

Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the Employment Related Day Care Program (ERDC)?

A: ERDC helps eligible, low-income, working parents pay for child care. This helps parents stay employed and provides safe, stable child care for families.

Q: How does ERDC work?

A: If a parent qualifies for assistance, DHS will pay a portion of their child care bill. The amount DHS will pay is based on the family's income, type of child care and how many hours of child care are needed. Most parents are required to pay part of the cost. DHS pays its portion to the family's child care provider directly. Providers must apply and pass a background check to participate.

Q: How many families can ERDC serve?

A: A limited number of families can be served. The number of families served is based on the program's budget. The limits are called caseload maximums. A case can include several children from the same family. The program budget and caseload maximums are set by the Oregon State Legislature.

These caseload maximums started July 1, 2011:

- July 2011 through December 2011: 9,000 cases;
- January 2012 through December 2012: 9,500 cases; and,
- January 2013 through June 2013: 10,000.

The caseload maximums can be changed by the Legislature.

Q: I get child care benefits now. Should I worry about losing them because there are new limits to the number of families ERDC can serve?

A: No. If you were getting child care benefits on June 30, 2011, you will not lose them because of the new limits. However, you need to maintain eligibility to keep receiving benefits.

Q: What happens if ERDC gets more applicants than it can serve?

A: When we reach the limit, we will start a reservation list. Families put on the reservation list will be notified by mail.

Q: If I'm placed on the reservation list, am I guaranteed to get child care benefits?

A: No. The list is for people who want to apply for child care benefits when they become available. Once you're name is picked from the reservation list, you must apply for ERDC at your local DHS office within 30 days. DHS will determine whether you qualify for child care benefits after reviewing your application.

Q: How will the reservation list work?

A: When there are openings, we will randomly select names from the reservation list. The selected families will get a letter inviting them to apply. They must apply within 30 days.

Q: Are there any exceptions to the reservation list?

A: Yes. You may qualify for child care assistance without being on the reservation list if you or a family member has received benefits from any of these Oregon public assistance programs during one of the last three months:

- Refugee program;
- State Family Pre-SSI/SSDI; or,
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Q: How can I check to see if I received benefits from other programs during the past three months?

A: Call your worker at your local DHS office. You can find a list of offices throughout the state at www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/localoffices.shtml.

Q: What if I miss the deadline to apply for ERDC?

A: If you miss the deadline, you will need to apply again so your case worker can place you on the reservation list with a new Reservation number.

Q: What if I've had child care benefits in the past?

A: You can apply again. If you had a break in child care benefits of two calendar months or more, you will be placed on the reservation list and considered a new applicant.

Q: Do other assistance programs qualify my family for ERDC?

A: No. Other assistance programs such as the Oregon Health Plan, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also known as food stamps), and Post-TANF do not qualify families for ERDC.

Q: Who do I talk to if I have questions?

A: If you have questions about this information, someone in the Direct Pay Unit can help you. Please call 1-800-699-9074.

Q: Where can I find other child care services?

A: You can learn what other resources might be available at the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network website at <http://www.oregonchildcare.org>.