

2026 Elimination of Child Care Subsidy Fees Webinar

Tuesday, August 25th

00:04

Jason Booth

Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us tonight. My name is Jason Booth with Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Division.

Tonight's webinar is Elimination of Child Care Subsidy Fees, and it will be presented by Jennifer Faulder, Executive Director, Policy and Planning.

Nneka Onyenekwu, Executive Director, Funding and Financial Assistance, and Brigitte A'Bear, Manager, Child Care Subsidy.

Following the formal presentation, we will have time for questions, which you're welcome to submit via the chat throughout tonight's presentation.

We will try to answer as many questions as we can, which will be read out by Jessica Brosch, Child Care Coordinator with ELCC.

00:46

Jason Booth

We will be documenting all the questions sent to ensure that even questions not answered live will be reviewed and considered and as a reminder, please limit your questions to the matter at hand.

And with that, I'll turn things over to Nneka for the land acknowledgement and to review tonight's agenda.

01:05

Nneka Onyenekwu

Thank you very much, Jason and welcome everyone.

We recognise that Manitoba is on Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe and Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininawak, and Nehethowuk peoples.

We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the homeland of the Red River Metis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration

02:05

Nneka Onyenekwu

So, I'll quickly run through our agenda for today.

Today's session is intended to provide an overview of the initiative, that is, to explain what is changing and outline how the changes will be implemented.

We'll start with a high-level overview of the initiative, and then review the specific program changes, including what they mean for our families and child care providers.

From there, we'll discuss the implementation approach and also touch on the anticipated impacts of the changes.

Following the presentation, we'll have time for questions, discussion, and any items that may require follow-up.

So, I would now like to pass the floor to Jennifer Folger.

02:53

Jennifer Faulder

Thank you, Nneka.

In, earlier this year, in March, Budget 2026 was released, and it included a commitment to make childcare free for families with low incomes and we have the language from the budget documents on the screen here.

For single parent and low-income families who are struggling to keep up with daily costs, we are going to eliminate childcare fees altogether so parents can save a little more for the future and focus on their training, education, and finding a good job.

Free childcare for the families who need it most will help us work toward ending poverty in Manitoba and improve outcomes for every child.

03:40

Jennifer Faulder

Today's webinar is going to walk through the implementation of this commitment that was made as part of the budget.

So, as stated in the budget documents, eliminating parent fees for families eligible for the child care Subsidy program. Reduces barriers to licensed childcare, enabling parents to pursue employment, education, or training while expanding access to high-quality early learning opportunities.

04:12

Jennifer Faulder

And just as a, you know, to be clear, and this will come up again, eliminating the parent fees for children under this child care Subsidy program is being supported by the department providing child care facilities with that money directly. So, there is no loss in revenue to any child care facility with this change.

04:38

Jennifer Faulder

And we do anticipate that, not only will there be no loss in revenue for the childcare facilities. We hope that these changes will actually make your life a bit easier, alleviating some of the administrative burden by eliminating the need for you to collect the additional payments from families in the child care Subsidy program.

Okay, and I will pass it back to Nneka.

05:05

Nneka Onyenekwu

Thank you, Jennifer.

So, I will now turn our attention to the charts that are on the screen before us.

05:14

Nneka Onyenekwu

So, these charts present, in a nutshell, the fee structure for the child care Subsidy program.

Above, we have a before or present picture, where for the average partially subsidized family, we would have the subsidized fee component, the non-subsidized fee, and the family contribution.

So, this will look a little different for a fully subsidized family, where we don't have any family contribution. There will be just the subsidized fee and non-subsidized fee.

So, at the core of these changes is the elimination of all parent fees for families eligible for the child care Subsidy program.

05:57

Nneka Onyenekwu

So that means that in our after picture here, we have just subsidized fees, so all of the childcare fees will be subsidized going forward.

So that means that families will either qualify for full subsidy or no subsidy at all

06:15

Nneka Onyenekwu

So, moving forward, facilities will no longer collect apparent fee from eligible families. So, I'd like to highlight one exception to this rule and that relates to absences that exceed the family's allowable absent days under the program.

In those cases, facilities may continue to charge families for fees not covered by the subsidy program, and that will be equivalent to \$10 a day for regular hours of care, that is, 4 to 10 hours.

06:47

Nneka Onyenekwu

Though it's also important to note that the application process for the child care Subsidy program is not changing.

