



StanWORKs
CHILD CARE
PARENT & PROVIDER
HANDBOOK

Revised January 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Child Care Policy and Procedures

PARENTS

StanWORKs CHILD CARE PROGRAM.....	1
PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES.....	2
STAGES OF CHILD CARE.....	3
CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY.....	3
NEED FOR CHILD CARE.....	6
REQUESTING CHILD CARE SERVICES.....	8
REQUIRED VERIFICATION.....	8
NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL/DENIAL.....	11
PARENT REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY.....	12
ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY.....	12
TERMINATIONS.....	13
NOTICE OF ACTION.....	14
CONFIDENTIALITY.....	14
PARENT'S RIGHT TO FILE FOR A HEARING.....	15
PARENTAL CHOICE.....	15
DISPUTES BETWEEN PARENTS AND PROVIDER.....	16
PARENT IS THE EMPLOYER OF IN-HOME PROVIDERS.....	17
PARENTAL COMPLAINTS AGAINST PROVIDERS.....	17
STANWAIT.....	18

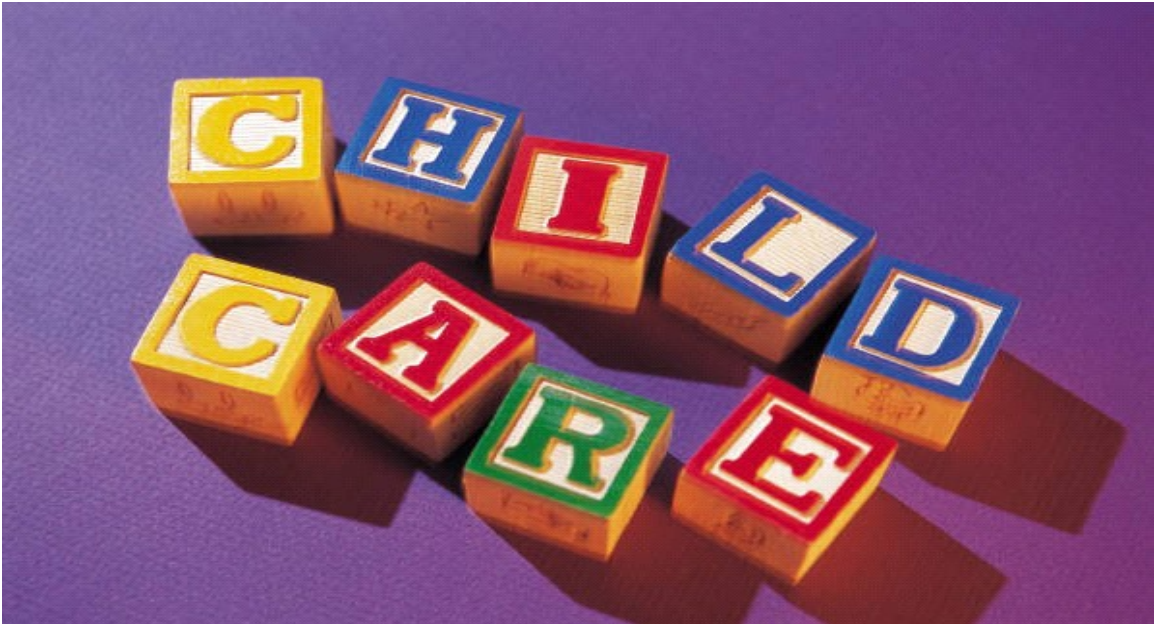
PROVIDERS

PROVIDER PARTICIPATION.....	19
PROVIDER APPROVAL.....	20
PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT.....	20
REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS.....	21
FAMILY FEE RECEIPT.....	24
REQUEST FOR RATE CHANGES.....	24
TERMINATIONS OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.....	24
PROVIDER'S GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.....	25

REIMBURSEMENT

RATE CEILINGS AND CO-PAYMENTS.....	26
HOW A RATE CEILING/CATEGORY IS DETERMINED.....	27
RATE ADJUSTMENTS.....	28
CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.....	29
REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT.....	29
ABSENCE POLICY.....	31
UNEXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY.....	32
ALTERNATE PROVIDER.....	32
NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS.....	32
REIMBURSEMENT TO PROVIDERS.....	33

PARENTS



StanWORKs CHILD CARE PROGRAM

The State of California's system to support families with child care services as they transition from public assistance to employment is the CalWORKs Child Care Program. Stanislaus County's Community Services Agency (CSA) locally administers the CalWORKs Child Care Program. Our program is known as the **StanWORKs Child Care Program**.

Our goal is to provide timely, accurate, and efficient services to our parents and providers.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program operates on a non-discriminatory basis, supporting equal access to services without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental disability, or physical disability.

We support providers who:

- Welcome the enrollment of children with exceptional needs, and
- Understand the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and implement reasonable accommodations for children with exceptional needs

Service Area and Type

The StanWORKs Child Care Program partners with parents to improve the future of their children by providing child care assistance to families residing in Stanislaus County who are receiving CalWORKs cash assistance, and are transitioning from CalWORKs to full time employment. In addition, we may provide child care assistance to former CalWORKs recipients.

Services and subsidies are provided for children from birth through twelve (12) years of age. Children who are unable to care for themselves due to a physical or mental disability, or are under court supervision, may be served up to age twenty one (21).

The StanWORKs Child Care Program is a subsidy program, and therefore has limitations:

1. There is a reimbursement amount limit for child care services which sometimes result in a partial reimbursement to the provider. The difference is the parent's responsibility. (See page 26 regarding co-payments)
2. Certain fees and charges are not covered by the StanWORKs Child Care Program. (See page 6)

PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The StanWORKs Child Care Program has the responsibility to:

- Reimburse child care providers on behalf of families eligible for child care services through the StanWORKs Child Care Program
- Act as a payroll agent on behalf of eligible families by subsidizing child care services provided to eligible children. The Community Services Agency is not the employer_of the child care provider.
- Make the child care program accessible to all qualified persons with disabilities
- Make child care services available to all qualified persons without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental disability, or physical disability
- Make regular reimbursements to providers for covered services, within 21 calendar days of receipt of a complete and correct Request for Reimbursement form

- Give parents a copy of the Hearings and Complaints Procedures (See pages 15, 17)
- Give providers a copy of the Grievance Procedure.(See page 25)
- Provide parents referrals to community resources, at their request

STAGES OF CHILD CARE

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) oversees the administration of the **three (3) stages** of the CalWORKs Child Care Program.

Stage 1: Current CalWORKs cash assistance recipients start in this stage. Child care services will not be available more than 30 days prior to the parent requesting services.

