



Case Number:
Loc. Off./Unit/Worker:

Dear Parent:

This is to notify you that there has been a change in law that allows more **working** families to receive a guarantee of child care. You may decide that, instead of receiving Temporary Assistance (TA), what you really only need is help paying for child care. **Families who are applying for and are found eligible for, or are receiving, TA and need child care in order to work**, may be eligible for a child care guarantee for working families. A child care guarantee means that if you meet the eligibility requirements, the social services district must pay an eligible child care provider for your child care. **This guarantee applies only to the hours you are working and a reasonable amount of time for you to get to and from work to your child care provider.**

Who is eligible?

You are eligible for this guarantee if you *are applying for and found eligible for* TA and choose child care instead of TA or if you are *receiving* TA and ask that your TA case be closed, and:

- You are earning at least minimum wage or you are employed in a job where minimum wage is made by the combination of gross earnings and tips, or you are self-employed; AND
- Your gross earnings are equal to or greater than the amounts listed below: OR
- If you are employed in a job exempt from minimum wage rules and you are earning less than minimum wage, you work the minimum number of hours listed below.

What if I am earning at least minimum wage (\$7.15/hour), am I eligible?

If you are earning at least minimum wage and are a single parent, you must have gross earnings of at least \$125/week or \$542/month. If you are a two-parent family, you must have gross earnings of \$179/week or \$774/month.

What if I am self-employed?

If you are self-employed and are a single parent, you must have gross receipts less allowable deductions of at least \$125/week or \$542/month. If you are a two-parent family, you both must be employed and if self-employed have combined gross receipts less allowable deductions of \$179/week or \$774/month. If one parent is not self-employed, gross earnings apply.

What if my earned income falls below any of the above amounts?

If your gross earnings fall below the above amounts, you will no longer be eligible for this guarantee. If this happens, you may want to ask your worker if you are eligible for child care under another program.

What if my job doesn't pay minimum wage?

If your employer is not required to pay minimum wage and you are earning less than \$7.15 per hour, you must be working at least 17.5 hours per week if you are a single parent or 25 hours per week if you are a two-parent family.

What if my work hours drop below these amounts?

If you are earning less than minimum wage and your hours drop below the above amounts, you will not be eligible for the guarantee.

What if my income or hours of work changes all of the time?

If your hours of work or earnings are constantly changing we will look at an average amount of hours and income that occurs over a period of three to six months. As long as the average number of hours or income meets the minimum described above, you will still be eligible.

What happens when my income rises above the amount where I would be eligible for TA?

Once your family income is at or above the amount that would allow you to remain eligible for TA but is at or below 200% of the State Income Standards, you may be eligible for transitional child care.

What if I am working and going to school?

The guarantee applies only to the hours that you are working and a reasonable amount of time for you to get to and from work from your child care provider. You also *may* be eligible for child care for the hours that you are in school. If you need child care in order to go to school, you should discuss this with your worker.

Are all of my children eligible for the child care guarantee?

Any child under the age of 13 is covered by the guarantee. If you have older children with special needs who need child care, they may be eligible under a different child care program. You should let your worker know about any of your children that have special needs.

Is there anything else I need to do to be eligible?

If there is an absent parent, you must either receive court-ordered child support; or you must be actively pursuing child support through the Child Support Enforcement Unit; or you must be trying to get child support through other legal means; or you must receive a good cause exception from actively seeking child support.

What if I am worried that, if I go after child support, my partner may harm me or my child?

You should discuss your situation with your worker. Your worker will determine whether you should receive a good cause exception from actively pursuing child support. You may be asked to provide hospital or police reports or statements from family, friends or neighbors who are aware of your situation.

If I had a Domestic Violence (DV) Waiver while I was receiving TA doesn't that demonstrate good cause not to pursue child support?

If you can show your worker a DV waiver dated within the last 12 months, the DV waiver demonstrates good cause. If your DV waiver is older than 12 months, you should discuss your situation with your worker so he or she can determine if you have good cause not to pursue child support.

Does my eligibility for this child care guarantee have a time limit like the 60-month time limit for TA?

No, your child care benefits under this guarantee are not limited to 60 months. You can continue to receive child care benefits for as long as you are eligible.

Why don't I have a child care guarantee while I am on TA?

Actually, you do. TA recipients who are participating as required in work activities also have a child care guarantee as long as they meet certain requirements. However, the child care in lieu of TA guarantee discussed in this letter allows you to receive the same guarantee of child care without having to remain on TA.

If I decide all I really need is child care, how do I apply for the child care guarantee?

If you are eligible for TA and decide that all you really need is child care, your worker can tell you how to apply for the child care guarantee. If you are already *receiving* TA and are otherwise eligible for the program, you will need to close your TA case in order to get this guarantee.

Will all of my child care be paid?

If you choose to receive child care assistance instead of receiving TA and child care, you will have to pay part of your child care costs. This is called your family share. Additionally, if your provider charges above the market rate, you will need to pay the amount that your provider charges above market rate.

Who can care for my child?

You can choose any eligible child care provider. This may be a licensed or registered day care center, family or group family day care home, or school-age child care program. You can also choose a relative, neighbor, or friend. If you want a relative, neighbor, or friend to care for your child, he or she will need to meet certain eligibility requirements and enroll with a legally-exempt caregiver enrollment agency. Ask your worker for the enrollment forms.

What if I change my mind and decide that I need TA as well as child care?

You can still apply for TA at any time. If you are found eligible for TA, you may still be eligible for child care.

What about other benefits like Food Stamps and Medical Assistance?

Your Food Stamp eligibility will not be affected if you request child care instead of TA.

If you are applying for Medical Assistance and you choose to receive child care instead of TA, your application will be referred to the Medicaid program for a separate determination. If you are currently receiving Medicaid and request your TA case be closed, your Medicaid will continue unchanged until Medicaid can complete a separate determination.

What if I have any questions about this letter?

You can contact your local district social services worker.