That means families will continue to apply for subsidy in the same way as they do presently. So, the Subsidy assessment process is not changing, and eligibility will continue to be determined using the existing program requirements and income-based assessment methodology, with the same family circumstances, composition, and other factors taken into consideration.

07:19

Nneka Onyenekwu

These changes focus on improving affordability for eligible families while maintaining the existing program framework and application processes.

So, I would now like to pass the floor to Brigitte, our in-house expert, to explain how the department is implementing these changes.

07:38

Brigitte A'Bear

Thank you, Nneka.

So, part of the implementation is the... well, the first part is the non-subsidized fees that were previously billed to your subsidized families will now be covered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning as an additional payment to the facilities, this will be done through the actual facility attendance report that you would submit at the end of every 28 days for your billing period.

08:17

Brigitte A'Bear

The additional payment will be calculated based off your facility of tenant's report that is submitted.

And it will include... it will be... the information of the payment will be included in your facility payment summary.

The department will also waive the family contribution amounts for families currently receiving partial subsidy thereby, excuse me, issuing full subsidy for all families under the program.

08:45

Brigitte A'Bear

As mentioned by Nneka previously, the only exception here is the families will still be billed by the facility for any absent days not covered by the program.

So, there is no change in terms of if someone who is subsidized has exceeded their absent days.

09:02

Brigitte A'Bear

You would still be billing that family. You can continue to collect up to the maximum daily fee for the absent days that are not eligible for Subsidy payments.

And these program changes take effect in the billing period beginning September 13th, 2026.

09:24

Brigitte A'Bear

So here you will see... have a... you get a quick peek of what our new approval letter will be looking like.

So, in the past, it's spoken to the cost of care of \$160.

On your approval letter for the family and for the facilities, your... the approval letter will state the total cost of care and the children's names, and at the top, the first paragraph is stating that this family is approved for subsidy, and the full payment will be made on behalf of the family to the facility directly. The full payment listed on that approval letter.

10:01

Brigitte A'Bear

The second letter to your right is the backup... a pre-approval letter that was sent out in the circular that was sent to the sector on August 10th, 2026.

If you were able to register for this webinar, you have access to that letter, because it's in that initial email you were sent, and it's the third link to press, that will get you to that pre-approval letter.

10:28

Brigitte A'Bear

The pre-approval letter just... it's... it's written on behalf of our ADM, and they are explaining to you, because as most of you probably are used to the subsidy program saying, you need to bill full fees, or you need to bill according to the approval letter until you have a new approval letter.

10:45

Brigitte A'Bear

So, this letter is stating that, please take this letter. As your confirmation that you can if you are billing ahead of time, that you can bill zero fees for any of your families that are currently subsidized past September 13th.

Just in case we're not able to get all those approval letters re-sent out.

11:10

Brigitte A'Bear

So, the impact that we're seeing...

We anticipate that these changes may increase participation in our Child Care Subsidy Program. Particularly as licensed childcare spaces continue to expand across Manitoba and more families seek out support with the financial barrier of the parent fees.

And ultimately, these changes will put more money back into the pockets of Manitoba families.

11:39

Brigitte A'Bear

Families currently receiving full childcare subsidy, or who are considered fully subsidized are expected to save an average of up to \$520 per year, with the payment of with them no longer having to pay that non-subsidized daily fee.

11:55

Brigitte A'Bear

And families who are currently receiving partial subsidies will see even greater savings, with average annual savings ranging from approximately \$520 all the way up to \$2,600, depending on their circumstances.

12:10

Brigitte A'Bear

These changes will also benefit child care providers by reducing that administrative burden.

Because facilities will no longer be required to collect these family contributions or non-subsidized parent fees.

As these payments, Will be paid directly by the department.

12:30

Brigitte A'Bear

This will simplify invoicing and payment administration while providing more stable and predictable revenue, allowing facilities to spend less time managing fee collection from subsidized parents and more time supporting children and families.

12:44

Brigitte A'Bear

Just one quick example with this, and if you have any children who are under guardianship of a CFS agency, you will no longer have to chase after these agencies for that monthly non-subsidized fee, because we will be paying that on behalf of that child now.

13:07

Brigitte A'Bear

So, as we mentioned, the policy of the allowable absent days still applies.

So, we will be continuing to pay absent days as long as they have their absent days allocated to them remaining, as long as their allowable absent days are remaining.

