

## **CEC and ASCC Childcare Schemes**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **Glossary of Terms**

- TEC = Training and Employment Childcare – the name of the administration unit and childcare service provider contract under which three of the DCYA childcare support programmes are administered (CETS, ASCC and CEC)
- CEC = Community Employment Childcare Programme
- ASCC = Afterschool Child Care Programme
- CETS = Childcare Education and Training Support Programme
- ECCE = Early Childhood Care and Education Programme
- CCS = Community Childcare Subvention Programme
- CE Programme/Applicant = Community Employment under the Dept of Social Protection

#### **Q1. Who is eligible for a CEC place?**

**A.** A CE Applicant, who needs childcare for child/children up to the age of 13 years, in order to take up a place on a CE Programme, is eligible for a CEC place/s.

There is one exception - where a child/children of a CE Applicant is participating in ECCE during the same time as the CE Programme (i.e morning or afternoon), that child cannot transfer to a CEC place.

However, if a parent is participating on CE on an alternative time of day to the child's ECCE programme the parent can also avail of CE Childcare for the time of day they are participating on CE.

The CE sponsor will issue the CE Applicant with a letter detailing the start and end date of CE programme.

Places are open to existing CE Applicants as well as new entrants.

#### **Q2. Can ECCE children transfer into CEC scheme?**

**A.** No, ECCE children cannot transfer into the CEC programme. On completion of ECCE, a CE Applicant may apply for a CEC place.

**Q3. If a child is in ECCE and a CE Applicant has a place on a CE programme for an opposite time of day (i.e. ECCE in the morning but CE Programme in the afternoon), can the parent avail of both ECCE and CEC hours for childcare?**

- A.** Yes. If a parent is participating on CE on an alternative time of day to the child's ECCE programme the parent can also avail of CEC.

**Q4. How many CEC programme places are available nationally and how are they distributed?**

- A.** There are 1,200 CEC part time places available nationally for CE participants with children up to 5 years of age (not attending primary school) and 800 places available nationally for CE participants who require after school childcare (attending primary school). Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis across the country. The take-up of places will be monitored by the Department of Social Protection on a monthly basis.

**Q5. If a parent is on a CE Programme for more than a 12 month period, is it possible for the parent to apply for childcare under the CEC programme for more than an initial 50 weeks?**

- A.** A CEC place will be approved for 50 weeks in a 12 month period for a CE parent. A parent can re-apply for a CEC place after this 50 week period comes to an end, and a place will be approved subject to demand and availability.

**Q6. Can a CEC programme place be provided in broken timeframes?**

- A.** No. A CEC place is approved for a block period of 50 weeks. Note, there is no provision for a participant to continue to access a CEC place if they are absent from CE.

In the event of a CE participant breaking from CEC, a new application will be required should they need a place again

**Q7. How many CEC places can a parent avail of while on CE?**

- A.** Provided their children are aged up to 13 years, and subject to the demand and availability of CEC places, there is no limit on places per parent.

**Q8. Are CE applicants eligible for the ASCC? Can parents avail of ASCC and CEC scheme at the same time?**

- A. As a result of the changes in July 2014, CE participants will no longer require access to ASCC as their childcare needs will now be met under the CEC programme. The CE sponsor letter will cover all children up to age of 13.  
However, CE participants already on ASCC at July 2014 will not be affected and may apply for CEC with their CE sponsor, when their 52 weeks on ASCC is reached.

**Q9. Which services are contracted under TEC to deliver the CEC programme? If parents choose a service that is open less than 50 weeks can a CCC let them go ahead?**

- A. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DYCA) will consider any service which is currently in contract for TEC, to apply to be in contract for CEC programme places.  
If a parent chooses to take a childcare place in a service which is open for less than 50 weeks, parental choice will be facilitated, on the understanding that there is no obligation on the Department of Social Protection (DSP) or DCYA to facilitate childcare in respect of weeks the service is not open.

**Q10. What is the effective date for the CEC programme? Can it be back-dated to when a parent started on CE?**

- A. The effective operational date of childcare support for CE participants is 2 January 2014. There is no provision for backdating within the CEC programme; eligibility to the CEC programme is dependent on the participant being engaged on the CE scheme. The changes to the CEC programme announced in July 2014 are effective from 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

**Q 11. If parents are currently on CCS do they complete a transfer form for the CEC programme? Or would this incur a loss for CCS services?**

- A. CE Parents currently on CCS can complete a transfer form to CEC. Where this causes a problem for CCS services which are not in contract for TEC, the DCYA will consider issuing TEC contracts to those services. Where Parents transfer from CCS to CEC within the same service, the level of CCS subvention being paid to that service will be reduced.

**Q12. CE hours can be varied depending on the need of the organisation – how will the childcare services be paid for the varying hours children attend. For example if a parent uses 3 full days to complete the 19.5 hours, instead of the 5 mornings or 5 afternoons, how is a service paid?**

**A.** Payment by DCYA for CEC places for a child up to age of 5 (not in primary school) is at rate of €80 per week, and the parent pays €15 per week. For a child in primary school, the Afterschool rate is €40 per week. This payment will be made regardless of how the actual hours may be worked by the CE participant, as long as the childcare provider is agreeable to provide childcare at the times required by the CE participant.

