



Changes to Child Care Subsidy Gap Fee Payments

Information on EFT Exceptions

From 1 July 2023, families using family day care will be required to pay the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) gap fee via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

What exceptions are available?

Exceptions are available in limited circumstances.

Exceptions will be available for:

- Individuals at risk of family or domestic violence
- Services experiencing exceptional circumstances.

The [person with management or control](#) (PMC) of a service provider must apply on behalf of the service and/or the individual seeking an exception. Exceptions will be re-assessed yearly to ensure that the individual or the service remains eligible.

What is the application process?

Individual exceptions

Service providers can apply for an individual exception at any time. To apply for an individual exception, services must complete the individual exception application form available on the Department's website [here](#).

When applying, service providers must provide supporting evidence that the individual meets the eligibility criteria of being at risk of family or domestic violence. Evidence may include:

- Letters or statements
- Referrals
- Case plans
- Certificate of determination for ACCS (child wellbeing)

Evidence must be from a suitable third-party organisation or professional such as:

- Early intervention and support programs and services
- State and territory child safety/protection agencies
- State and territory government and non-government organisations that are providers of relevant services
- Medical practitioners
- Welfare agency personnel and social workers
- Police officers

When a service provider is unable to obtain relevant evidence, a statutory declaration from the service provider outlining why they could not gather evidence may be considered.

Service exceptions

A service may be eligible for an exception if:

- The service is located in a remote or very remote area, and
- Experiences poor internet or phone coverage, or
- Has a significant number of families who have limited access to a financial institution, which poses a barrier to those families paying electronically.

The Department may consider granting an exception if a service experiences exceptional circumstances other than the circumstances above. If a service exception has been granted, this will enable a service to accept cash payments for all families attending the service.

The Department will contact service providers in remote or very remote areas directly to apply.

Service providers with existing exceptional circumstance should apply for a service level exception before **1 July 2023**. Should exceptional circumstances occur in the future, applications can be submitted after this date.

To apply for a service level exception, services must complete the application form for services on the Department's website [here](#).

What if families or individuals don't meet any of the exception criteria?

If families or individuals do not meet any of the exception criteria, they must pay the gap fee via EFT. However, if they are having difficulties with this, they can:

1. Look at alternate payment options such as using a prepaid debit card to make payments – these cards are a safe alternative to cash and do not require a bank account. These can be purchased at post offices, banks, retail stores or online.
2. Contact Services Australia – if families are experiencing financial hardship, they may be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS). ACCS offers additional financial assistance with the cost of approved child care. Families can learn more about the Additional Child Care Subsidy on the [Services Australia website](#) or ring 136 150.
3. Seek financial counselling – if families are experiencing financial difficulties they can speak with a financial counsellor who can provide advice and support to help them manage their finances and to find a solution that best suits. Families can learn more at the following websites:
 - [Commonwealth Financial Counselling](#)
 - [Financial Resilience program](#)

4. Speak with their financial institution – they may be able to provide assistance or offer alternative payment options. For example, they may be able to assist families in the setup of a direct debit or BPAY to the service or educator.

USEFUL RESOURCES:

- Click [here](#) to view the legislation for the Child Care Subsidy Amendment (Electronic Payment Exceptions and Other Measures).
- Visit [Family Day Care Australia](#) for more information on gap fee payments or get in touch with us at 1800 658 699 or enquiries@fdca.com.au
- To find out more about the changes to gap fee payments from July 2023 and learn more about the exceptions, [click here](#)
- More information is available at the Australian Government Department of Education [website](#)
- Support services for those experiencing domestic violence:
 - [1800RESPECT](#) – 1800 737 732
 - 1800 ELDERHelp line –1800 353 374
 - [Lifeline](#) –131 114
 - [MensLine Australia](#) – 1300 789 978
 - [Q Life](#) – 1800 184 527