Stage 2: Provides child care services to stable families who are current CalWORKs cash assistance recipients or former CalWORKs cash assistance recipients within 24 months of the parent's or family's discontinuance from CalWORKs cash assistance, including receipt of CalWORKs Diversion.

Stage 3: Provides child care services to parents who have been discontinued from CalWORKs cash assistance including CalWORKs Diversion, for 24 months and are in their final 24th month of Stage 1 or 2 Child Care.

CSA administers Stage 1 Child Care, and facilitates a seamless transition of families who are no longer eligible for Stage 1 Child Care to Choices for Children of Stanislaus County for Stage 2 and 3 Child Care.

CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY

Current CalWORKs recipients are categorically eligible to Stage 1 Child Care. For former CalWORKs recipients, including families in Stage 2 and Stage 3 Child Care, eligibility is determined based on family income and need for services.

Income

A former CalWORKs family's total monthly countable income cannot exceed 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) to meet initial and ongoing income eligibility. The family's income is verified, as applicable by the Child Care case manager at:

- Initial certification or recertification
- Any time between initial certification and recertification when a request is made to change a Family Fee or need for services
- As applicable, when members are added to or deleted from the household
- When income is reported in excess of 85% of the SMI

The family's total countable income includes all gross monthly income received, with the following exceptions:

- Child support paid for a child who is not in your home
- Earnings of a child under age 18
- Loans, grants and scholarships that are obtained under conditions that preclude their use for current living costs
- Grants or loans to students for educational purposes made or insured by state/federal agency
- Allowances received for uniforms or other work required clothing, food and shelter
- Business expenses for self-employed family members
- Income of an SSI/SSP recipient

Monthly Income is calculated as follows:

- **If a parent is paid every week:** weekly income is multiplied by 52 weeks and divide by 12 months.
- **If a parent is paid twice a month:** semi-monthly income are added together to determine monthly amount.
- **If a parent is paid every two weeks:** bi-weekly income is multiplied by 26 weeks and divide by 12 months.
- **Fluctuating income:** when income fluctuates due to infrequent commissions, sporadic overtime, bonuses, lottery winnings, migrant agricultural work or other seasonal employment, monthly income is computed by averaging the total countable income from at least two months.

Family Fee

Former CalWORKs families may be assessed a Family Fee based on the family's income and family size, and be required to pay a Family Fee.

The Family Fee is paid for the family, not for each individual child. The fee is based on the child certified to have the most hours of care per month, and is assessed at certification, recertification, and any time a request for a reduction to the family fee is made. A certified need of more than 130 hours per month will be assessed a full-time Family Fee. A certified need of 130 hours or less per month will be assessed a part-time Family Fee. The Family Fee is not calculated based on actual attendance.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program requires parents to pay the Family Fee directly to the provider. A receipt verifying Family Fee payment must accompany each month's request for reimbursement before reimbursement can be processed. (See pages 24, 30).

If the Family Fee is not paid, a discontinuance Notice of Action will be sent to you indicating the amount of unpaid fees and the period of delinquency. If payment is not verified with a receipt by the request date, child care services will be terminated. If you are unable to pay all your delinquent Family Fees prior to the termination date, you may contact your case manager to set up a payment plan.

If your income or family size changes, your Family Fee may be recalculated or you may ask for your Family Fee to be recalculated. The recalculated Family Fee will be effective on the first of the month after the new fee is assessed.

Registration Fees

In some instances, a child care provider may charge a registration fee to enroll a child in their facility or at regular intervals throughout the year. The StanWORKs Child Care Program may be able to reimburse those fees. You must have your provider include these fees on the Request for Reimbursement form.

The Child Care case manager follows a budget calculation process to determine if a registration fee can be paid. The Child Care case manager will notify the family of the result.

Non Reimbursable Fees

The StanWORKs Child Care Program reimburses for child care services and costs that fall within the Regional Market Rate limits, but will not reimburse charges such as:

- Late charges when children are picked up after scheduled pickup time
- Fees for late payments or bank charges
- Charges for laundry, meals, snacks or transportation
- Fees for completion of paperwork
- Tuition at a private facility for school attendance
- Field trip/transportation expenses
- Charges for toilet training or other special service
- Charges to hold a child care spot/slot
- Equipment or curriculum charges or deposits
- Additional charges to families in the StanWORKs Child Care Program that are not charged to private pay families

An incomplete or incorrectly completed Request for Reimbursement form cannot be processed for reimbursement (See page 29). Any costs incurred that are not allowed by the StanWORKs Child Care Program are the parent's responsibility to pay.

NEED FOR CHILD CARE

Families not otherwise considered categorically eligible, must have a Need for subsidized child care before they can be approved for child care services.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program reimburses for reasonable transportation time to and from a job, approved Welfare to Work activity, or vocational training.

Child Care for on-line courses, study time, and sleep time may potentially be covered. Ask your Child Care case manager for more information.

You are responsible for paying your provider for any hours of care that the StanWORKs Child Care Program does not cover.

You meet a criteria of Need when you are:

a. Employed

You must be employed or as applicable, if you receive CalWORKs, is required to and is intending to participate in an approved Welfare to Work (WTW) activity, or is WTW exempt but is indicating a desire to volunteer and participate. If you are WTW sanctioned, you may remain eligible for child care services only if you are employed or participating in an approved WTW activity.

Self-employed WTW participants are expected to work the number of hours required by WTW or combine their self-employment with other approved activities. A reasonable assessment of the hours needed is calculated by dividing the parent's self-employment income by the applicable minimum wage to determine the maximum allowable hours of child care services per month. As applicable, if you work in your own home, the nature of the work must preclude the supervision of your children in order to receive subsidized child care services. If you work as a child care provider, you are not eligible for subsidized services.

- b. Participating in an approved Vocational Training and Education** leading directly to a recognized trade, para-profession, or profession, as applicable. Need for child care services due to vocational training and education is time limited.

c. Seeking Employment

Child care services may be reimbursed for job search hours.

Reimbursement for child care services is limited to no more than five days per week and less than 30 hours per week, as applicable.

In two-parent families, child care may be reimbursed only for the hours that the parents' schedules overlap, making both parents unavailable to care for the child(ren). Every effort should be made to vary your schedules so that care can be provided by one parent while the other is looking for work or while children are in school.

Job seekers are strongly encouraged to use all resources available. Visit your local Employment Development Department (EDD). EDD can provide you with job leads as well as assistance in resume preparation, typing skill enhancement, and career research materials.

- d. Incapacitated** to such an extent you are not able to provide normal child care.

In a two-parent family, one parent must be working or participating in an approved activity, and if the incapacity of the second parent precludes the adults' ability to care for the child(ren) in the home, child care reimbursement may be available.

