



COUNTY OF RENFREW CHILD CARE SERVICES

Child Care Fee Subsidy Guidelines for Families



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CHILD CARE IN THE COUNTY OF RENFREW

What is Licensed Child Care?

Licensed Child Care is government regulated Child Care that takes place in Child Care Centres or Licensed Family Homes.

Day Nurseries Act (DNA)

This is the Ontario Government law that sets the minimum standards for operating licensed Child Care Centres and Family Home Child Care Centres in Ontario.

Licensing requirements

The Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing branch of the Ministry of Education licenses child care centres and family home child care agencies under the Day Nurseries Act (DNA). Agencies and centres must be re-licensed every year.

To be licensed means that the Child Care program has been visited by a Ministry of Education representative, has been inspected, and has met the Day Nurseries Act (DNA) guidelines for a child's health and safety, nutrition, equipment, programs and activities, staff training and more.

All Child Care Centres must have their license posted near the entrance and a licensed

Family Home Child Care agency must make their license available to parents upon request. It is important to read the license because it may include information that you should know.

A **Regular License** is issued on white paper; this type of license meets all the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act and can be valid for up to one year.

If a program has a "Provisional License" the program did not meet all of the

What to Look For On a License:

- Type of License (Regular or Provisional)
- Terms and Conditions
- Director's signature and approvals
- Approved age groups of children
- Approved capacity of children on site
- License number
- Official name and location of the operator
- Name and address of the Program
- License issue and expiry dates

requirements of the DNA, and the Child Care Operator has been given time to meet the standards. In this case, find out why the program did not meet the requirements and what steps they are taking to meet the requirements for a Regular License.

Types of Licensed Child Care

Licensed Child Care Centres

Licensed Child Care Centres offer care for children ranging in age from 0 to 12 years (or up to 18 years for children with special needs). The staff is made up of a Supervisor, Early Childhood Educators (ECE) and Early Childhood Assistants. Children at a centre are grouped together based on their age. Each group must have at least one qualified ECE.

A Licensed Child Care centre can be a daycare or a nursery school. A daycare is able to offer child care for longer than 6 hours per day. A Nursery School can offer care for children for less than 6 hours per day in the morning or afternoon.

Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are the teachers in licensed Child Care Centres. They have completed a certificate program through a College diploma or University that teaches them about child development, safety, nutrition and programming. Supervisors of Child Care Centres must also have their ECE or equivalent.

Child Care Centre Age Groups and Staff Ratios		
Infant	0-18 months	3 staff for every 10 children
Toddler	18-30 months	1 staff for every 5 children
Preschool	30 months to 5 years	1 staff for every 8 children
Junior Kindergarten	4 years	1 staff for every 10 children
Senior Kindergarten	5 years	1 staff for every 12 children
School age	6-12 years	1 staff for every 15 children

Licensed Family Home Child Care

Licensed Family Home Child Care offers child care in approved homes for children ranging in age from 0-12 years. Licensed family home child care is made up of a Home

Visitor and Home Child Care Provider. The Home Visitor works with a family to determine their needs and preferences, and helps them select a home child care provider from the agency's screened and approved caregiver list. The Home Visitor visits the provider's home and regularly reviews nutrition, activities and safety standards according to the Day Nurseries Act (DNA). The hours of care available vary from home to home. Licensed family home child care may accommodate families who work shifts or who need part-time child care. In Renfrew County there are two Licensed Family Home Child Care Agencies (Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre and Homemade Tales).

For further information about licensed child care in Ontario, please visit the Ministry of Education website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/index.html>.

Finding Child Care in the County of Renfrew

In addition to Licensed Child Care, other child care options in the County of Renfrew include approved Recreation Programs (for children ages 6-12 years of age or up to 18 years of age with special needs) and School Based Early Learning Programs.

What Do You Need?

Before you decide on a Child Care Agency you should have the answers to the following questions:

- *Do I want my child in a Child Care Centre, Nursery School, Recreation Program, School Based Early Learning Program, or licensed Family Home Child Care?*



- *Do I want all of my children at the same location?*
- *Do I need a program that is close to where I live or go to work or school?*
- *What type of hours of care do I need?*
- *How many hours of care do I need a day?*
- *Do I need part time or full time care?*

Where to Look?

