

Tip Sheets

Understanding Special Needs Rates of the Child Care Assistance Program

Defining Special Needs

For the purposes of the CCAP Special Needs Rate, a special need or disability is when there is a “functional limitation or health condition that interferes with a child’s ability to walk, talk, see, hear, breathe or learn...”

Special needs may be any special medical, developmental and/or atypical behavior or condition requiring additional support measures to help the child successfully grow and develop to his or her full potential.

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Special Needs Rate is available for children with special needs in Minnesota who receive CCAP and meet designated criteria. A Special Needs Rate may be requested for an individual child if there are increased costs related to necessary accommodations and modifications for the child. It is the provider’s responsibility to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The provider needs to assure that the rate being sought is a rate that would be charged for similar services provided to a child with a disability who is not on CCAP.

The rate is managed through the family’s CCAP authorizing agency. Individual rate adjustments address the needs of the child and support the provider in caring for the child with special needs. The increased rate is intended to support specialized training, services, or environmental adaptations provided to meet the individual needs of the child.

Requesting Increased Rates

Rates should support costs that are increased from a typical situation of care due to the child’s individual needs. The rate calculation may include:

- Training related to the child’s diagnosis/needs
- Specialized or increased equipment or supply needs
- Increased adult supervision
- Environmental modifications

The provider estimates the increased costs and details this in the required documentation. The provider should request an amount that will help cover any additional costs. The request can be short term or long term. It is approved for up to 12 months at which time the request will be reviewed prior to renewal.

Forms

CCAP Special Needs Rate Variance Request: Parent and Provider Request (DHS-4194) form: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4194-ENG>

Documentation of needs is required to process the request for a special needs rate. This may include any or all of the following:

- Child’s Special Educational Assessment or Educational Plan (IEP or IFSP)
- Report from a mental health professional and/or any medical documentation
- Letters from child’s county or social workers
- Service referrals and other professional sources

Once paperwork is completed, it is submitted to the county or agency CCAP worker for review by local and state agency staff. When this process is completed, the county or agency worker notifies the provider and parent about approval or denial.

Renewals

The timeline for a provider to reinitiate the rate is about one month prior to a renewal date. If approved, the date of request becomes the effective date.

Appeal Process

If the parent or provider would like to appeal a decision, the parent must complete and submit a written request to their county or agency worker.

At Risk Rates

Another category of a rate differential is "At Risk" rates. These are intended to cover costs of specialized services to certain populations. "At Risk" categories and rates are determined by the authorizing county. The provider must demonstrate that a significant number of children served meet the at-risk definition and that specialized services are provided.

The "At Risk" definition can include environmental or familial factors that create barriers to a child's optimal achievement such as:

- A federal or state disaster
- Limited English proficiency in a family
- History of abuse or neglect
- Family violence
- Homelessness
- Age of the parent
- Level of maternal education
- Parental disability or mental illness
- Parental chemical dependency or history of other substance abuse

Steps in Requesting Special Needs CCAP

1. Request forms – online or call worker
2. Parent and Provider partner together to complete paperwork
3. Gather documentation
4. Determine requested amount
5. Send to County/ agency CCAP worker

For additional information and resources, talk to the family's CCAP worker.

For more information, visit www.inclusivechildcare.org.

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