However, if they, at the point that they exceed the allowable absent days. The facility will need to be billing the families for the absent days that were not paid.

Please note, like before, like right now, it will continue that we will still continue to pay those attended days, but if it's any absent day after they've exceeded it, you will continue to bill the parents for that fee.

14:02

Brigitte A'Bear

The other question that we find that we get a lot is, do families already receiving subsidized childcare need to reapply?

No, they do not.

Applicants who have already been approved for child care Subsidy or have recently applied, and not yet received a response, do not need to take any action.

The child care Subsidy unit will be Reassessing all approvals and adjust them to show the new initiative, and facilities and families will get new approval letters.

14:43

Brigitte A'Bear

If a child exceeds the maximum allowable absent days, going back to that.

Like we stated, we will not cover the cost of childcare. You will still see these warnings and exceptions and see the number of days being paid for this subsidized child on your summary. Your facility payment summary.

So, you will still be aware when they're close to being, out of absent days for you to be able to manage your billing for that, or you can always wait till the Subsidy department has processed and finalized your payment, and you can see what we did not pay based on the number of absent days available to that child.

15:27

Brigitte A'Bear

The other question is, do families already receiving subsidized Childcare need to reapply. As I stated, they do not, so please do not have the parent reapply, or the guardian reapply. They will get new approval letters, as you will, and in the meantime, you have that pre-approval letter that was found in that circular.

15:51

Brigitte A'Bear

There is no changes being made to the child care Subsidy program eligibility.

So, note that we are continuing to approve based on the net household income, family composition, the ages, number of children, the reason for needing childcare.

They will be continuing to be assessed based on those unique circumstances of each family.

16:17

Brigitte A'Bear

Applicants should also be encouraged to use our Child Care Subsidy Estimator tool to determine if they may be eligible.

That Subsidy estimator also will be updated to reflect the new initiative as of September 13, 2026.

16:37

Brigitte A'Bear

You can... the applicants can apply online at our website, or they can request a paper application from our branch, either by email or phone, which we will have that information available shortly.

16:53

Brigitte A'Bear

If you start getting questions from parents at this time or once the news release goes out, I believe the news release is early... set for early September.

Prior to the September 13th launch date, anyways.

If parents start... once that news release goes out, especially, if parents start to ask you questions. You can assure them that there's been no changes to any eligibility criteria and you can also let them know that if they have any more questions, they can reach out to the Subsidy department, or you can refer to the circular, the FAQs.

And that pre-approval letter for further details and key messaging.

17:39

Brigitte A'Bear

Any additional questions that you have after today's webinar can be posed to our subsidy team.

The two ways to contact us, actually three ways, you can contact us at our email, CDC subsidy at gov.md.ca.

This is an intake email; it is monitored throughout the day.

You can also contact our intake line at 204-945-8195. That is our live phone line, and it is answered in order of receipt.

18:12

Brigitte A'Bear

You can also contact our Early Learning and Child Care General Inquiries line, or email at CDC info at gov.mb.ca, or at 204-945-0776.

And we always encourage our sector partners to visit our website at [www.manitoba.ca slash childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/slash/childcare).

18:40

Nneka Onyenekwu

Thank you very much, Bridget, for working us through the mechanics of these important changes.

I would now like to open the floor to any questions from those of us who have joined us on the call today.

18:54

Jessica Brosch

Thank you. We do have a few questions. One is from, Martha.

What will happen to the \$2 center fee?

19:05

Brigitte A'Bear

So that \$2 non-subsidized fee will be paid out in the addition... under the additional payments section. It will be the total dollar value of each subsidized child that attended during that period. And it will also pay out the non-subsidized fee based on what we're able to pay them for subsidies.

So, in a case where you have a child who has run out of absent days, and they were absent for 5 of those days, we will continue to pay those 15 attended days, but then the non-subsidized fee payment will reflect the 15 days that we were able to pay, and not the full 20.

19:51

Brigitte A'Bear

Also, to keep in mind, you do still get that reduced parent fee revenue grant payment for all days, regardless if that subsidized child has exceeded absent days, because that is a separate parent fee.

20:07

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

We have a question from Linda, asking if the funding for this is coming from the province or federal government.

20:16

Jennifer Faulder

Yep, so, this initiative to enhance the childcare Subsidy program is cost shared between the province and the federal government under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

20:33

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

Bonnie's asking if they will still have to bill the parents at \$0.