There are many ways to find licensed Child Care in the County of Renfrew.

- Call County of Renfrew Child Care Services at: 613-732-4100
- Visit the County of Renfrew Child Care Website at:
<http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/departments/social-services/child-care/>
- Email County of Renfrew Child Care Services at:
childcare@countyofrenfrew.on.ca
- Visit an Ontario Early Years Program in your neighborhood or visit them online at:
<http://www.earlyyearsrenfrew.ca/index.html>

What Questions Do I Ask the Child Care Agencies I am Interested In?

- *Does the program offer care for your child's age group?*
- *Does the program offer care on the days and for the times you need it?*
- *How much will it cost?*
- *Is there a registration fee or is a deposit required?*
- *If you need help with the cost of care, is fee subsidy available?*
- *If your child goes to school, how will the program get your child to and from school safely?*
- *Does the program offer care on school holidays and/or professional development days?*
- *How will the program support any special needs your child or family may have?*
- *Will there be a space available when you need it?*

Arrange a Visit

Visiting a Child Care Centre gives you a chance to see the space and watch the staff and children interact. It also allows you an opportunity to speak with the staff and ask them questions. If possible:

- 🚗 Visit at different times of the day to watch different routines and activities.
- 🚗 Visit with your child so you can see how they like the child care program.
- 🚗 Go prepared with a list of questions.

My Child Has Special Needs.

Renfrew County Child Care also provides support for children who have a diagnosed handicap or special need and who attend a licensed child care agency or approved recreation program. You do not have to receive fee subsidy to be eligible for this support.

Integration Coordinators work closely with the child care agencies to arrange funding for extra staffing support for children who require more than the Day Nurseries Act ratio (this is called resource funding). As well, Integration Coordinators support the child care agencies with resource materials, workshops and direct intervention and implementation planning.

Referrals: Referrals can be made at any time of your child's enrollment process or placement in a licensed child care agency.

Make your choice

After you have visited all the child care programs you are interested in, review your child care needs and answers to your questions.

Does the Centre meet all of your requirements? Do you know someone with a child attending your chosen Centre?

If so, ask the parents if:

- 😊 They recommend this child care centre/home child care provider?
- 😊 There are things they like about the program?

When you have made your decision, contact the child care agency to let them know you would like child care with their agency.

At this point, you will need to make sure you apply to the **County of Renfrew Child Care Centralized Fee Subsidy Waitlist** if you are interested in fee subsidy for financial help with child care expenses.

CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY

What is Fee Subsidy?

Child Care Fee Subsidy is offered by County of Renfrew Child Care Services to assist you with the cost of licensed child care, a school based early learning program, or an approved recreation program. It is possible to receive a subsidy up to 100% of your child care expenses.

If you live in the County of Renfrew and are the parent or legal guardian of a child 0 - 12 years of age (or a child with special needs up to 18 years of age) that lives with you, you may be eligible for Fee Subsidy.

Fee Subsidy Process

Fee Subsidy has 3 steps: Application, Assessment and Placement.

Application:

Complete a Waitlist application available at any licensed child care agency in the County of Renfrew or through the Child Care Services office. All families interested in a fee subsidy space will be placed on a **Centralized Waitlist** managed by County of Renfrew Child Care Services. The Waitlist priority of need is based on Ministry of Education and local County of Renfrew policies. Eligibility for fee subsidy will not be determined until a space is available. If you are interested in an estimation of your financial eligibility, please visit the County of Renfrew Child Care Website and use our online Fee Subsidy Estimator Tool noted below.

Online Fee Subsidy Estimator Tool:

www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/departments/social-services/child-care/subsidy-estimator/

Assessment:

When your name is next on the waitlist, you will be contacted and a telephone interview with an Eligibility Coordinator will be scheduled. To be considered for fee subsidy you must be working, job seeking, going to school, or have a documented special or social need within your family.

Financial eligibility is determined by an Income Test. An Income Test is based on line 236 (net income) of you and your spouse's (if applicable) most recent Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada. If telephone screening results indicate you may be eligible for a fee subsidy, or if you wish to further discuss the results of the telephone screening Intake, an in-person interview with an Eligibility Coordinator will be scheduled. You will need to provide the following documents at the in-person interview: Birth verification, Revenue Canada Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year, Canada Child Tax Benefit verification, custody verification (if applicable), address verification, and verification of activity and/or special/social need. If you are applying as a recent immigrant, you will require proof of your current status (in Canada).

