



County of Santa Cruz

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Employment & Benefit Services Division
Irma Marquez, Director

Child Care Provider Memo

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance on child care payment updates regarding timely payments to providers, parent signature requirements, part-time and full-time care definitions, and payment discrepancies. These updates are effective March 1st, 2024.

- 1. Timely Payments to Providers:** In Santa Cruz County, child care providers will submit the attendance form by the 5th calendar day of the month following the month in which care was received. The County fiscal department will provide reimbursement within 21 calendar days of the submission of a complete DC 10A Child Care Reimbursement Claim form.
 - If the County is unable to make payment within 21 calendar days due to extenuating circumstances, the impacted provider will be notified within a reasonable timeframe of when the County becomes aware of the circumstance causing the delay of reimbursement payment. Extenuating circumstances may include an emergency or payment system malfunction.
 - If a provider submits a DC 10A for multiple children, and not all individual records or invoices within the submission include adequate information to provide a payment, payments will not be withheld for those records or invoices that do include adequate information to provide a payment.
- 2. Parent Signature Requirements:** The DC 10A can be processed without a parent's signature when all of the following conditions apply:
 - The parent has not communicated with the provider for a minimum of seven consecutive days.
 - The provider has notified the County Child Care Specialist of the parent's lack of communication.
 - The County has documented the provider's unsuccessful attempts to collect a signature.
- 3. Part-Time and Full-Time Care:** Part-time and full-time care are defined as follows:
 - "Part-time care" for reimbursement purposes, is defined as care certified for a child for fewer than 25 hours per week.
 - "Full-time care" is defined as care certified for a child for 25 or more hours per week.

4. **Payment Discrepancies:** Overpayments that are the responsibility of the provider.
 - Providers are responsible for overpayments resulting from the actions of the participant (Parent did not have good cause for failure to comply).
 - In other instances when a childcare provider is paid for childcare services that were not provided, or are paid more than regulations allow, the childcare provider is responsible for the overpayment. Examples would include billing mistakes or payment errors.
 - When the overpayment is identified, HSD Fiscal Staff will contact providers directly to arrange repayment and obtain written consent to initiate recovery.
 - A timeframe for recoupment will be agreed upon based on provider's ability to repay.
 - Repayments for childcare overpayments will be processed within 24 hours of receipt.
 - Repayments will be recorded and tracked by HSD Fiscal.
5. If an underpayment is identified, Fiscal will make a supplemental payment to the provider as soon as made aware of the finding.

If you have questions regarding this memo, please contact the County Child Care Specialist (call: 831-763-8561 or email: HSDCWES.Childcare@santacruzcountyca.gov).