



▶ Information for families using child care

Fact Sheet 10

What is the Child Care Rebate (CCR)?

The CCR is a payment from the Australian Government that helps working families with the cost of child care. If you are using approved child care for work, training or study-related reasons the Government will provide you with 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket child care costs, up to the annual cap. From 1 July 2010 the CCR annual cap will be \$7,500 per child per year, subject to the passage of legislation.

From July 2011 you have the option to receive your CCR paid fortnightly, either directly to your bank account, or through your child care service provider as a fee reduction. You still have the option of having your CCR paid quarterly or annually as a lump sum directly to your bank account.

Who can get the CCR?

There are certain requirements you must meet to get the CCR. You must have:

- used approved child care
- been eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) (entitled at a rate of zero or more)*
- passed the work, training, study test (for the purposes of the rebate).

***Note: There is no income test for the CCR. If you are eligible for CCB but your CCB entitlement is zero due to income, you may still be eligible for the CCR.**

What is the work, training, study test?

To get the CCR, both you and your partner (if you have one) must have had work, training or study-related commitments at some time during a week or have an exemption. No minimum number of hours is required.

For more information about this test, contact the Family Assistance Office by visiting www.familyassist.gov.au or calling 13 61 50.

What is approved care?

Approved care covers child care services approved by the Government because they meet certain quality standards and operating requirements. Services include:

- Long Day Care
- Family Day Care
- Outside School Hours Care (including before and after school and during school holidays)
- Occasional Care
- In Home Care.

To find out if your child care service is approved, call the Child Care Access Hotline on 1800 670 305 or search the www.mychild.gov.au website.

It is important to note that you cannot get the CCR for registered care.

How much CCR can I get?

From July 2011 for the 2011–12 financial year, if you meet the eligibility criteria you can get 50 per cent of your out-of-pocket child care expenses up to the annual cap. From 1 July 2010 the CCR annual cap will be \$7,500 per child per year, subject to the passage of legislation.

Out-of-pocket expenses mean the amount you pay for child care after your CCB and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care fee assistance (JETCCFA) amounts are taken out. For more information on CCB and JETCCFA please see the specific fact sheet on the web site at www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Resources.

Payment process to receive CCR

There are four ways to receive your CCR:

1. Direct to your approved child care service paid fortnightly
2. Direct to your bank account paid fortnightly
3. Quarterly payment to your bank account
4. Annual payment to your bank account

When you choose a payment option, this option will be applied for the entire 2011-2012 financial year.

Fortnightly payments

From July 2011, the timing of the fortnightly payment depends on how frequently your child care service provider submits your child care attendance records. For some families this will mean a fortnightly payment but for others it will actually be paid weekly.

Where you are receiving a higher than zero rate of CCB and you choose the CCR fortnightly payment option, the Family Assistance Office will withhold 15 per cent of the payment to ensure that you do not accumulate a debt or overpayment of CCB or CCR within a financial year. The balance of these funds withheld will be reconciled at the end of the financial year (when your tax returns have been lodged and all your child care attendance information has been received). Any outstanding amounts will be paid as a direct payment to your bank account.

Where your CCB entitlement is zero you will receive your full 50 per cent CCR as a fortnightly payment up to the annual cap. As you do not receive CCB during the year, there is no risk of a debt after the end of the financial year reconciliation process.

If you want to receive your CCR as a fortnightly payment either directly to your bank account or through your child care service provider, you must claim CCB as reduced fees, even if you are eligible for CCB but your entitlement is zero due to income.

Quarterly Payments

Quarterly payments will be paid once the Family Assistance Office has received child care attendance details from your approved child care service/s. Quarterly payments will be paid to you automatically if you receive your CCB as reduced fees, at the zero rate, or more than the zero rate unless you nominate to receive fortnightly payments.

At the end of the financial year, the CCR will be reconciled against your actual income and adjusted for the financial year. Payment of the last quarter of the CCR will be “held” until CCB reconciliation occurs (when your tax returns have been lodged and all your child care attendance information has been received). This

will then be used in any adjustments as part of the reconciliation. The CCR entitlement is paid directly into your bank account by the Family Assistance Office.

If you want to receive your CCR as a quarterly payment directly to your bank account, you must claim CCB as reduced fees, even if you are eligible for CCB but your CCB entitlement is zero due to income.

Annual Payment

The CCR is based on your CCB entitlement. If you choose to claim CCB as a lump sum payment, you will not receive your CCR entitlement until the end of that year, once your CCB entitlement has been determined.

When can I get my quarterly payments?

The table below contains the CCR quarterly payment timelines for the 2011-2012 financial year.

Table 1: CCR quarterly periods and payment timelines for 2011-2012.

Quarter	Child Care Rebate Quarterly Periods	Child Care Rebate Payment Periods If parents have not received their payment within a week of the end of the relevant payment period below they may need to contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 6150
	2011-2012	2011-2012
One	4 July 2011—2 October 2011	19 October 2011—1 November 2011
Two	3 October 2011—1 January 2012	2 January 2012—31 January 2012
Three	2 January 2012—1 April 2012	18 April 2012—1 May 2012
Four	2 April 2012—1 July 2012	23 July 2012 onwards If tax returns have been lodged for the 2011-2012 financial year with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and attendance information is received from the parent's Child Care Service Provider.

What if my child is absent from child care?

CCB and CCR and if applicable JETCCFA can be paid in some situations if you are charged for child care when your child is absent.

You will get CCB and CCR for 42 absence days per child each financial year. These can be for any reason and will not require proof.

You can also get CCB and CCR for additional absence days above this for specific reasons only. There is no limit on these days but you may be required to provide documentation to support the absence. More information is available in Fact Sheet 9—Absences from child care—Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR).

You can also access your child's absence record on your online statement along with your child care attendance and CCB and CCR amounts paid statements. These are available on the Family Assistance Office website, under *Online Services/ Child Care/View child care details and payments*, at www.familyassist.gov.au.

What if I did not get CCB?

If you have now identified that you are eligible for CCB but have not received it, you can lodge a lump sum claim with the Family Assistance Office. You must do this within two years of the end of the financial year for which you are claiming. Once you have received your CCB entitlement, you are then eligible for the CCR if you used approved care and were working, training or studying or had an exemption.

If you were not eligible for CCB, you will not be able to get the CCR.

How can I get more information?

For further information on your eligibility for CCB and CCR please contact the Family Assistance Office:



access online services at www.familyassist.gov.au



call 13 61 50 between 8am and 8pm (local time) Monday to Friday



email through www.familyassist.gov.au



visit a Family Assistance Office (located in Medicare Offices and Centrelink Customer Service Centres).

Useful resources

For news and information on child care visit the mychild website available at www.mychild.gov.au

Centrelink/Family Assistance/Child Support/Child Care Estimator at www.familyassist.gov.au

Family Assistance, The What, Why and How booklet, available at www.familyassist.gov.au

Family Assistance Office Guide to Payments fact sheet, available at www.familyassist.gov.au

If you need to, you can also call:



Teletypewriter (TTY) 1800 810 586 (if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment).

You need a TTY phone to use this service.

13 12 02 if you need information in a language other than English.