



Payment of Fees Policy

Policy Number: 27
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Rationale and Policy Considerations

The setting and payment of fees takes into account all requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Australian Tax Office, Privacy Act and the guidelines contained within the Australian Government Child Care Provider Handbook. All records held at the service will be maintained in accordance with Confidentiality and Privacy Policy. Lifestreamers Childcare understands the importance of maintaining accurate fee statements and providing clear information to families on fee payment processes.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Guidelines on child care fee payments (Child Care Provider Handbook) Privacy Act 1988 (Cth.)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999

Needs

Children's

For continuity of care and family support where payment of child care fees is an issue.

Families'

Advice about fee levels and Child Care Subsidy application process; affordable fees; simple fee payment process; accurate fee payment statements; information about available financial support; family difficulties in maintaining fees/payments to be addressed in order to prevent any negative impact on the care provided to children.

Educators

Clearly explained fee payment process; families to maintain fee payments; fee payment issues not to impact negatively on the relationships between educators, children and families.

Management

Sufficient fee income to ensure maintenance of a quality service; fee payments to be up to date; accurate fee collection records to be maintained.

Scope

This policy is for all clients of Lifestreamers Childcare

Policy Statement

The service aims to provide a quality education and care service at an affordable price to families eligible to attend under the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines. Fee levels will be set by the Approved Provider each year according to the service's required income in order to provide a quality education and care service.

Lifestreamers Childcare relies on the regular payment of fees to provide a quality service for its families. Failure to pay fees when they are due results in forced cost cutting and a decrease in the quality of services provided.

Policy Principles

Fees

- The fee schedule and fee payment policy will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process.
- Families will be given a minimum of 14 days notice of any fee increase.
- Families pay for a place and may elect to book a full-time or part-time place. Families are required to pay fees on public holidays if the holiday falls on their normal day of care.

- Fees are payable on all booked days regardless of whether they attend or not. This includes sick days, school holidays, public holidays and family holidays.
- Pupil free days are non payable for school aged children.
- Parents/guardians should contact the service to advise of their child's inability to attend as soon as this is known. Fees will still be required on days the child would normally attend.
- Two-weeks notice (14 days), in writing, of cancellation of care must be given and fees will be charged up to this date. Childcare assistance will only be paid up to the last day of signed-in attendance and therefore failure to attend up until the end of two-weeks' notice, will incur full fees.

Child Care Subsidy

- The service will comply with the Australian Government requirements to be an approved education and care service for the purposes of Child Care Subsidy (CCS). The on-line reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS will be maintained by the service.
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to complete and lodge their CCS application with the Department of Human Services. Families need to apply for each type of care they will use i.e. Long Day Care or Vacation Care.
- CCS can only be paid for children who have met immunization requirements.
- Families will only be eligible for CCS if child care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult and other eligibility requirements are met.
- Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCS is paid for these days provided that the child would normally have attended on that day and fees have been charged.
- CCS would be paid directly to the child care service.

Overdue Fees

- Parents/guardians with overdue fees will be encouraged by the nominated supervisor/manager to discuss any difficulties they may have in meeting payments and make suitable arrangements to pay. If this is not done, or the agreed arrangements are not kept, the following procedure will apply:
 - after two weeks overdue - a written reminder will be forwarded to the parent/guardian;
 - after three weeks overdue - a letter will be sent advising that the place may be cancelled, the letter will include a reminder that parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss payment difficulties and make suitable arrangements to pay with the nominated supervisor/coordinator;
 - after four weeks overdue - if overdue fees are not up to date, the place will be cancelled and family will be notified. The guarantor will be contacted to arrange recovery of fees;
 - if a contact detail for guarantor is not provided, it will be passed on the debt collection agency for recovery.

Late Collection Fees

- Children who are collected after 6.00pm will be charged a fee to cover overtime rates for the staff who have had to stay later than their shift.
- The fee will be \$25 for each 15 minutes or part thereof.

Account Procedure and Payment

- Accounts are emailed out each fortnight for the coming two weeks. It is only an estimate as your fees are sent electronically to the Child Care Management System for reconciliation at the end of each week. Any recalculations of your fees will then be automatically adjusted to your account either in advance or in arrears.
- All childcare fees are paid by Direct Debit on the first Monday of the account period.
- BLAST accounts are issued after the school holiday period once Centrelink payments have been applied.
- Receipts are emailed out each week for payments from the previous week.
- Lifestreamers Childcare reserves the right to cancel care if fees are outstanding.
- Full fees are payable until CCS or ACCS (Additional Child Care Subsidy) has been processed. Credit balances once these have been paid will be returned to the payer or kept in the account as a credit depending on the request of the family.

- Outstanding fees need to be paid within four weeks of leaving the centre. All fees, commissions, charges and legal fees accrued in the collection of any debts will be added to the initial account.

Direct Debit

- Direct debit is set up on enrolment and is included in the enrolment form.
- Families are to nominate their desired account and sign the authority.
- All fees associated with Direct Debit are passed on to the family.
- Nominated accounts will only be debited the amount owing on the selected date. This is not a set amount and will reflect usage over the nominated period.

The fees associated with Direct Debit which are passed on to the family are:

• Bank Account	per transaction	\$0.75
• Visa/Mastercard	Calculated on transaction value	0.90% + \$0.75
• Amex	Calculated on transaction value	3.85% + \$0.75
• Failed transaction	Per failed or returned transaction attempt	\$2.75
• Claim/Chargeback	Only charged when payment is reversed	\$33.00
• Refund	Per refund (credit/debit card only)	\$2.75

Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012** - Section 3(3)(c); 175
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations** -75; 158-159;
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care (Feb 2018)** - Element 6.1.1; Element 6.1.3; Element 7.1.2
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia**
- **Guarantor Form**
- **Regulation 168 (2)(n)**
- **Enrolment Form**

Links to other Policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Equal Opportunity
- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Partnership and Communication with Parents
- Records Management

Source

www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

- **Child Care Provider Handbook;**
- ***Section 3 Enrolling Children***
- ***Section 4 Child Care Subsidy***
- ***Section 5 Additional Child Care Subsidy***
- ***Section 6 Payments***

- **Department of Human Services - *Assistance with child care fees*** - Retrieved 18 April 2018, from <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/assistance-child-care-fees>
- **Privacy Law** - Retrieved 18 April 2018, from <http://www.oaic.gov.au/>

Document History

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