REQUESTING CHILD CARE SERVICES

If you are interested in applying for child care subsidy, you can tell your CalWORKs case manager, WTW case manager, visit the StanWORKs Child Care Program, or call our Child Care Information line at (209) 558-2332. You must make the request within 30 days from the first day you receive services from your provider, and complete the application process within 30 days from making the request.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program does not accept mail-in applications. An office visit is required to apply for child care services. Please check in at the Child Care reception window located on the second floor of the Community Services Agency (Family Services Entrance) located at 251 E. Hackett Rd, Modesto to request an appointment for an application interview. Application interviews are conducted Monday through Friday by appointment only.

A Child Care case manager will conduct a face to face interview with you to determine your eligibility to the StanWORKs Child Care Program. You will be asked to obtain all required documents and verifications needed to determine your eligibility and provide such documents and verifications. Subsequent interviews may be necessary to ensure all required documents and verifications are received before your application can be processed.

REQUIRED VERIFICATION

You will need to provide verifications of the following:

- A. All household income such as wages, tips, commissions, child support, dividends and interest, rental property income, estates or trusts, Unemployment Insurance Benefit, Veteran's Benefits, SSI/SSA income, financial aid/work study awards, income tax returns, other public assistance benefits, etc. As applicable, if you are employed, you must submit a letter from the employer, all payroll checks stubs, or other record of wages issued by the employer for the preceding month or as applicable, for the preceding 12 months. This documentation must include the days

and hours of employment. The StanWORKs Child Care Program's Verification of Employment form may substitute for an employer letter.

B. Verification of family size. Family size is determined by the number of adults and children living in the home. Birth verification is required for all family members, and immunization records are required for each child, except for children attending school or a licensed daycare facility. Documentation of marriage/divorce is required for parents.

C. Child Care Provider Information

Licensed Providers:

- Licensed Provider Designation Form
- W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification), and
- Provider's Contract (terms agreed upon between parent and provider) and
- Facility license (if not already submitted to our program), and
- Fee Schedule (rates and list of charges by age group)

Licensed-Exempt Providers:

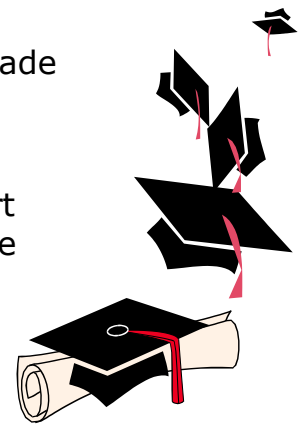
- License-exempt provider packet
- W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification), and
- Proof of Provider's age (i.e. birth certificate, driver's license, etc.),
- Proof of Provider's relationship to the child (if applicable)
- Social Security Card,
- Trustline registry (if applicable)
- Health & Safety Facility Checklist

E. Parent(s) and provider(s) must sign and date a CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT form indicating you understand it is your responsibility to read and understand the Parent and Provider Handbook, a RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES form, and a PROCEDURE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR COMPLETING REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT form.

F. As applicable, students in Vocational Training and Education must provide the following documents before child care services will be considered for approval:

1. Training Verification form completed by a representative of the school you are attending which identifies:
 - Your occupational goal (specific job goal) and anticipated start and completion dates (Academic Plan, contract, etc.). Training must lead directly to a recognized trade, profession, or Para profession.
 - The expected completion date for the entire course of study.
 - The beginning and ending dates of the current quarter/semester/term.
 - The current training schedule including course titles, times and days of classes. (This may be submitted on an attached document.)
 - Signature or stamp of the training institution's registrar. Signature of the student and the date signed.
2. Verification of acceptance into the school program (letter, current class schedule, contract).
3. Verification of successful performance (most recent grade report, transcripts, performance evaluation, written statement from the school).

Note: You must make satisfactory progress for a report period and complete unit hours for which you are enrolled and have been approved for reimbursement. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA and/or pass 50% in non-graded programs. Progress will be reviewed at the time of recertification, mid-semester, at the end of each semester, and at the end of the training program. Students must submit verifications such as report cards, transcripts or other records, when requested, to document satisfactory progress toward attainment of the occupational goal. You must inform us when classes are dropped.



If you do not make satisfactory progress in a report period, services will be terminated for the training and will not be available to you until after 6 months from the date of termination.

Subsidized child care is limited to 6 years from the start date of the original course of training. Once started, the 6 year time clock starts and continues regardless of whether or not you continue to be engaged in vocational training or education. Subsidized Child Care may be authorized for up to 24 semester units or its equivalent after the attainment of a Bachelor's Degree.

- G. Job seeking adults: As applicable, parents pre-approved to do job search must complete a written declaration signed under penalty of perjury that the parent is seeking employment which includes the parent's plan to secure, change, or increase employment with a description of when services will be necessary.
- H. Incapacitated Adults: As applicable, a Statement of Incapacity or Medical Report must be completed by a legally qualified professional, to verify the need for child care services. The nature of the incapacitation and the age of the child(ren) will be considered in the determination of need, including verification and clarification of the provided statement.
- I. Self Employed Adults must complete a written declaration under penalty of perjury that includes a description of the employment and an estimate of the days and hours worked per week, and a complete, signed, and dated Independent Contractor Log must be provided along with verification of income such as receipts, quarterly tax reports, and the previous year's tax return, as applicable.

NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL/DENIAL

After submitting a complete application or recertification, you will be informed through a Notice of Action within thirty (30) days whether you have been approved or denied child care services. (See page 14)

If the Child Care case manager needs additional information before child care services can be approved, a Denial Notice of Action and a checklist will be sent to you requesting additional information and a date the information is due. If the requested information is not submitted by the due date, the denial is effective and any costs for child care services will be your responsibility.

Approved families receive a Notice of Action approving services along with a Child Care Certificate specifying the child care provider, child care hours, and rates. The Child Care Certificate must be signed by the

parent and the provider and returned by the due date specified on the Notice of Action before reimbursements can be issued. (See page 28)

Once approved, you will be sent a Request for Reimbursement form each month. These forms are child, month, and provider specific and must only be used for the same child, month, and provider pre-printed on the form. These forms are sent to the parent(s) at least 10 days prior to the beginning of the service month it covers. The parent must call the Child Care case manager if form(s) are not received 5 days prior to the start of the service month. (See page 29)

PARENT REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY



You are required to notify the StanWORKs Child Care Program within 30 days when your household income exceeds 85% of the SMI for your household size. You must report ahead of time if you know your need for child care services is changing or has changed which may cause your need to increase, or if income is changing or has changed which may cause your family fee to decrease. Increase in need and/or a reduction in Family Fee is effective the 1st of the month following the month in which verification, which caused the change is received and a Notice of Action is sent. You must also report ahead of time before using a new provider or if you change providers. Your chosen provider must meet certain requirements before reimbursement can be authorized. If you use a provider whom the program is unable to approve, you will be responsible for payment. If applicable, you may be required to report other changes that affect your eligibility and need.

ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

When you are approved for child care services, you will receive a Notice of Action which indicates the beginning and ending dates of eligibility. This period of time is called a Certification period and it is generally for 12 months. The Certification period is not to be confused with a Child Care Certificate. (See page 29)

For services to be provided after the Certification period, you must be re-certified for child care services. Your family will not be eligible for continued services until the recertification is approved by the Child Care case manager.

At the end of the Certification period, a recertification interview will be conducted. Recertification forms must be completed and submitted with required verifications to the Child Care case manager. Failure to submit the required recertification forms and verifications will result in termination from the program.

TERMINATIONS

Child care services for current CalWORKs recipients who are considered categorically eligible to Stage 1 Child Care cannot be discontinued during the 12-month certification period except under specific circumstances. Ask your Child Care case manager for more information.

As applicable, the StanWORKs Child Care Program will terminate a family, for reasons such as, but not limited to:

1. Failure to provide information/verification at the time of application, recertification or when submitting information/verification is required
2. Delinquency in the payment of Family Fees
3. Failure to notify the StanWORKs Child Care Program within 30 days when household income exceeds 85% of the SMI
4. Failure to comply with the monthly request for reimbursement form's signature/date, and daily completion requirement
5. Fraud, forgery, falsification of, or refusal to sign any form. Cases terminated for these reasons may have special requirements for future participation in the StanWORKs Child Care Program, even if other eligibility criteria are met
6. Family income exceeds 85% of the State Median Income
7. The family is no longer meeting "Eligibility" or "Need" criteria (See pages 4, 6), including abandonment of care
8. Unavailability of program funds
9. Parent's request
10. Non-cooperation with Federal, State, or County staff



Parents are responsible for paying all outstanding provider charges due to terminations or denials resulting from but not limited to the above reasons.

NOTICE OF ACTION

Notice of Action is mentioned several times in this handbook. There are several types of Notice of Action:

Approval Notice – If you are determined eligible for child care services, you will be sent or given an approval notice indicating the period of time child care services are approved for.

Denial Notice – If you are determined ineligible for services, you will be sent or given a denial notice indicating the reason for the denial. Child care services will not be reimbursed.

Change Notice – If a change occurs that affects your eligibility and need for child care services that does not result in the termination of child care services, you will be sent or given a change notice indicating the change to your child care services.

Discontinuance Notice – If your eligibility for child care services stops, you will be sent or given a discontinuance notice ten (10) calendar days prior to the discontinuance of child care services. A copy of the notice will be sent to your provider.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The use or disclosure of any information maintained in the Family Data File concerning StanWORKs Child Care participants and their families is limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of the child care program. Parents sign a Release of Information form at the time of application and at subsequent recertifications. Contacts may be made with agencies or individuals including but not limited to your provider, employer(s), teacher/school(s), counselor, Department of Child Support Services staff, Internal Revenue Service, worksite supervisors, StanWORKs case managers, doctors and other subsidized child care programs. Information may be gathered for the purposes of verifying employment, hours worked, income, attendance, verifying Department of Child Support Services paid or collected, and/or to aid in the smooth transition between the Stages of Child Care. (See page 3) You shall have access to information in your StanWORKs Child Care file at a time and place considered reasonable by the Community Services Agency.

PARENT'S RIGHT TO FILE FOR A HEARING

If you disagree with an action taken by the StanWORKs Child Care Program indicated on a Notice of Action, you have the right to file for a hearing.

You must follow the procedure outlined on the back of the Notice of Action being disputed and meet specified filing dates. A written request for a hearing must be filed within ninety (90) calendar days from the issuance date of the Notice of Action. The appeals process begins with the Hearings Unit at CSA.



The CSA administrative staff person/hearing officer will notify you of the type of hearing, time, and place of the scheduled hearing, taking into consideration your work or school schedule.

During the hearing you may speak on your own behalf or be represented by someone else. If requested, CSA will make an interpreter available. A Child Care case manager will be present at the hearing to explain the reason(s) for the action indicated on the Notice of Action before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). The Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will send you a written decision after the hearing is held.

Complaints may also be filed using the county's Uniform Complaint Procedures. Contact the Stanislaus County Chief Executive Office for additional information and instructions.

PARENTAL CHOICE

As a parent, you have the right and responsibility to choose a child care provider who meets your needs, and is acceptable to the StanWORKs Child Care Program. It is recommended that you choose a provider whose rates are "reasonable and necessary." In other words, rates that do not exceed what an ordinarily prudent person would pay for similar services in the community. All charges in excess of what the StanWORKs Child Care Program reimburses is your responsibility.

You have the right and responsibility to change providers when necessary. You must notify your Child Care case manager at least 10 days in advance of the change. The StanWORKs Child Care Program has the right and responsibility to either approve or deny a chosen provider. The new provider must first be approved by the StanWORKs Child Care Program before reimbursement for child care services is made.

You are encouraged to choose a clean, healthy, safe environment for your children. You are encouraged to consider how important early education programs provided by licensed providers later affect the success of your child in school and in life. If you need assistance in choosing your provider, please contact Stanislaus County Office of Education Child Care Resource and Referral at (209) 238-6400.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program will only reimburse one child care provider per child when the hours of operation of the primary provider selected by the parent can accommodate the certified need for child care.

DISPUTES BETWEEN PARENTS AND PROVIDERS

Child care is a contract between you and the provider. Any disputes arising or liability resulting from the parent-provider contract shall not involve the StanWORKs Child Care Program in any way. The StanWORKs Child Care Program does not inspect or warrant the condition of the provider's home or facility or the degree or type of supervision provided.



The StanWORKs Child Care Program assumes no responsibility for injury or damages arising from the parent or child care provider's performance or facility. You and the provider agree to hold harmless CSA and the StanWORKs Child Care Program, and their employees, from costs, suits or liability arising from child care services.

Providers do not have the authority to advise families of their eligibility to the StanWORKs Child Care Program. If a provider tells you that you are eligible for our program and then reimbursement is denied or the family is determined ineligible for the program or specific child care services, you will be responsible to pay for those services.