20:39

Jennifer Faulder

Yes. So, effective September 13th.

Any child who is enrolled, under the child care Subsidy program, that family cannot be charged any fees by the facility because we will be providing full subsidy for those children.

So, effective September 13th.

Please ensure you are not collecting any parent fees moving forward for children who are included in the child care Subsidy program. If you have already collected fees for September 13th or later, or you are intending to bill, and you do collect fees, you will be required to reimburse the parents for that amount.

21:33

Jessica Brosch

Thank you. We have another question from Marth. If they have no children receiving subsidy in their care at this time.

Do they continue to bill everybody the \$10 per day? Correct.

21:47

Brigitte A'Bear

So again, this only applies to any approved subsidy family or subsidized child. For your families who are not subsidized, and you do not hold an approval for them for subsidy.

Those families should be continued to be billed the \$10 a day.

22:08

Jessica Brosch

Okay, we have a question from Cheryl. It's asking, will the current eligibility rates for a family to receive subsidy change?

22:18

Brigitte A'Bear

I think Cheryl was maybe speaking to the thresholds?

There is no change in any of that. Nothing is being changed in terms of the eligibility process or the threshold process. So, again, if someone had just recently applied, and they were found to be not eligible. And they still currently have the same job, same pay. If they were to reapply again, they... because of this new initiative, they still will be ineligible for subsidy, because they... they still do not qualify income-wise.

So, nothing has been increased to scope more people in at this point.

22:58

Jennifer Faulder

However, if someone is partially subsidized. And has a family... a family contribution that goes up to, say, \$7 a day.

They are... they will continue to be eligible, assuming that their circumstances have not changed but they will now receive full subsidy and will no longer have a family contribution.

23:26

Jessica Brosch

Great, thank you.

We have a question from Choi.

How do fully subsidized parents save \$520? Can you explain how that was calculated?

23:38

Nneka Onyenekwu

Okay, so, the \$520, is based on the assumption of 260 billable days in a year and \$2 a day which is the currently non-subsidized fee.

So that will be over the 13 billing periods that exist in a year. So, at \$2 a day. We have \$40 a billing period and \$520 a year.

24:13

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

We do have a few other questions. So, is this payment coming as a lump sum, or being itemized per child?

24:22

Brigitte A'Bear

So, on the facility payment summary, the children will continue... the subsidized children payments will be continued to be listed in the normal space. You will see the payment for the subsidy portion of it as 160.

Then you will see, under the additional payment element. You will see there's additional payment element that has a few other different elements within, and there's one that's called the Daily Payment of Additional Non-Subsidized Fee.

And that's exactly how it will be listed on your facility payment summary report, with the total amount. Of your payment for the non-subsidized fee, which would correlate with who you have paid on the beginning part of your summary payment regarding the subsidized children.

25:17

Brigitte A'Bear

So... We are working on getting it put into the letters that almost... we're hoping it'll be listed out, similar to how the reduced parent fee revenue grant shows on your summary, but all of these payments are going to be separated on your summary, just as the subsidy and the reduced parent fee are currently.

And then, additionally, you'll have that additional Daily payment of the additional non-subsidized fee with an amount there as well.

25:48

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

And just for some clarification on, partially subsidized, they will either be going to be fully subsidized or not subsidized at all.

25:59

Brigitte A'Bear

Correct. So, September 13th onwards.

You're getting an approval letter if they're approved, and you know that you're getting that approval letter, and there's no fees for that parent to pay towards the daily cost of care.

The other part I do want to mention, too, is if you have a situation where you have an approval with multiple children on it.

And the way that we have to currently assign the family contribution, it may appear that one child is does not look like they're subsidized.

26:30

Brigitte A'Bear

However, what we are looking at in that situation, this family would be fully subsidized.

It would be updated to reflect zero family fees, because the total cost of care is what we look at, and that family is considered partially subsidized for all 3 children.

26:50

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

So, before they receive the approval, or the letters, can they prepare to adjust their billing? Let's say, for example, \$200 for preschool child, \$172 for two periods of care for school age?

27:09

Brigitte A'Bear

Yes, absolutely. So, some parents have been advised of this, just if they've called into our unit and we were talking about it, but it's not a secret in the way that you can tell these parents, but they may be surprised a little bit, because they... a lot of them may have not... may have... may not have heard about this, but, like, stating that there is this news release that will be coming out, which that will get a lot more exposure.

