homeless” and weekly hours as 25
- No income information should be entered into CCFA
- Families will not be assessed a parent fee
- Allowed up to 6 months to comply with child’s immunization and physical paperwork requirements
- Parents who have a change in homelessness status will continue to be eligible until their next reauthorization. At that time, families will be reauthorized under a different CCFA type if they continue to meet EEC eligibility rules

Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Journey Map for DCF-Related Families



DCF-Related Referral Form

DCF Clinical Team Information

- Area Office
- Social Worker
- Supervisor
- Contact Information

Parent/Caregiver Information

- DCF Release
- Custody Status
- Name and Contact Information
- Relationship to Child
- Child Background Information

Family's Child Care Preferences

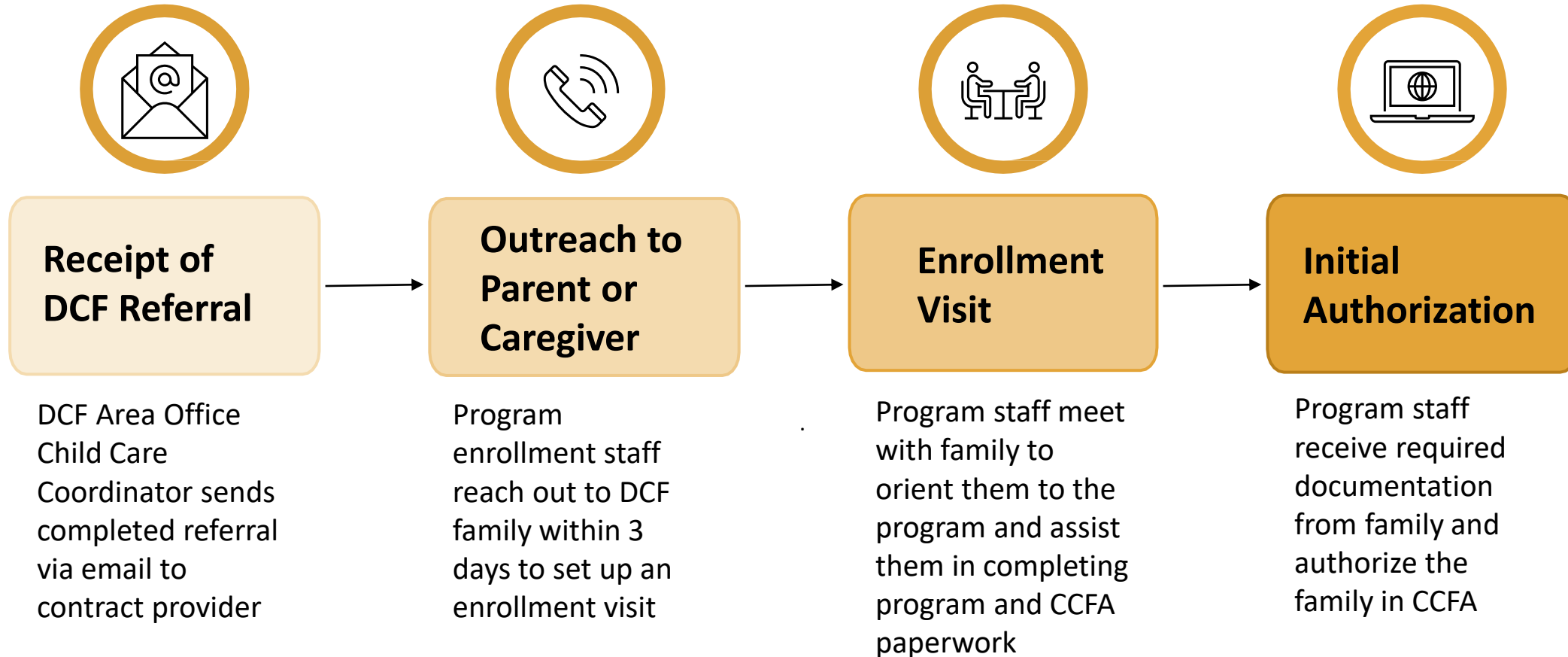
- Preferred Program Type
- Care Needed
- Transportation Needed

