



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**



December 2021

Dear Parent,

Over the last year, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) has been working on reducing co-pays for families receiving EEC child care subsidies through a new parent co-pay structure and will complete the roll-out of the new co-pays on February 1, 2022. This is critical to making sure that parents have access to affordable child care. The new parent co-pay structure was voted on by EEC's Board on February 9, 2021 and June 8, 2021.

Starting the week of February 1, 2022, child care providers will begin collecting parent fees from families on a weekly basis, unless a different agreement has been made between both the provider and family.¹ Families will receive an updated application and fee agreement (AFA) with their new co-payment in the first two weeks of January. Please contact your child care program or Child Care Resource and Referral agency if you have questions about your EEC subsidy or do not receive an updated application and fee agreement (AFA).

How will the parent fees change?

The new parent co-pay structure will result in most parents paying a **lower** co-pay. Key changes include:

- Parent co-pays will be calculated based **only** on income made **above** the Federal Poverty Level.
- The parent fee will be based on a percentage of a family's income.
- Sibling discounts will be applied from youngest to oldest child, instead of oldest to youngest.

What does this mean for me?

- You will receive a letter with your updated amount of your weekly parent co-pay no later than January 15, 2022. Please make sure that your address is up to date with your subsidy administrator.
- Starting February 1, 2022, you will need to pay the parent co-pay to your child care provider each week your child is enrolled.
- If you started care with your child care provider between March 2020 and January 2021, you may need to pay a one-week deposit of your new parent co-pay amount no later than February 28, 2022, unless another agreement has been made.

Additional information can be found at www.mass.gov/eec. Please contact your child care program or your Child Care Resource and Referral agency with any questions.

Sincerely,
The Department of Early Education and Care

¹ Note: Families who receive assistance from DTA (active TAFDC case), DCF, and caregivers will continue to have their parent fees covered, continuing the policy in place prior to March 2020.