27:38

Brigitte A'Bear

So, you can bill ahead of time, that's why we also sent out that circular on August 10th, because we recognize a lot of you do bill ahead of time, so wanting to be able to give a little bit extra time to be able to tell these parents that they have no fees to pay.

28:00

Jessica Brosch

And just, to follow that one, if they don't get the letter before September 13th, would the families be approved?

28:07

Brigitte A'Bear

Yeah. So, again, if you have that approval letter, current one that shows that contribution amount, know that September 13th, they will have no contribution amount to pay, nor will they have that \$2 a day non-subsidized fee to pay and you can also refer to that email that was sent out.

And in that email, like I said, it has that link for the pre-approval letter that was sent out to use in advance for confirmation of the zero fees for any active approvals past September 13th.

28:43

Jessica Brosch

Thank you. We have some questions, regarding additional fees. So, are centers allowed to charge additional fees to subsidize families? For example, snack fees, diaper wipe fees,

Can they charge the subsidy families?

28:57

Brigitte A'Bear

Yes, they... so no change to this. Like, again, prior to this, you would have been billing these families the same fees.

So, there's no change in terms of... you can still bill for those fees. We actually speak to it in our FAQs; it's question number 4.

Facilities may continue to charge families for services that fall outside the scope of that child care Subsidy program. In accordance with our policies and procedures for funded centers.

You can find this policy on our Manitoba ELCC website and one more thing to note, any of these additional fees are optional to the parent, and the parent can opt out of paying that amount at any time.

29:46

Brigitte A'Bear

I do also want to point out another scenario that has, come forward, too, that if the child you have an approval for 4 to 10 for that child, and out of control of the family, out of the family's control, that child stayed 10 plus hours that one day, or maybe a few days. But the approval is for 4 to 10.

Unless they did have a 10+, but if the approval was 4 to 10, Subsidy will continue to pay that 4 to 10 approval at \$10.

You, in this case, would bill the parent the difference between the 4 to 10, and what the 10 plus hours would have cost if you do so as per your policies.

30:32

Brigitte A'Bear

So, for example, like I said, the 4 to 10 is \$10 a day. 10 plus is a total of \$15 a day, the \$12 plus the \$3 non-subsidized fee.

You would bill that family that difference of the \$5 for each day that that child stayed late past the 10-plus hours.

30:51

Jessica Brosch

Thank you. If a family currently has approval for one child, and not for the other child, will both children, be fully subsidized after September 13th?

31:03

Brigitte A'Bear

They will.

We look again at that total cost of care, so if that contribution amount is \$200, but the total cost of care is \$320 currently.

They are considered to be partially subsidized, so effective September 13th, they will... their approval letters will be updated to fully subsidized, and no parent... no \$2 a day non-subsidized fee. This would even apply if you have one child at your center, and a child at another center.

31:35

Jessica Brosch

Thank you. And can you just review, how they would bill if a subsidized child has exceeded their absentee?

31:43

Brigitte A'Bear

So, no difference than before, just like if facilities can continue to bill for those absent day fees if the child has exceeded those absent days, and Subsidy is no longer paying for any absent day going forward within that approval time period.

32:03

Jessica Brosch

Thank you.

And if they charge, facility fees for all the parents, will this still continue to be charged?

32:15

Brigitte A'Bear

like, a program... a program fee, or a parent... if it's... if it's not the non-subsidized fee, or the \$8 a day maximum cost of care.

You would, if it's within your policy to charge this fee.

32:33

Jennifer Faulder

As long as it aligns with the additional fees policy, so I would encourage you to check the additional Fees Policy on the website to ensure that that is an authorized fee.

All of those fees must be optional for parents. They must have the ability to opt out of those fees, regardless of whether they are subsidized or not. That is a policy for all funded facilities.

33:06

Jason Booth

All right, it seems that's all the time we have this evening, and all of the questions we have this evening. I want to thank Jessica, I want to thank Bridget, Jennifer, and NECA for your time this evening, and I want to thank you for attending tonight.

This has been the Elimination of Child Care Subsidy Fees webinar. Reporting, along with a transcript and a copy of the PowerPoint, will be posted on our website within the next few business days at [manitoba.ca forward slash childcare](http://manitoba.ca/forward/slash/childcare).

Thank you so much and have a great evening.