PARENT IS THE EMPLOYER OF IN-HOME CARE PROVIDERS

A license-exempt provider who cares for a child in the child's home becomes an employee of the child's parent/guardian. As the Employer-of-Record, the parent/guardian agrees to meet all federal and state employer requirements that include, but may not be limited to:

- ✓ Registering with the IRS to receive an employer identification number
- ✓ Paying the employer's share of social security and Medicare taxes on wages paid to the provider
- ✓ Withholding the provider's share of social security and Medicare taxes
- ✓ Making quarterly tax deposits using Form 942
- ✓ Issuing the provider a W-2 form at the end of the calendar year
- ✓ Withholding and submitting to the state the provider's share of State Disability Insurance (SDI)
- ✓ Paying quarterly Unemployment Insurance (SUI) to the state
- ✓ Providing Worker's Compensation Insurance for the provider
- ✓ Paying the difference between minimum wage and the maximum amount the StanWORKs Child Care Program can reimburse

If you choose to use an in-home, license-exempt provider you must provide the StanWORKs Child Care Program a completed, signed and dated self-attestation form acknowledging you are assuming employer responsibilities including complying with any applicable federal and state employment laws.

PARENTAL COMPLAINTS AGAINST PROVIDERS

Against Licensed Providers

The California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division receives and investigates complaints against licensed child care providers. To contact Community Care Licensing, call (559) 243-4588.

Against Licensed- Exempt Providers

The StanWORKs Child Care Program maintains a written record of substantiated parental complaints against license-exempt providers who do not comply with Health and Safety Code requirements. This information is public record.



To make a complaint about a license-exempt provider, you must submit a signed and dated written statement specifying the nature of the complaint, the date and approximate time of the occurrence and the name and address of the provider about whom the complaint is made. The written statement must be signed by you and submitted to your Child Care case manager. Upon notification of the complaint, the provider is notified and may submit a written rebuttal statement. Following a complaint, you and your provider are notified that the provider has fourteen (14) days to correct the situation or reimbursement for child care services will cease.

If you feel this is a serious Health & Safety concern, please report this to:

**Modesto Police Department
(209) 572-9500
and/or
Community Care and Licensing
1-559-243-4588**

Note: If you have any questions about licensing or need help finding a child care provider, Stanislaus Office of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral can help you. Call (209) 238-6400.

STANWAIT

Even if you are currently being served by the StanWORKs Child Care Program, you may request to be placed on StanWait, an eligibility list for state programs maintained by the Stanislaus County Office of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral. This is a list used by other county subsidized child care programs which will give you access to a broader system of ongoing subsidized child care outside of the StanWORKs Child Care Program.

If you wish to be placed on StanWait, you must call the Stanislaus Office of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral at (209) 238-6400. Once you are placed on StanWait, you must contact them every three months to update your information and to remain active on the list.

If another Subsidized Child Care Program contacts you, you can select to move to that program or stay in the StanWORKs Child Care Program.

PROVIDERS



PROVIDER PARTICIPATION

Child Care providers throughout the community help enable parents to prepare for, seek, accept, and retain employment by providing needed child care services to families served by the StanWORKs Child Care Program. The StanWORKs Child Care Program reimburses providers for various child care services: all day, part-time, before and after school, weekends, evenings, nights or split shifts.

Reimbursement can be made to providers who are a:

- Licensed child care center
- Licensed family day care home
- License-exempt school-aged program operated on school grounds by school personnel
- License-exempt facility when the parent is in an approved activity on-site during child care hours
- License-exempt Parks and Recreation programs that have met the requirements; utilize sign-in/sign-out sheets, provide adult supervision, and ensure that all employees who have contact with

children have completed a criminal background check (paid at exempt care rates)

- License-exempt relative or non-relative, legally able to work in the U.S., 18 years of age or older, has been registered and cleared through Trustline (if not the grandparent, aunt or uncle of the child), has completed a Health & Safety Self-Certification, and has no disqualifying felony conviction

PROVIDER APPROVAL

Child Care providers chosen by families participating in the StanWORKs Child Care Program may be approved or denied by the StanWORKs Child Care Program. The program may deny or terminate any child care provider. Some reasons for rejection or termination may be for:

- Licensing Issues
- Trustline Registry Issues
- Practices or billings do not comply with child care regulations
- Non cooperation with the Community Services Agency – CSA
- Continued failure to accurately complete Requests for Reimbursement
- Fraud, forgery or falsification of documents
- Making false statements or representation
- Failure to comply with the actual times, daily completion requirement of the Request for Reimbursement, and/or interfering with parents' ability to comply with this requirement
- Other issues the Community Services Agency deems necessary to reject or terminate

PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT

CSA acts as a payroll agent for the reimbursement of child care services by sending the reimbursement directly to the child care provider. CSA is not the employer of the child care provider.

- Reimbursements made directly to providers in excess of \$600.00 per year will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service at the end of each calendar year. A 1099 form will be sent to the provider and the IRS.
- Child care expenses are reimbursed only for the certified hours, or as applicable, actual attendance up to the certified hours. In two-parent families, child care can only be reimbursed for hours both parents are unavailable due to work or approved work activity.
- Reimbursement will not be made for child care services when care is or can be provided by parents, legal guardians, members of the assistance unit, including persons who exercise a parental role to the child in the household.
- Reimbursement for providers who live in another county and provide services in that county for a Stanislaus county resident in our program will be calculated using their county's Regional Market Rate ceiling.
- Court ordered deductions will be levied against active providers receiving reimbursement from the StanWORKs Child Care Program. Deductions will be sent to the levying agency based on the terms of the court order. These agencies might include: Department of Child Support Services, Franchise Tax Board, Internal Revenue Service, Department of Motor Vehicles, etc.



REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

- Provide child care for families living in Stanislaus County.
- Complete the Child Care Provider Information Packet and W-9 forms and provide copies of license, contract, and fee schedule (if licensed), and relationship and age verification (if license-exempt).
- Remain in compliance with applicable licensing or registry laws and regulations.
- Renew license prior to expiration and present proof. Licenses are issued to specific providers for specific locations. A provider who moves must provide a license reflecting the new address before being eligible for reimbursement.
- All providers must immediately submit a new provider packet and W-9 if there is a name or address change, a tax status and/or Tax Identification # change.

- If a licensed provider changes address, or has a change in their "Total Capacity", child care reimbursement will be stopped and will resume only from the date listed on the new license. A copy of the new license must be submitted to the StanWORKs Child Care Program.
- License-exempt providers must submit a new Health & Safety Facility Checklist if they change addresses.
- License-exempt providers cannot care for more than one unrelated family's child(ren).
- TrustLine Registry. If a license-exempt provider is not the grandparent, aunt or uncle of the child in care, the provider must be TrustLine registered.

TrustLine required providers must be TrustLine registered before being approved as a provider. The program cannot reimburse for child care services unless the provider becomes TrustLine registered. The StanWORKs Child Care Program will not reimburse providers who fail TrustLine registry.

Parents are responsible for all payment if their provider fails to pass TrustLine registry or use a provider who is not currently TrustLine registered.

