

**Suffolk County Department
of Social Services
Child Care Program**

**Suffolk County Dept of Social Services
FCSA Child Care Unit
P.O. Box 18100
Hauppauge, NY 11788
General Intake # (631) 854-3349
Fax # (631) 854-3331**

Child Care Unit Main # (631) 854-9321
(For Providers & Advocates only)

Carleen Newlands, Director 854-9430
Anne Marie Lavoie, Asst. Director 854-3475
Cynthia Naso, NTA Child Care Supervisor 854-9215
Cynthia Speroni, TA Child Care Supervisor 854-9169

**The purpose of the Day Care Unit is to assist families
by providing payment to childcare providers.**

**The NYS Child Care Subsidy policy supports the goals
of personal responsibility and self- sufficiency by:**

- Removing child care as a barrier to working
- Encouraging personal responsibility
 - Parents are responsible for selecting and monitoring a provider
 - Low income families are required to pay a family share
- Empowering clients to make informed childcare decisions by supplying information about providers and quality care.
- Setting minimum health and safety standards for legally-exempt providers.

**TA (Temporary Assistance)
Child Care**

The Child Care Unit provides child care subsidies for clients in receipt of Temporary Assistance who are:

- Participating in assigned work activities such as work experience, job search, vocational training, education, etc.
- Employed
- Attending substance abuse treatment programs

The # of days / hours that child care is authorized is based on the # days / hours the client is engaged in work activities, employment, or treatment plus transportation.

TA clients do not pay a family share.

**NTA (Non-Temporary Assistance)
Child Care**

The Child Care Unit provides child care for low income families who are:

- Employed
- Teen parents attending high school
- Attending educational / training programs
(limitations apply re type of program, and: client must work at least 17.5 hours weekly)
- Attending an approved substance abuse program
- Experiencing a short-term emergency situation such as homelessness, family illness, domestic violence, etc.

The parent contributes a weekly family share, based on their income. The family share is paid directly to the provider.

**Suffolk County Child Care
Income Eligibility Standards**

125% of NYS Income Standard for new applications

150% of NYS Income Standard for recertification/case closings

200% of NYS Income Standard for Transitional Day Care and Families with Special Needs children in need of child care

**Suffolk County
Family Fee Percentage**

Currently at 20%

Family Fee = $\frac{\text{Gross Annual Income minus Income Standard}}{\text{divided by 52 weeks} \times 20\%}$

Who can watch my child?

- Families in receipt of temporary assistance, eligible low-income families, and most families receiving child care as part of their Child Protective Services case plan can use **any approved provider**
- Families who are receiving child care services as part of their Child Preventive Service case plan must use a **contracted provider**

Types of Providers

- Licensed Day Care Centers
- Licensed Group Family Day Care Homes
- Registered Family Day Care Homes
- Licensed/Registered School Age Child Care Programs
- Legally Exempt School Age Child Care Programs
- Legally Exempt Summer Camp Programs
- Legally Exempt (Informal) Child Care Providers (Family member, friend, neighbor)

How can a family find a provider?

- **The Child Care Council of Suffolk (CCC)** can provide the names of licensed and registered providers in your area who have met NYS OCFS health, safety and staffing standards.
Call the CCC at: **462-0303** or visit their website at <http://www.childcaresuffolk.org/>
- Search the **NYS OCFS Child Care Facility System** at http://it.ocfs.ny.gov/ccfs_facilitysearch/
- Ask people you trust for recommendations

NOTE: All legally exempt (informal providers) must be approved by the Child Care Council of Suffolk in order to receive payment from DSS.

What is the cost to the family?

- Low income families pay a weekly family fee based on their gross income and family size. (The minimum fee is \$1.00 weekly.) The family fee is paid directly to the provider.
- No cost to Temporary Assistance recipients
- No cost to active CPS cases regardless of income

How do I apply?

All required forms and instructions are now available on our Department's website!

- Go to www.suffolkcountyny.gov
- Choose Departments from the top menu, then choose Social Services.

How do I apply?

- When the Social Services webpage comes up, use the "Search Program Area" box on the left side of the screen and scroll down to Child Care
- You will find thorough information about our child care program, the eligibility wizard, a revised, shorter application, and all necessary forms and instructions for applying.

How do I apply?

- TA clients who are in an activity approved by the Department of Labor (DOL) are eligible for child care. The DOL worker will provide the necessary forms and information to the Child Care Unit.
- TA clients who are employed and other low-income applicants who cannot access the application and forms online can call the Child Care Unit's intake worker (854-3349) who will do a quick telephone interview and mail an application and required forms to the client - to be returned to the DSS office by mail.

What documentation must be submitted with the child care application?

Applicants must submit proof of the information they provide in the child care application. This includes proof of:

- Applicant's identity and marital status
- Residence in Suffolk County
- The child(ren)'s citizenship/legal residence in U.S., date of birth and relationship to the applicant(s)
- The child(ren)'s special needs, if applicable
- The absent parent's identity, location and availability to provide child care, if applicable

What documentation must be submitted with the child care application? Cont'd.

- Employment if applicable
(pay stubs; confidential employment inquiry form; work schedule)
- Income from any/all other sources including:
 - Child Support
 - Unemployment Insurance Benefits
 - Self-employment
 - Rental income
 - Social Security
 - Veterans Benefits
 - Pensions (Retirement; Disability)
- Enrollment in an approved educational program, if applicable (school form; course schedule)

How often must I recertify my case?

- TA child care cases are subject to the annual recertification of the family's TANF case. In addition, families are periodically asked to submit proof of enrollment in an approved activity.
- NTA child care cases must complete a full recertification every 12 months. A small # of families are randomly selected to complete a full recertification at the 6-month mark - for fraud prevention purposes.
- It is the client's obligation to inform DSS whenever a change occurs that could affect their eligibility for child care services (family member began or ended employment, family member began or ended educational or treatment program, change in family size, change in residence, change in child care provider, etc.) Failure to do so constitutes fraud and could result in arrest and/or recoupment of child care costs from the family if the family is found to have been ineligible for services provided.

I was granted Aid to Continue (ATC) while awaiting my Fair Hearing. What does this mean?

If you request a fair hearing with Aid to Continue (ATC) before your benefits end, your child care benefits will be reinstated and will be unchanged until the fair hearing decision is issued.

HOWEVER, if you fail to show or lose the fair hearing, you will owe any child care benefits that you should not have received. DSS is required to recover any child care overpayments. Overpayments may be collected by reduction of future child care allotments, lump sum installment payments, or through legal action. **If you want to avoid this, when you request a fair hearing you should indicate that you do not want your child care benefits reinstated while awaiting the outcome of the fair hearing.**

The End