Placement:

Placement of your child in a licensed child care facility involves matching your child care preferences with available space and funding.

Families are able to choose the type of child care that suits them best based upon availability.



NOW THAT YOU ARE RECEIVING CHILD CARE SUBSIDY



Now that you are receiving child care fee subsidy, it is important that you understand your rights and responsibilities regarding your subsidy.

Each of the following sections gives you important information about your child care subsidy – how to keep it and when it will stop. If you do not understand any information in this booklet, ask your Eligibility Coordinator to explain it to you.

YOUR CHILD'S PLACEMENT

Parent Contribution

After you are approved for a subsidy, you and the child care agency will receive a letter – “Fee Subsidy Agreement”. The letter will tell you the amount that you must pay which is known as the parent contribution. The parent contribution is determined by the Income Test which is based on line 236 of you and your spouse's (if applicable) Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year.

You may be eligible for either a full or partial subsidy.

A **full subsidy** pays for all of the child care expenses. The only expenses you will be required to pay at the daycare are costs related to fees not associated with the daily cost of care.

A **partial subsidy** means that you pay some of the child care expenses and we pay the rest. If you pay a partial subsidy you must pay your part of the expenses directly to the child care agency. Payments must be made on time. You should ask the centre or provider for child care receipts for income tax purposes.

You must pay your part for every day that the centre, program or provider is eligible to bill the County of Renfrew. This may include sick days, vacation (holidays), or absent (not going to program) days.

If you do not pay your part of the child care expenses, then you may lose the child care subsidy.



Transfers

“I want to move my child from one provider to another one. What do I do?”

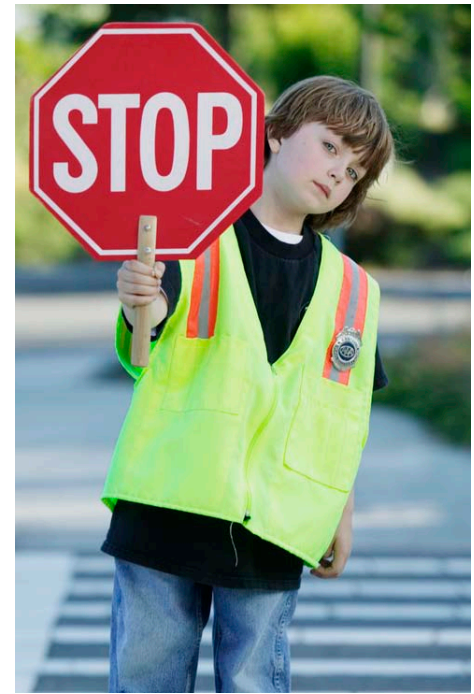
Contact the Intake Coordinator. The Intake Coordinator will tell you about other child care programs available. You must follow your present child care agency’s policies and give 2 or more weeks notice to your present child care agency before you transfer your child to another program. For more information, please check the section called “Notice of Withdrawal” below.

Notice of Withdrawal

“I want to stop the subsidy.”

If you no longer need subsidized child care, you must give 2 or more weeks' notice in writing, by completing a Notice of Withdrawal form (available at the Child Care office or at your child care provider) and submitting it to both your Eligibility Coordinator and the child care provider.

You remain responsible for any other fees owing to the child care provider as well as the required period for a withdrawal without notice.



ATTENDANCE

Some child care programs have policies or rules about a child being absent or not showing up to the program. Please talk to your child care provider about their policies or rules so you understand your rights and responsibilities.

Vacation/Absent Days

Child Care Subsidy will pay for (after the parent's contribution):

- Each day the child goes to the program, as approved by the Subsidy Office
- 20 vacation/absent days per calendar year

If you have a parent contribution, then you may have to keep making payments when your child is absent or on vacation.

You must pay the full cost of child care directly to your provider if you take additional vacation/absent days over and above the allowable days. If you require more than 20 days due to extenuating circumstances, this must be pre-approved by County of Renfrew Child Care Services by completing and submitting a Request for Additional

Vacation/Absent Days form.