Type of Childcare	State Contribution	Max Parental Contribution
CE Childcare (part-time)	€80	€15
CE After-school* (no pick-up service)	€40	€15
*10 Weeks Holiday (no pick-up service)	€80	€15

**Note there is no provision for a participant to continue to access a CEC place if they are absent from CE.**

**The maximum that a CE participant can be charged is €15 per week.**

**Q13. Are CEC programme applicants required to submit PPSN information for themselves and their children with the Parental Declaration/Application form?**

**A.** Yes. The form requires PPS numbers and copy of proof of PPS for child and parent.

**Q14. A parent with a child in the ECCE programme works 2 full days and one morning per week on CE. Can the parent apply for CEC for the two afternoons?**

**A.** Yes, but in circumstances such as this, a daily CEC rate of €16 per afternoon will apply, with the parental contribution €3 per afternoon.

**Q15. Can a parent continue to receive CEC support for childcare while on maternity leave?**

- A. A CE participant will not be able to access CEC while on maternity leave- the purpose of CEC is to facilitate attendance on the scheme. There is no provision for a participant to continue to access a CEC place if they are absent from CE for a prolonged period.

**Q.16 What are the eligibility criteria to avail of an ASCC place?**

- A. From 14 July 2014 the ASCC programme will be available to customers of the Department of Social Protection who:
- are currently getting Jobseekers' Benefit (JB) or Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) or One - Parent Family Payment (OFP) or are on a DSP employment programme; AND
  - have been in receipt of JB, JA or OFP or on a DSP employment programme (or any combination of the 4) for at least 3 months;

AND

- have one or more children aged between 4 and 13 who are in primary school,

AND

- either:
  - start a new job; or
  - increase the days currently worked; or
  - start a DSP employment programme (except CE).

CE is excluded from eligibility for ASCC as the CEC Programme now caters for all CE applicants with children up to 13 years of age

**Q. 17 Under ASCC, what are the payment rates to providers and what are the parental contributions?**

- A. From 14 July 2014 the state contribution for the scheme will be increased to €40 per week per child from €35 and the parental contribution will decrease from €20 per week per child to €15 per week per child. A state contribution of €80 will be provided for after-school childcare with pick-up service but the parent contribution will remain at €15 per week per child. During school holidays, for 10 weeks the state contribution will increase to €105 per week from €100 but the parental contribution will remain at €15 per week.

**Summary of fees:**

Type of Childcare	State Contribution	Max Parental Contribution
Basic ASCC*	€40	€15
ASCC* with Pick-up	€80	€15
*10 Weeks Holiday (no pick-up service)	€105	€15

**For those in part-time employment, subsidised after-school childcare will be provided on a pro-rata basis.**

**Q. 18 Under CEC, where parents are on their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of CE scheme, do they need to apply again for childcare?**

**A.** Yes, each new 50 weeks under the CE scheme must be applied for using a new parent application form, the CE sponsor letter, and accompanying proof of child and parent's PPS numbers. A CEC place will be approved for 50 weeks in a 12 month period for a CE parent. A parent can re-apply for a CEC place after this 50 week period comes to an end, and a place will be approved subject to demand and availability. If the CE sponsor has provided the parent with a 3 year CE letter, childcare must still be requested for each 50 week term. It is not envisaged that there will be a problem with availability of childcare for a parent who re-applies for a place for a second or third year.

**Q. 19 Some CE participants are asked to work an extra 4 hours per week or 208 extra hours per year- is this allowed for within CEC and will the service be paid for these extra hours?**

**A.** DCYA have a standard definition of a part-time childcare place as catering for childcare provision up to a maximum of 5 hour per day (or 25 hours per week). This is the definition we have applied to CEC part time places and it is not possible to provide childcare support outside 25 hours per week.

**Q. 20 If a child does not attend for two weeks due to illness and service has been notified of this, does the parent have to pay the top up for the absent weeks?**

**A.** Once the service has been notified of the illness and it does not exceed two weeks, DCYA will continue the payment to the service and the parent must also pay the parent fee for the absent weeks as this is the rate for the place.

For parents on ETB/Solas training courses, the only time parent fee is not paid by the parent is for weeks that their training course is not on and they do not use the service for childcare for these weeks. Providers are advised to ask parents on ETB/Solas training courses for their course calendars to show the weeks that the course is on holidays.

**Q. 21 Which DSP job activation programmes are covered under ASCC programme?**

**A.** The specified employment programmes that qualify for ASCC are Jobsbridge, BTWEA (Back to work enterprise allowance), TÚS, Gateway or RSS.

**Q.22 If a participant on CE only needs childcare cover for the school holiday periods, can this be accommodated under the CEC programme?**

**A.** Yes, CE parents can avail of a maximum of 10 weeks school holidays per 50 weeks. The provider will be paid @ CE part time rate of €80 per week for holiday weeks requested.