

Working Connections Child Care FAQ

What is Working Connections Child Care?

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) helps families with low incomes (under 200% FPL) pay for child care while they work or meet WorkFirst participation requirements.

When a family qualifies for child care subsidy benefits and chooses an eligible provider, one who is willing to accept the state's reimbursement rate as payment, the state pays a portion of the cost of child care. Subsidy reimbursement rates vary by provider type, region and age. The parent is also responsible to pay a copayment to the provider each month.

How is Working Connections Child Care funded?

WCCC is funded by a combination of approximately 22% state and 78% federal dollars. The federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) provides more than half of the resources for our state child care subsidy and also supports child care licensing and quality improvement. CCDF is made up of mandatory formula funding and annual appropriations to the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

What does the Federal CCDBG Increase mean?

Congress increased CCDBG funding in FY 18. The state legislature anticipated this increase and laid out direction for spending in a 2018 Supplemental budget proviso. The allocation for Washington State was about \$38 million annually.

Per the direction of the 2018 proviso, the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is investing the additional federal funds to raise WCCC child care subsidy rates for child care centers.

- Effective February 1, 2019 DCYF increased child care subsidy base rates for licensed center providers.
- The increase brings center subsidy base rates to at or above the 45th percentile according to the [2018 Market Rate Survey](#). This allows families receiving subsidy to access at least 45% of the child care market.
- Providers' will receive this increase when their invoices for February services are paid in March.

For Family Child Care Providers: Family child care providers are represented by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 925 and the state collectively bargains with SEIU 925 on reimbursement rates, among other topics. If approved in the 2019 State Budget, SEIU 925-represented providers will receive their own reimbursement rate increase effective July 1, 2019 which will bring them to the 55th percentile of market rate.

Both the center and family child care provider increase are a step towards addressing federal findings that the state is out of compliance with rate standards set to ensure families with subsidy have equitable access to quality care. The federal grantor's benchmark for access is subsidy rates at 75th percentile of the market rate, allowing families receiving subsidy to access 75% of the child care market.

Washington Falls Short for Young Children

Currently all child care reimbursement rates are below the 75th percentile. **\$166 million** is needed to ensure families can access child care in their community. This investment will bring all regions and ages to the 75th percentile of market rate and mean that families will have better access to quality child care in their community.

A snap shot of rates for child care centers and family homes.

| Current base rates - Centers | | | | | NEW Feb 1 base rates - Centers | | | |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Infants | Toddlers | Preschool | School-age | Infants | Toddlers | Preschool | School-age |
| Region 1 | \$34.03 | \$28.62 | \$27.03 | \$25.46 | \$ 35.29 | \$ 32.44 | \$ 30.53 | \$ 29.41 |
| Spokane County | \$34.81 | \$29.28 | \$27.67 | \$26.05 | \$ 45.45 | \$ 38.77 | \$ 35.65 | \$ 26.05 |
| Region 2 | \$34.39 | \$28.68 | \$26.61 | \$23.53 | \$ 39.44 | \$ 31.62 | \$ 30.44 | \$ 23.53 |
| Region 3 | \$45.50 | \$37.93 | \$32.78 | \$31.82 | \$ 57.84 | \$ 49.47 | \$ 42.34 | \$ 31.82 |
| Region 4 | \$52.94 | \$44.20 | \$37.10 | \$33.41 | \$ 68.98 | \$ 59.59 | \$ 55.57 | \$ 33.41 |
| Region 5 | \$38.82 | \$33.41 | \$29.40 | \$26.12 | \$ 48.86 | \$ 40.33 | \$ 35.47 | \$ 26.12 |
| Region 6 | \$38.18 | \$32.78 | \$28.62 | \$28.01 | \$ 46.39 | \$ 39.22 | \$ 35.29 | \$ 28.01 |

| Current rates – Family Child Care Homes | | | | | NEW Rate FY20, assuming CBA passes | | | |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Infant | Toddler | Preschool | School Age | Infant | Toddler | Preschool | School Age |
| Region 1 | \$ 30.21 | \$ 26.28 | \$ 24.26 | \$ 21.56 | \$ 31.25 | \$ 26.79 | \$ 25.89 | \$ 22.32 |
| Spokane County | \$ 30.93 | \$ 26.89 | \$ 24.81 | \$ 22.03 | \$ 32.59 | \$ 27.68 | \$ 26.79 | \$ 26.79 |
| Region 2 | \$ 31.27 | \$ 27.19 | \$ 24.93 | \$ 22.91 | \$ 32.14 | \$ 29.46 | \$ 26.79 | \$ 25.00 |
| Region 3 | \$ 42.82 | \$ 36.25 | \$ 36.25 | \$ 29.38 | \$ 42.86 | \$ 37.50 | \$ 36.25 | \$ 29.38 |
| Region 4 | \$ 54.37 | \$ 45.31 | \$ 40.78 | \$ 32.31 | \$ 54.37 | \$ 48.70 | \$ 41.07 | \$ 32.31 |
| Region 5 | \$ 37.07 | \$ 32.23 | \$ 27.19 | \$ 22.91 | \$ 37.37 | \$ 34.90 | \$ 31.25 | \$ 26.79 |
| Region 6 | \$ 33.33 | \$ 28.99 | \$ 27.19 | \$ 25.60 | \$ 33.93 | \$ 31.25 | \$ 28.41 | \$ 25.89 |