DCF Child Care Coordinator Information

- Child Care Coordinator Name
- Contact Information
- Date Referred
- Signature

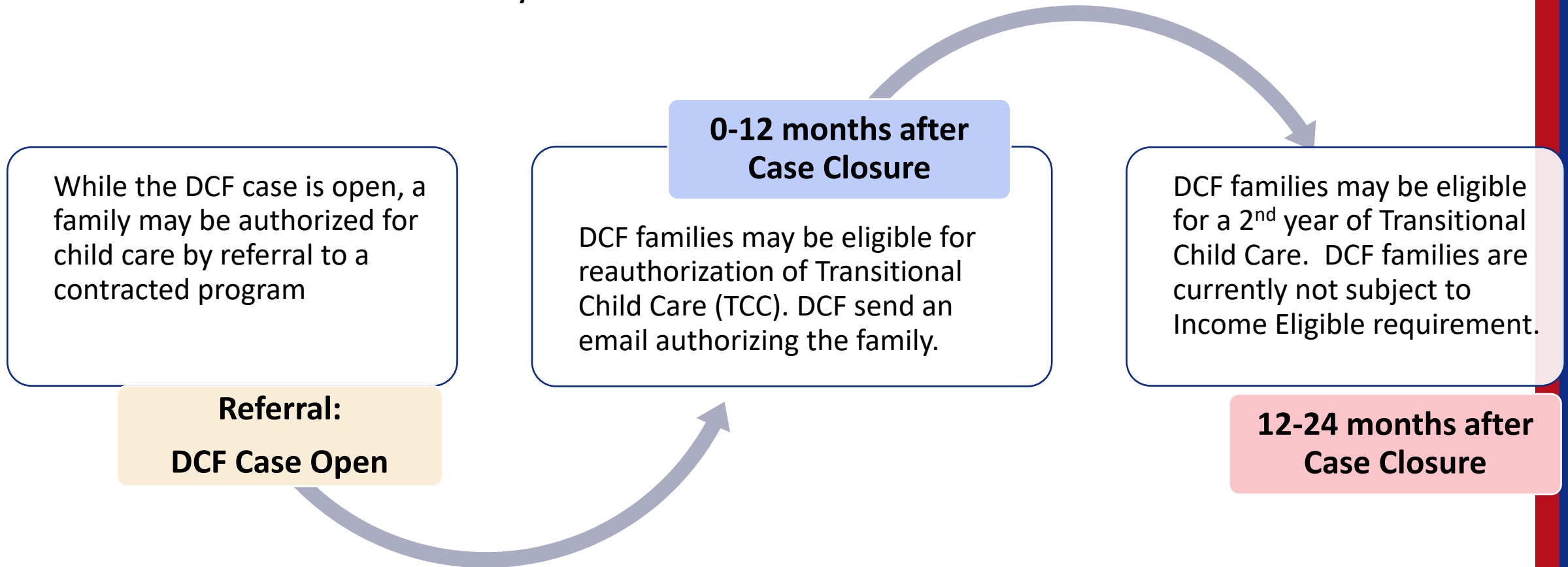
DCF must complete all sections of DCF Referral Form before the contract provider can process it

DCF-Related Referral Process



DCF-Related Child Care: Ongoing Eligibility

A referral from DCF will be issued to the program by the DCF Area Office Child Care Coordinator to provide a family with immediate access to DCF-Related Child Care services based on the family's choice.



Eligibility Verification for DCF

1

Verification of
Identity of
Parents/Caregivers

2

DCF Referral

Important:

- Family Access Administrator should **only** communicate with and request documentation from the parent listed on the DCF referral
 - DCF Social Workers may be listed as the parent on a referral
- DCF will indicate on the referral whether the family needs transportation supports and that will determine the family's eligibility.
- **No other eligibility documents should be requested of DCF families at enrollment**

Transitional Child Care (TCC):

Families are eligible for up to 24 months of Transitional Child Care (TCC) after the closure of their case. TCC may be authorized for DCF families with the following circumstances:

- Who have a child currently enrolled in DCF Related child care
- Who did not receive DCF Related child care while their case was open
- Whose case is no longer open, but they had previously used DCF Related child care

If a Family Access Administrator becomes aware of a family's DCF case being reopened or a family left at any time during this process or after, the Family Access Administrator should have the family reach out to their DCF Social Worker to see if they are eligible for a referral for a DCF Related Slot or voucher.

DCF families living outside of Massachusetts at the time of their DCF Case Closure are not eligible for TCC. A 2-week notice should be issued to the family.

Important Reminders

Department of Children and Families

- Change reporting (e.g., custody or parent changes, contact information)
- Allowed up to 6 months to comply with child's immunization and physical paperwork requirements
- When a DCF case closes, DCF is no longer working with the family
- When a DCF case closes during an authorization period, Transitional Child Care (TCC) will begin at the end of the authorization. Please note: DCF's TCC Authorization email will serve as the authorization for the second year of TCC.

Resources and Supports

TOPICS	EEC STAFF	SUPPORTING DOCS
Any question about regulation, policy, procedures, etc.,.	contact EEC by EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov	https://www.mass.gov/info-details/hub-for-child-care-financial-assistance-programs-changes#regulations,-policies https://www.mass.gov/lists/eec-policy-transmittals
Any issues with technical assistance	Help Desk staff	Submit help desk ticket to https://massgov.service-now.com/eec or by going into CCFA and under “Help” click “Request Support”.
Any programmatic or contract issues or questions	Contact your Family Assess Specialist	RFR