- If a provider has been Denied TrustLine registry, or had their registration Revoked, then reapplies later to become a provider in our program, the provider will not be approved.
- If a provider has been Closed in the TrustLine registry for over a year, and again reapplies for TrustLine Registry and receives a "Cleared" status, we may approve them as a child care provider.
- If the person requesting approval as a provider in the StanWORKs Child Care Program is known by our agency to have a felony conviction or is someone with a record of offenses that would be questionable in taking care of children, they will be denied until the TrustLine registry is completed. This applies to exempt relatives as well as non-relative providers.
- All license-exempt providers must complete and submit a Health and Safety Self-Certification.
- Provide child care on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Rates for families in the StanWORKs Child Care Program are not higher than what is charged for private paying families.
- Charge families a "reasonable and necessary rate for Child Care services." In other words, rates that do not exceed what an

ordinarily prudent person would pay for similar services in the community.

- Complete the in and out times portion of the Request for Reimbursement form on a daily basis, not at the end of the week or month, and not interfere with the parent's or authorized person's ability to do the same.
- Enter the exact time daily on the provider sign-in/sign-out portion of the Request for Reimbursement form when a child is dropped off and picked up from school, and not interfere with the parent's or authorized person's ability to do the same.
- Collect the Monthly Family Fee directly from the parent.
- Report delinquent Family Fee payment to the StanWORKs Child Care Program immediately.
- Allow parent's access to their children during normal hours of operation whenever the children are in care.
- Assume any and all responsibility and liability resulting from the decision to enter into a verbal or written contract with a parent.
- Understand that you are employed by the parent and may be terminated by the parent. Understand that any disputes arising or resulting from the contract between you and the parent does not involve the StanWORKs Child Care Program in any way. (See page 18)
- Understand that the StanWORKs Child Care Program cannot reimburse above what the State establishes as the Regional Market Rate ceiling. (See page 26)
- Understand any child care costs not covered by the StanWORKs Child Care Program are the parent's responsibility to pay.
- Cooperate with Federal, State, and County staff. Failure to cooperate may result in provider denial or termination.
- Understand by providing child care services to children of families receiving child care subsidy, you are giving consent for the program to recover any overpayment, resulting from incorrectly issued reimbursement.



FAMILY FEE RECEIPT

If the StanWORKs Child Care Program requires the family to pay a Family Fee, the child care provider must provide a pre-numbered receipt for the Family Fee payment. If the parent refuses to pay the Family Fee, the provider must refuse to issue a payment receipt. (See pages 5, 33)



REQUEST FOR RATE CHANGES

Licensed providers must submit a written request for an increase in advance along with a revised fee schedule/contract and provider packet. If the request is received between the 1st and 15th of the month and approved, the rate increase will become effective the first day of the following month. If the request is received between the 16th and the 31st and approved, the rate increase will become effective the first day of the second following month.

TERMINATIONS OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

When a licensed child care provider terminates a family, or a family chooses to move to a new provider, the provider/parent must notify the StanWORKs Child Care Program 10 days in advance. If a two week notice is to be billed by the provider according to their written contract with the parent, the two week notice must be billed at the time of the termination and the children must attend during this two week notice period. If the children do not attend this two week period, the StanWORKs Child Care Program will not reimburse the terminated provider and the parent will be responsible for payment.

PROVIDER'S GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

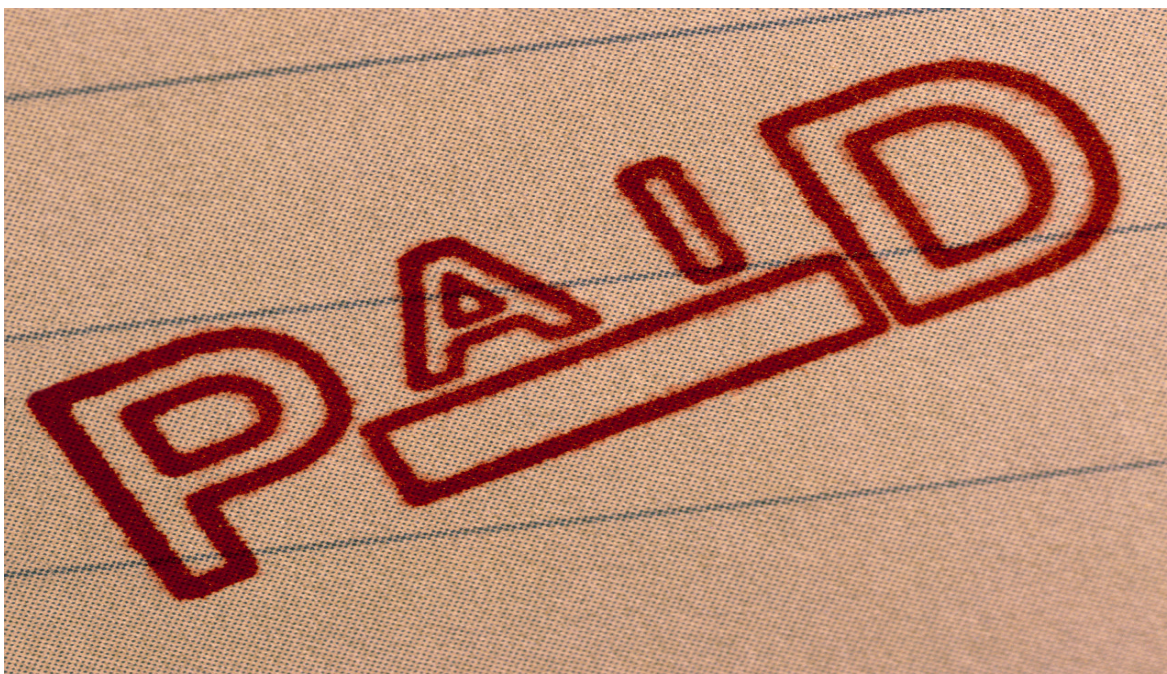
A provider may disagree with actions taken by the StanWORKs Child Care Program. If an issue cannot be resolved with the Child Care case manager, the Child Care Supervisor, or the Child Care Manager, the provider may file a grievance with the StanWORKs Child Care Appeals Officer:

Child Care Appeals Officer K3A
Laura Ortega
P.O. Box 42
Modesto CA 95353-0042
Office Telephone: (209) 558-2949
FAX Number: (209) 558-2878

1. The child care provider must submit a letter explaining their grievance. The letter must include the providers address, telephone number, case name or parent name, and the name of the child(ren) who received child care.
2. Upon receipt of the letter, the Child Care Appeals Officer will review the issue to determine if the action taken was appropriate according to the policies and procedures listed in Parent and Provider Handbook and according to Child Care regulations.
3. The Child Care Appeals Officer will then attempt to contact the provider by phone to discuss the issue and obtain any additional information she may need. The Appeals Officer will inform the provider of the decision by phone and follow up with a written decision that will be mailed to the provider.

