



Absences from child care—Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR)

There are times, like public holidays, when you will be charged for care even though your child was absent from care.

If the absences are your initial 42 absence days, additional absence days or approved under the exceptional circumstances provision, the Australian Government will still pay you CCB, CCR and if applicable Jobs, Education and Training Child Care fee assistance. This is for CCB approved child care including Family Day Care, In Home Care, Outside School Hours Care and Long Day Care. Absences are treated differently for Occasional Care.

What is an absence day?

You will get CCB and CCR for 42 absence days per child each financial year. These can be for any reason and will not require proof and include public holidays.

You cannot claim absences if your child has not started care or has stopped care. You also cannot claim an absence if you have notified your child care service you are taking your child out of care on a set date and then change your mind and remove your child earlier.

If your child is absent for one or more than one session of child care on the same day, such as both before and after school care, it is counted as one absence day.

If you receive CCB as a fee reduction at more than one child care service you must let each service know when your child has used your initial 42 absence days.

Why do I pay for child care on a public holiday?

Charging practices are commercial decisions made by child care service providers and are not a matter regulated by family assistance law. This includes the widely-used practice of charging for public holidays because child care workers, like most employees, are entitled to be paid for public holidays when they would otherwise be at work. The Government has no legal capacity to intervene in these decisions.

What is an additional absence day?

You can also get CCB and CCR for additional absence days once your initial 42 absence days have been used. There is no limit on these days but you may be required to provide documentation to support the absence.

The additional absence days reasons are:

- illness (with a medical certificate), or another absence due to sickness of the child, a parent or sibling, supported by medical certificates
- non-immunisation
- rostered days off
- rotating shift work
- temporary closure of a school or pupil-free days
- period of local emergency – the service is closed or the child is unable to travel to the service

- shared care arrangements due to a court order, parenting plan or parenting order
- attendance at preschool
- exceptional circumstances

What is a parenting plan?

A parenting plan can take any form, but to be a parenting plan under the *Family Law Act 1975* it must be in writing, signed and dated by both parents. It must be made free from any threat, duress or coercion. When providing documentation for shared care arrangements, it is not sufficient to have a verbal agreement or a statutory declaration signed by just one parent, describing the arrangement.

Parenting plans are developed by both parents, sometimes with the help of the Family Relationship Centre. For examples and more information about parenting plans you can go to the Family Relationships website at www.familyrelationships.gov.au or call 1800 050 321.

What are exceptional circumstances?

You may also get CCB and CCR for up to 20 further absence days for your child to take a break from care. Exceptional circumstances are when you have used 31 or more of your initial 42 absence days for one or more of these reasons:

- an illness or illnesses (with a medical certificate)
- rotating shifts or rostered days off
- shared care arrangements due to a court order, parenting plan or parenting order.

You must provide supporting documentation to show that the 31 or more of the initial 42 absences were used for these specific absence reasons—for example, the supporting documentation for illness is a medical certificate. If your child has a medical certificate specifying a long-term illness, you do not need a separate medical certificate for each additional absence day.

Can I get absences for Occasional Care?

You will get CCB and CCR for an absence if you have booked and paid for the child care your child was absent from at your Occasional Care service. There is no limit on the number of absences.

What are my child care services responsible for?

Your child care services must keep a record of each absence for your child. Your service must let you know regularly how many absences have been used. Services are required to provide families with statements at least every three months.

You can also access your child's absence record on your online statement along with your child care attendance, CCB and CCR amounts paid statements. This is available by visiting www.humanservices.gov.au/onlineservices.

How can I get more information?

For further information on your eligibility for CCB and CCR please contact the Australian Government Department of Human Services:



access Online Services at www.humanservices.gov.au/onlineservices



call 13 61 50 between 8 am and 8 pm (local time) Monday to Friday



visit a Service Centre (located in Medicare Offices and Centrelink Service Centres)

Useful resources

For news and information on child care visit the mychild website available at www.mychild.gov.au

Access the Child Care Estimator at www.humanservices.gov.au/estimators

Family assistance payment rates fact sheet, available at www.humanservices.gov.au

If you need to, you can also call:



Teletypewriter (TTY) 1800 810 586 (if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment).

You need a TTY phone to use this service.

13 12 02 if you need information in a language other than English.