

<b>Name of policy</b>	Childcare Subsidy (CCS) Management Policy & Procedure
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the accuracy and secure record-keeping of information relating to childcare enrolments, attendance, and CCS payments by detailing the procedures relating to roles in the organisation, background checks, access to third party software, training, compliance and reporting.
<b>Rationale</b>	An approved provider under Family Assistance Law must accept the legal responsibilities associated with operating a child care service (or services) and passing fee reductions on to eligible parents (or guardians) if child care payments are paid to it by the Commonwealth for those parents' benefit. All administrative processes in place in ECKA Services must support the integrity of data supplied to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.
<b>Relevant policies &amp; legislation</b>	<b>Child Care Subsidy (CCS):</b> Family Assistance Law and Childcare payments. Details are available at: <a href="https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy">https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy</a> or telephone the FAO on 136 150. Education fact sheets <a href="https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/payments-families">https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/payments-families</a> Family assistance law <a href="https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-legislation">https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-legislation</a> ECKA fee Policy
<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Child Care Subsidy:</b> Child Care Subsidy is the regular payment that assists eligible families with the costs of child care. Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. It will reduce the fees that a family pays a child care provider for the care of their child.
<b>Authorisation</b>	Authorised by the Approved Provider on the 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
<b>Review</b>	Reviewed January 2020, January 2023 Next Review date: November 2025

## Policy

ECKA will manage CCS payments and any data relating to childcare service management securely and accurately to ensure compliance with Australian Government Department of Education and Training expectations.

## Responsible Parties

ECKA's organisation structure consists of:

- The ECKA Board (Approved Provider)
- Executive/Management staff consisting of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Operations Manager (OM), Finance Supervisor (FS)
- Administration Staff with designated roles to manage childcare bookings and scheduling and data submission through the childcare management software,
- Centre Coordination staff with designated roles to manage enrolments and electronic sign in sign out systems on site,

**Persons with management or control of the approved provider:** These are people who participate directly or indirectly in the decision making or management of childcare services operated by the Approved Provider. This refers to Board Members and ECKA Executive/Management Staff (CEO, OM, FS)

These people may:

- change bank account details and other information regarding the childcare service
- add and remove other persons, such as persons responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service from the Child Care Subsidy System
- authorise data submission transactions to the Child Care Subsidy System
- notify the Department of Education and Training of the cessation of operations
- submit an application to add or remove a service.

## **Person or persons responsible for the day-to-day operation of the childcare service:**

Nominated by the persons with management or control of the approved provider, are Centre Coordination staff and Administration Staff with designated roles and functions related to the childcare subsidy.

These people may:

- add and remove persons responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service
- authorise data submission transactions to the Child Care Subsidy System
- manage enrolments, scheduling of hours and complying written agreements
- notify the Department of Education and Training of changes in respect of the service for which they are responsible, excluding bank account details and cessation of operations

The ECKA Board and Staff will adhere to the following procedures and respond in a timely manner to a breach of this policy and procedure.

## **Procedures**

ECKA uses Hub works software to manage all administrative systems pertaining to the Childcare Services and the Child Care Subsidy system, including recording attendance and absences, provide Statements of Entitlement, invoices and receipts.

**Background Checks:** The CEO and Operations Manager will ensure any person with management or control of the provider and any person responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service, are fit and proper persons to be involved in the administration of Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy and have completed or provided Police Checks (no more than 6 months old), current Working with Children Checks, Personal name search, Bankruptcy search, Banned and disqualified search.

Employees are provided access to the third party soft-ware after obtaining a satisfactory National Police Check and training.

- **Access to software and Roles:**
  - The CEO, Operations Manager and Finance Supervisor will have secure access to third party software (Hubworks) to oversee all functions, including the enrolment process (arrangement for care of a child, submission of enrolment notice, ceasing enrolment) and submission of weekly session reports to Centrelink/DHS
  - the Finance Supervisor and authorised Administration staff will have secure access to the financial components of the third-party software to complete Statement of Entitlement and invoices family for fees, less reduction amounts
  - Childcare Coordination Staff will have access to enrolment and attendance information for verification purposes to ensure accuracy of the session reports.
  - The Coordination staff at each childcare service will identify children who require extra support through Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).
  - parents and guardians may be given secure access to third party software for the purposes of signing children in/out in real time, booking sessions and making payments but only for their listed children.
- **Staff Induction and Training:**

- Relevant training and induction (webinars) will be provided for each party (CEO, Operations Manager, Administration Staff and Childcare Coordination Staff, Finance Supervisor and parents) using the third-party software by Hubworks.
- All staff will be provided with a copy of the Childcare Handbook,
- All staff will be given a position description outlining their role in the management of the childcare subsidy, including training and support to fulfil the role and tasks within the position description.
- All staff will be provided training as to their responsibilities under Family Assistance Law.
- Staff will be provided ongoing training and support and informed of any changes to the family assistance law or childcare subsidy.