The Child Care Appeals Officer hears complaints regarding the StanWORKs Child Care Program, not regarding parents. Any disputes arising or liability resulting from the parent-provider contract shall not involve Stanislaus County in any way.

REIMBURSEMENT



RATE CEILINGS AND CO-PAYMENTS

The maximum reimbursable amount under the StanWORKs Child Care Program is equivalent to the Regional Market Rate (RMR) ceiling or the provider's actual charge, whichever is less.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program will calculate reimbursement using rate categories that closely corresponds to the rate category listed on the licensed provider's fee schedule. (See page 27)

Families who elect to use providers who charge above the Regional Market Rate ceiling, or charge rates that are not "reasonable and necessary," or whose rates do not correspond with the family's certified need will be responsible to pay all charges above the RMR ceiling directly to the provider. This is called a co-payment. This would be in addition to paying their usual Family Fee, if applicable.



A Child Care Certificate will be mailed to the parent identifying the authorized days and hours based on the parent's certified need. If the parent's certified need is variable, days and hours of approved child care services will not be reflected, only the maximum authorized hours per week will be reflected on the certificate. The

certificate will identify the maximum reimbursable ceiling(s). (See page 29)

If reimbursement is incorrectly issued on behalf of a parent which results in an underpayment to a child care provider, the StanWORKs Child Care Program will take steps to correct the underpayment and issue a supplement to the provider.

If reimbursement is incorrectly issued on behalf of a parent which results in an overpayment to a child care provider, the StanWORKs Child Care Program will take steps to collect the overpayment from either the parent or the provider. Overpayments will be assessed and collected to cover the cost of services for the month or the portion of the month determined to be un-reimbursable.

Reimbursed days and/or hours claimed which are later determined to be fraudulent will be disallowed and assessed as an overpayment.

Fraud exists when a parent or provider:

- Knowingly, and with intent, makes a false statement or representation to obtain benefits, obtain a continuance or increase of benefits, or avoid a reduction of benefits
- Knowingly, and with intent, fails to disclose a fact, which if disclosed could result in denial, reduction, or discontinuance of benefits
- Accepts benefits knowing he/she is not entitled to, or accepts any amount of benefits knowing it is greater than he/she is entitled to

HOW A RATE CEILING/CATEGORY IS DETERMINED

The appropriate rate ceiling and category used to calculate allowable reimbursement for child care services is selected based on the parent's certified need for child care services, the age of the child, and the type of provider.

Reimbursement Rate Categories:

- Less than six (6) hours per day:
The rate category can be **Hourly**
- Six (6) hours or more per day:
The rate category can be **Daily**

- Less than twenty five (25) hours per week:
The rate category can be **Part-Time Weekly**
- Twenty five (25) hours or more per week:
The rate category can be **Full-Time Weekly**
- Less than twenty five (25) hours per week every week of the month:
The rate category can be **Part-Time Monthly**
- Twenty five (25) hours or more per week every week of the month:
The rate category can be **Full-Time Monthly**

Back-up providers whether licensed or license-exempt, are eligible for reimbursement only on days/hours child care services is provided, up to 10 days per fiscal year.

RATE ADJUSTMENTS

Licensed Provider Premium Rates for Evening and Weekend Care:

When the certified need for care is between 6:00 pm and 6:00 am, and/or weekends and the licensed provider provides care during those hours, the Regional Market Rate ceiling for the applicable rate category (except for hourly) may be adjusted for premium hours calculation.

Note: The StanWORKs Child Care Program will reimburse the lesser of the adjusted Regional Market Rate ceiling or the rate the provider charges.

Provider Premium Rates for Children with Exceptional Needs:

If a provider verifies additional child care and developmental services are being provided because of a child's exceptional needs, and those services and/or accommodations results in an on-going financial impact on the provider, and the parent submits required documentation verifying the child has exceptional needs, the appropriate Exceptional Needs Multiplier will be applied to the Regional Market Rate Ceiling. The StanWORKs Child Care Program will reimburse the lesser of the adjusted Regional Market Rate ceiling or the rate the provider charges.

CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES

Eligible families are enrolled in the StanWORKs Child Care Program according to their Need for child care services, and receive Child Care Certificate(s) indicating the maximum reimbursement ceiling(s) and each child's certified days and hours of child care, except for variable schedules. Actual and allowable reimbursement amount(s) may be lesser.

The StanWORKs Child Care Program may reimburse for services provided up to 30 days prior to a request for Stage 1 Child Care (only).

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

A completed Child Care Request for Reimbursement form, validated by the parent/guardian and the provider establishes:

1. A reliable record of which adult is supervising and responsible for the child regarding health, safety, and liability issues
2. An auditable invoice for determining reimbursable amounts
3. The days and hours of care, thus ensuring that utilization of care corresponds to the certified Need for care.

A correctly completed Request for Reimbursement form must be submitted to the StanWORKs Child Care Program by the fifth (5th) of the month following the month of service. Request for Reimbursement forms are processed on a flow basis from the date they are received by the agency. Reimbursement is issued within 21 calendar days from receipt of a complete and correct Request for Reimbursement form. Incomplete, incorrect and/or unsigned forms will cause requests for reimbursement to be either denied or delayed. Correct processing date is the date we receive final information necessary to process the request for reimbursement. For example, if a request for reimbursement is received on the 5th but the Family Fee receipt is not received until the 12th, the request for reimbursement will be processed and reimbursement issued within 21 days from the date the Family Fee receipt was received.

Things to remember when completing the Request for Reimbursement form:

1. One Request for Reimbursement form must be completed for each child each month. If a child has more than one provider, each provider must complete a separate form.
2. The in and out portion of the form must be completed on a daily basis. The parent or authorized person must record the actual in and out time for each child as the child is checked in and checked out. The provider cannot complete the in and out portion for the parent. If children are checked in before school, they should be checked out during school hours and checked back into care, if applicable, after school is over.
3. Exact times must be used when completing the in and out portion. Incorrect completion is the most common error for reimbursement delays and denials.



