

# Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative – FAQs

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February 2018

## For Parents

### **1. How can I receive this benefit? Do I have to apply for one of the reduced cost spaces?**

Parents do not need to apply in order to receive this benefit. Beginning in April 2018, parents with children attending licensed group and family Infant/Toddler and/or 3-5 year care (including In-Home-Multi-Age Care) may receive targeted fee reductions through enhanced funding provided to child care providers who choose to “opt-in” and are approved by the Ministry to participate in the Child Care Fee Reduction initiative.

Parents do not have to enroll or apply in order to receive the reduced fees. If your licensed child care provider has chosen to “opt-in” and has been approved to participate in the initiative, your child care fees will be reduced by your provider.

### **2. How will I know if my provider has chosen to “opt-in” and been approved?**

Licensed child care providers will be required to inform families with children in their care they are opting in to the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. Providers will be invited to apply in March 2018; however, providers may apply for enrolment at any time in 2018/19. If your child care provider has not informed you that they are taking part in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, you can ask them if they plan to participate, or check the government website at: [www.gov.bc.ca/childcareoperatingfunding](http://www.gov.bc.ca/childcareoperatingfunding) for a list of participating child care providers (please note, the list will not be available online until after April 1, 2018).

### **3. My provider has been approved to “opt-in”. When will my fees go down, and by how much?**

Licensed child care providers will be invited to apply in March 2018; however, providers may apply for enrolment at any time in 2018/19. Providers that are approved to “opt-in” in March 2018 will begin receiving enhanced funding effective April 2018 and will be contractually required to reduce their parent fees by prescribed amounts. Providers choosing to “opt-in” at a later date will begin receiving enhanced funding on the first of the following month, at which point they will be contractually required to reduce their parent fees.

Fee reduction amounts are prescribed by Government and vary depending on the type of care, as follows:

- Group infant/toddler (under 36 months) care by \$350/month;
- Family infant/toddler care by \$200/month;
- Group child care for 3-5 year olds by \$100/month; and
- Family child care for 3-5 year olds by \$60/month.

### **4. What if my licensed child care provider tried to “opt-in” but was not approved to participate?**

The Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative is intended to support families through a reduction in their monthly child care fees. In order to ensure the enhanced funding provided by Government under this initiative is passed on to parents as intended, each provider’s application to “opt-in”

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will be reviewed by the Ministry to ensure eligibility. The Ministry will assess the provider's historical, current and future (planned) fees in order to ensure the intended benefit for parents is not diluted through fee increases. In the event a provider proposes a fee increase (or increased their fees just prior enrolment in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative) higher than expected norms (based on each provider's fee history), the provider may be deemed ineligible to participate, as the entirety of the enhanced funding will not be passed on to parents as intended. For further questions, please contact the Ministry at 1-888-338-6622 (select "Option 2").

**5. What should I do if my child care provider is on the Ministry's online list of enrolled facilities, but my fees haven't been reduced, or been reduced enough?**

If your child care provider is enrolled in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and your child care fees haven't gone down by the prescribed amounts (see Question 3), please speak to your child care provider or contact the Ministry at 1-888-338-6622 (select "Option 2").

**6. What happens if my provider chooses to raise their fees after they enroll?**

Child care providers are entitled to raise their fees annually by a rate reasonable for costs associated with running a business. As a condition of enrollment in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, child care providers are required to receive Ministry approval for any fee increases expected to occur before April 1, 2019.

There may be extraordinary circumstances under which it is reasonable and necessary for the provider to increase parent fees. If a provider is enrolled in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative but encounters a situation where the prohibition on parent fee increases (beyond those approved in the provider's 2018/19 fee schedule) would cause the provider, parent or other party, undue hardship, the Province may, in its discretion, permit the provider to increase parent fees while remaining enrolled in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative.

If you feel your child care provider has increased their fees in a manner contrary to the conditions of the initiative, please contact the Ministry at 1-888-338-6622 (select "Option 2").

**7. My provider is a non-profit organization. Shouldn't these providers receive more funding than private (for-profit) organizations?**

The Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative is intended to support families through a reduction in their monthly child care fees, regardless of whether their provider is non-profit or private. The prescribed fee reduction amounts (see Question 3) are scaled based on the cost of care (which is determined both by the age of the child, and whether care is provided in a group or home-based setting). Both non-profit and private organizations are eligible to apply, as both types of organizations support families in communities across the Province.

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- 8. I receive Child Care Subsidy, and my child care provider has decided to “opt-in”. Do I need to contact the Ministry to report a change in my child care fees?**

Yes, both providers and parents are required to report to the Child Care Subsidy program the actual cost of the space to the parent, less any parent fee reduction, if applicable.

- 9. My child attends a Before and After School Care program at a licensed child care center. Will my fees go down?**

At this time, unlicensed, preschool or school-aged child care programs are ineligible to apply for the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. However, Kindergarten children who are 5 years of age and enrolled in licensed before and after school child care program that is approved to “opt-in” to the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative will be eligible.