If a child is absent from a program without notice for 5 consecutive days, fee subsidy may be cancelled.

*Don't Forget
Families must continue to pay
their Parent Contribution to the
child care centre or provider for
any vacation, absent,
or sick days.*

Child Sick Days

If you have a parent contribution, then you must keep making payments when your child is sick.

Subsidy pays for 24 sick days per calendar year. You must call the child care provider to tell them that your child is sick. You must contact your Eligibility Coordinator if your child is sick longer than **10 consecutive days** and has not been attending the child care centre.

You must pay the full cost of child care directly to your provider if your child exceeds allowable sick days. If you require more than 24 days due to extenuating circumstances, this must be pre-approved by County of Renfrew Child Care Services by completing and submitting a Request for Additional Sick Days form.



MAINTAINING YOUR ONGOING ELIGIBILITY

Reporting Changes

You must inform us immediately of any changes to your circumstances by calling your Eligibility Coordinator. Changes may include:

Job or Schooling: If you start or stop a job or start or stop attending school, if your educational status changes, or if your hours of work or school decrease.

Address: If you move or your living or accommodation status changes.

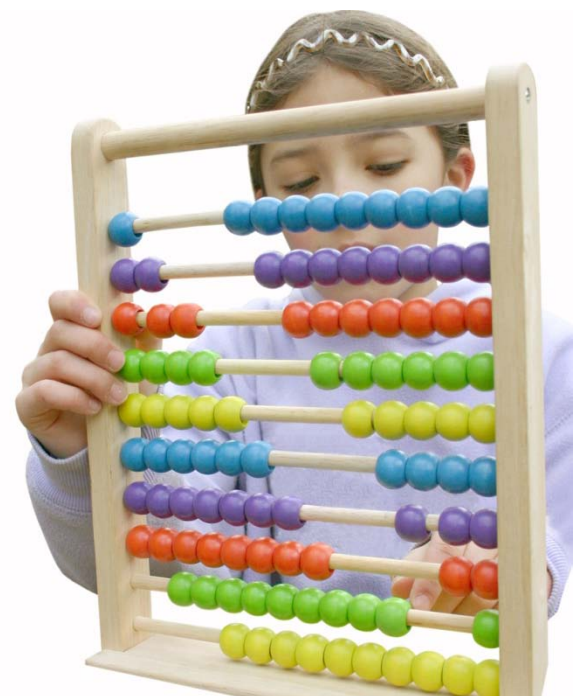
Marital Status/Family Composition: If you marry or live common law, separate or any other changes to your marital status.

Custody/Child Living Arrangements: If a child leaves the home or any changes to child custody or access arrangements.

County of Renfrew Child Care Services has an overpayment policy. Should any of the above-noted unreported changes occur, you WILL be responsible to repay any subsidy received during the time period for which the changes were not reported and/or you did not qualify.

Job Search / School

If you are getting a subsidy and your job or school ends, you must contact your Eligibility Coordinator immediately. Your subsidy may continue for 3 months (per calendar year) so you can look for work, but your job search must be pre-approved by your Eligibility Coordinator.



Review of Eligibility

All families will have their eligibility reviewed at least once per year. Both parents, if applicable, must be present at the interview. We will mail you a letter letting you know the time and date of your review and provide the list of information you must bring to the appointment.

**If you do not attend your review,
or notify us of changes to your status,
you may lose your Child Care Subsidy.**

**I Have
Questions,
Who Do I
Contact?**



If you have questions please contact the following:

For your waitlist status →

Talk to the Intake Coordinator

For your subsidy →

Talk to your Eligibility Coordinator

For the care your child receives →

Talk to the Child Care Agency Supervisor

For concerns regarding a licensed child care agency's compliance with the Day Nurseries Act →

Talk to the Ministry of Education, Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch

CONTACT INFORMATION

PEMBROKE:

- Manager of Child Care Services
- Eligibility Coordinators
- Integration Coordinators
- Intake Coordinator

County of Renfrew Child Care Services

545 Pembroke Street West

Pembroke, ON K8A 5P2

TELEPHONE: 613-732-4100

TOLL FREE: 1-866-561-7679

FAX: 613-732-4437

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ministry of Education, Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch:

1-800-267-5111