- **Data Quality:**

Random data checks are carried out a minimum of twice per month by persons with management and control (Board Members, CEO, OM or FS) through the internal audit checking process to ensure accuracy of data records and reports. Session reports must include information as outlined in the Child Care Provider Handbook.

Internal Audit checking process Includes:

- Random data checks carried out by persons with management and control a minimum of twice per month including checks on CWA's, schedules, sessions reports, statements of entitlement and fees.
- Annual internal audit check by Finance and Audit committee with report to the Board.
- Finance and Audit Committee complete the internal audit process once per year and external audit once per year. The CEO and Finance Supervisor provide to the Committee members copies of all Complying Written Agreements, a copy weekly schedules of all children to compare CWA's, as well as reconciliations of individual parent accounts with CCS payments received and Bank Statements. If an issue is identified an investigation will be triggered, advice sought if necessary and reporting of any substantiated breach to appropriate authority. Depending on the situation the staff discipline procedures may have to be implemented.
- Board report is provided once per year following the internal audit process and will describe the process undertaken by the finance committee as well as findings or recommendations. If the finance committee identified any discrepancies the Board would be provided with additional information as to findings of the investigation process (as above)

- **Record keeping and notifications:**

We will keep and maintain the following records:

- complaints relating to compliance with the Family Assistance Law
- record of attendance for each child for whom care is provided (regardless of eligibility for Child Care Subsidy and/or Additional Child Care Subsidy, including records of any absences from care)
- statements or documents demonstrating that Additional absence days in excess of the initial 42 absence days meet the criteria
- copies of invoices and receipts issued in relation to the payment of child care fees
- copies of all Statements of Entitlement issued and any statements issued to advise of a change of entitlement.
- any notice given to a state or territory body about a child at risk of abuse or neglect
- copies of the evidence and information provided with an application for approval about persons with management or control of a provider and persons responsible for the day-to-day operation of a service
- any evidence or information produced to obtain police checks and working with children checks for personnel and to support any statements about these checks in an application for provider or service approval.
- all Required background checks for all specified personnel.
- Records will be kept for seven years.

To see the full list of record keeping view <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook/record-keeping>

- **Notifications:**

Persons with management or control of the service will be responsible to ensure all notifications are submitted to the Department of Education within the timeframes specified (as set out in the Childcare Handbook).

Notifications will be made through the third-party software (Hubworks).

Notifications include:

- Any change to fee information- within 14 days
- Any change to operating hours- within 14 days
- Full day vacancies- Friday weekly
- Change of physical or postal address within 30 days
- Ceasing to operate- within 14 days
- Change of name of the provider- within 7 days
- Change of contact details- within 7 days
- Any new person with management or control- within 7 days
- Change of name or details for any persons with management or control- within 7 days.

To see the full list view <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook/notifications>

- **Enrolment Process:**

Parents complete a bookings form with the days and hours they are seeking. Admin staff confirm with the family if the days and times are available and advise the parent to commence registration through MyGov. The enrolment is set up in the third-party software and a complying written agreement is generated from the software. Parents sign the CWA which is then filed in the child's record and an enrolment notice is generated. If a family asks to vary/change care arrangements, a new CWA is generated from the third-party software, schedules are altered and parents sign the new CWA.

- **Additional Childcare Subsidy (ACCS)**

Applications for Additional Childcare Subsidy (child wellbeing) are submitted for the first 6 weeks through the third-party software, if a child is identified who meet the at-risk criteria. Subsequent applications for the same child are submitted after consultation with relevant persons/agencies or authorities with the appropriate information and letters of support provided. Staff continue to liaise with the parent/guardian and relevant agencies to assess if the child requires continued support through Additional Childcare subsidy.

- **Statement of Entitlement:**

Statements of entitlement are issued fortnightly after the care has been provided. These are issued through the third-party software by email or mail depending on the parent's preference.

## Breach

In the case of a breach of this policy and procedure, the following process will be followed:

- All information is to be documented and stored securely including details of the breach, name of parties involved, time and date of breach.
- Details of the breach to be discussed with relevant parties and investigated by ECKA Management staff.
- ECKA Management staff will make recommendations to prevent a similar breach and to initiate disciplinary procedures.

## Complaints

If parents, carers, volunteers or employees have a complaints or concerns about practices relating to the administration of subsidies, they are advised to contact

The Department of Education and Training provides a Child Care Tip-off line:

Phone: 1800 664 231

Email: [tipoffline@education.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@education.gov.au).