- Note: If you have any questions on how to correctly complete the Request for Reimbursement form, please call your Child Care case manager.
4. Children are expected to be in care for their certified hours and days. Children not receiving care should not be checked in. If a child is absent, the specific reason must be documented on the "Absence Reason" column of the form by the parent, not the provider. (See page 31)
 5. While a child is attending school, whether public, private, or home school, the hours will not be reimbursed for child care services.
 6. Parents must provide the Child Care case manager their activity/work schedule and/or their child's school schedule during the application and recertification process. The family is not eligible for child care services if the parent(s) is absent from the home for 24 hours/day or more including due to training/work. A child care provider cannot be reimbursed whenever a child is in care 24 or more hours.
 7. The Request for Reimbursement form must be signed in ink by the parent and the provider at the end of each month (make sure the signature dates on the front and back of the form are on or after the last date child care was provided for which reimbursement is requested). The correctly completed form must be submitted to the StanWORKs Child Care Program by the fifth (5th) of the month following the month of service. A Request for Reimbursement

form is invalid if received before all childcare services are provided for the month, and if received after 60 days from the last day of service. A Request for Reimbursement form received 60 days after the last day of service cannot be processed for reimbursement and becomes the parent's responsibility to pay.

8. When a family is required to pay a Family Fee, a pre-numbered receipt signed by the provider must accompany the request for reimbursement. The Family Fee receipt must include the amount paid by the parent to the provider, the date of payment, the period of service provided, the payment rate, and the provider's full signature. Pre-numbered receipt packets can be provided by the StanWORKs Child Care Program. If the parent has a repayment agreement with the provider for past overdue Family Fees, the amount paid toward the repayment of delinquent Family Fees must also be stated on the current Family Fee Receipt.

ABSENCE POLICY

If a child does not attend child care, the parent must report the reason for the absence on the child's Request for Reimbursement form. Providers are not to fill out the absence reason. When a family has not been in communication with the provider for seven consecutive calendar days, and has not notified the provider of the child(ren)'s absence reason, the provider is required to notify the StanWORKs Child Care Program.

License-Exempt Care:

License-exempt providers will only be reimbursed for actual hours the child attended child care. There is no reimbursement for absences to license-exempt providers.

Licensed Care:

Contracts between providers and parents often require payment for child care absences. The StanWORKs Child Care Program reimburses licensed providers for the following excused absences:

1. Illness or quarantine of the child or parent, including medical appointments. Verification may be required.
2. Temporary family emergency (any unscheduled absence due to death, accident or hospitalization of a family member, etc.). Situations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Verification may be required.

3. Court-ordered visitation, two weeks or less. The parent must provide a copy of the court order specifying visitation requirements in advance. Longer court-ordered visitation periods will not be reimbursed.

4. Best Interest Days.

10 days per fiscal year may be reimbursed as Best Interest Days. Best Interest Days are days which children spend with a parent or other relative that is in the best interest of the child.

Best interest days are determined by the Child Care case manager and the parent. It is not determined by the child care provider.

Reminder: The parent must note in the "Absence Reason" column of the Request for Reimbursement form the specific reason for an absence before that day can be considered for reimbursement to a licensed provider.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY

If a child does not attend their approved certified days/hours for licensed child care for any reason that is not listed above as an excused absence, the absent day will be considered an unexcused absence and is not reimbursable. Failure to give notice is an unexcused absence.

ALTERNATE PROVIDER

If the family must choose an alternate provider due to the child's illness or when the regular provider is not open to provide services, a maximum of 10 days per fiscal year may be reimbursed to an alternate provider.

A licensed provider who provides services to a family as an alternate provider will only be reimbursed for actual hours of child care.

NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS

Ten (10) Provider Non-Operational (Holiday/Vacation) days will be reimbursed per child, per fiscal year, to the regular provider when that provider is closed, as long as the regular provider charges these days to all parents, subsidized and private pay. These charges must be included in the parent-provider contract.

Under no circumstance will two or more providers be reimbursed for overlapping days and times of care with the exception of Alternate Providers.

REIMBURSEMENT TO PROVIDERS

Child Care reimbursement will be made following the:



1. Approval of the child care application
2. Approval of the provider by the parent and the StanWORKs Child Care Program
3. Return of signed and dated Child Care Certificate(s)
4. Receipt of a complete and correct Request for Reimbursement form with corresponding Family Fee receipt (if applicable)
5. Return of the signed and dated Child Care Policy and Procedure Statement for Parents and Providers
6. Completion of the Procedure Acknowledgment for Completing Request for Reimbursement form (if applicable)
7. Return of the signed and dated Provider Certification Regarding Rates Charged to Subsidized Families form
8. Return of the signed and dated Parent/Responsible Adult Responsibility to Pay Provider form
9. Return of the signed and dated Rights and Responsibilities for Providers form
10. Return of the signed and dated Application Part 2 form

The parent(s) must meet Eligibility and Need requirements, as applicable to be eligible for child care subsidy.

Reimbursements are always made after the care has been provided and cover certified or actual hours of need, including reimbursable absences.

Reimbursements made directly to providers that exceed \$600.00 per year will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service at the end of each calendar year. A 1099 form will be sent directly to the provider.

*If you have any questions regarding the information in this booklet, call your Child Care **case manager** or the Child Care Information Line at (209) 558-2332.*



StanWORKs Child Care Program
Community Services Agency – CSA

Location:
251 E. Hackett Road
Modesto, CA 95358-9415

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 42
Modesto, CA 95353-0042

Child Care Information Line: (209) 558-2332
Child Care Fax Line: (209) 558-3730



**PARENT(S)
CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT**

My signature below indicates I understand that it is my responsibility to review the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook in its entirety. I understand that all StanWORKs Child Care Programs are administered according to the policies and procedures stated in the Handbook.

Reimbursement cannot be processed until this form is signed and dated, and returned to the StanWORKs Child Care Program.

I can access the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook online at www.stancounty.com or request that a hardcopy be sent/given to me.

Please check one below:

- I will access the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook online.
- Please send/give me a hardcopy of the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook.

PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT NAME

2ND PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT NAME

PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT SIGNATURE

2ND PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT SIGNATURE

DATE

DATE

CASE NUMBER

CASE MANAGER





COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY

Christine Huber, MSW
DIRECTOR

PROVIDER CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT

My signature below indicates I understand that it is my responsibility to review the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook in its entirety. I understand that all StanWORKs Child Care Programs are administered according to the policies and procedures stated in the Handbook.

Reimbursement cannot be processed until this form is signed and dated, and returned to the StanWORKs Child Care Program.

I can access the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook online at www.stancounty.com or request that a hardcopy be sent/given to me.

Please check one below:

- I will access the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook online.
- Please send/give me a hardcopy of the StanWORKs Child Care Parent and Provider Handbook.

PROVIDER NAME

FACILITY NAME (IF APPLICABLE)

PROVIDER SIGNATURE

DATE

CASE NUMBER

CASE MANAGER



251 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358
P.O. Box 42, Modesto, CA 95353-0042
Phone: 209.558.2500 Fax: 209.558.2558
csa-stanislaus.com

