



Recent Changes to Working Connections Child Care

How has Working Connections Child Care Been Affected by State Budget Cuts?

- **Changes in eligibility**—Eligibility for Working Connections Child Care was reduced from 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to 175% of the Federal Poverty Level and 2,500 families were cut from the program.
- **Increases in co-payments**—Families with incomes between 82% of the Federal Poverty Level and 137.5 % of the Federal Poverty Level saw monthly co-payments increase from \$50 to \$65 per month, and families with incomes between 137.5% of the Federal Poverty Level and 175% of the Federal Poverty Level saw monthly co-payments increase using a sliding scale.
- **Waiting list**—An enrollment cap of 35,200 families has been set for child care assistance through Working Connections Child Care each month. Priority is given to families eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and families of children with special needs. New applicants receive child care assistance on a “first come, first served” basis. At the end of April, there were 3,311 families on the waiting list.

Federal Poverty Level, Monthly Income, and Changes in Copayments for Family of Four

Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	Monthly income for family of four	Monthly co-payment January	Monthly co-payment April
82%	\$1,530	\$15	\$15
137.5%	\$2,560	\$50	\$65
175%	\$3,260	\$373	\$415

How Does the Waiting List Work?

When enrollment in Working Connections Child Care exceeds 35,200 families, those without priority receive a denial letter from DSHS indicating that they will be placed on the waiting list. The waiting list will be reviewed every month and families will receive a letter in the mail when space in the program is available. **Families only have 10 days from the date of the letter to complete the application process, beginning with calling the DSHS Customer Service Call Center at 1-877-501-2233 right away. If families do not complete the process within this time frame, they will have to re-apply and go to the end of the waiting list.** Families can call the DSHS Customer Service Call Center at 1-877-501-2233 to check on the status of their applications.

Families currently receiving child care assistance through Working Connections will not be placed on the waiting list as long as they do not have a gap in eligibility. **It is extremely important that families submit their paperwork on time, get receipts for documents turned in, and keep copies of documents.**

How Can Families Find Child Care While on the Waiting List?

Families can call the Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network at 1-800-446-1114 to see if there are any child care providers in the community who offer a sliding fee scale or scholarship opportunities.

Are You On The Waiting List?

The Early Learning Action Alliance would like to hear how implementation of a waiting list is affecting families. Your experience could help improve access to child care assistance for other families in the future. If you are willing to share your story please contact Casey Osborn at casey@childrensalliance.org or 206.324.0340 x14.

The Early Learning Action Alliance is convened by the Children’s Alliance.
Learn more by contacting Leslie Dozono at (206) 324.0340 x20 or leslie@childrensalliance.org