

News Release

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State of Oregon significantly increases child care assistance for working families

Need to know

- Child care copays through the Employment Related Day Care program have decreased to an average of \$16 per month for working families.
- Approximately 8,200 working families receive child care assistance through the Employment Related Day Care program.
- Working families can apply for child care assistance and other government supports at One.Oregon.Gov

(Salem) – Finding affordable, quality child care has long been a struggle for families, and the pandemic has only made this situation worse. Working families who participate in the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Employment Related Day Care Program (ERDC) will see their child care costs significantly decrease, making child care more accessible across the state.

ERDC helps eligible working families pay for child care, including registration and enrollment fees. ERDC is a subsidy program, which means some families, depending on their income, may be required to pay a copay.

These changes will support working families by:

- Decreasing the average family copay to \$16 per month.
- Reducing the family copay to \$0 for families who make 100% or less of the federal poverty level (an annual income of \$21,960 for a family of three).
- Limiting family copays to no more than \$130 a month.

“For many families the cost of child care can be a barrier to entering and staying connected to the workforce,” said Dan Haun, director of the ODHS Self-Sufficiency Programs. “This copay decrease will support working families across Oregon as they continue to deal with the many challenges facing families in today’s world.”

These changes are effective for families renewing or applying for the ERDC program on or after Oct. 1, 2021.

From March 2020 through September 2021, the federal government temporarily permitted ODHS to offer \$0 copay child care assistance to families participating in the ERDC program during the COVID-19 pandemic. These temporary COVID-19 changes expired on Sept. 30, 2021.

Prior to the temporary COVID-19 copay changes, the average family copay was approximately \$250. The lowest possible monthly family copay was \$27.

In addition to copay reductions, the Early Learning Division (ELD) has been using federal relief funds to provide grants directly to child care providers to stabilize our existing child care supply and help providers stay in business.

“We know that access to quality, affordable child care that meets families’ needs continues to be out of reach for many families across the state,” said Alyssa Chatterjee, Early Learning System Director of the Early Learning Division.

“Reducing the copays for eligible families will not only allow more families to find care, but also provide additional stability for our child care providers who accept subsidies.”

Working families who earn 185% of the federal poverty level, or \$40,626 annually for a family of three, may be eligible to enroll in the ODHS Employment Related Day Care program.

Oregonians can apply online for Employment Related Day Care Assistance and other government supports online at [One.Oregon.Gov](https://www.oregon.gov) or by phone at 1-800-699-9075 or TTY 711.

The copay reduction is made possible by additional funding provided by the federal government through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act; the 2021 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act; the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021; and the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Development Fund.

Resources to help meet basic needs

- Find a food pantry: [foodfinder.oregonfoodbank.org](https://www.foodfinder.oregonfoodbank.org)
- Dial 2-1-1, or text your zip code to 898-211 for help finding local resources and supports, including child care in your community.
- Visit www.211info.org for help finding local resources and supports, including child care in your community.
- [Oregon Department of Human Services Resources](#)

The Oregon Department of Human Services, Self-Sufficiency Programs operates the Employment Related Day Care program. The Employment Related Day Care

program helps working families pay for child care, including registration and enrollment fees. It also works with partners statewide, including the Early Learning Division, to help families find quality child care.

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