

Guiding Questions for Optional Services and Supplemental Parent Fees

For Daycare Facilities and Family Day Homes

Please see the following guiding questions to help you determine if an additional fee can be charged to parents beyond the flat monthly parent fee. Please also refer to the 'Matters To Be Considered' in the *Early Learning and Child Care Act*.

If the answer is “yes” to any of the questions below then it is up to the discretion of the program to implement, or not implement, a fee that falls under these categories:

- Is it a targeted fee that serves as a deterrent for non-compliance with, or is based on convenience related to, the policies set out by the child care provider at the commencement of care (e.g. credit card fee, late pick-up fee)? This would be a fee outside of the Affordability Grant.
- Is it a fee applied before or after a child is receiving child care or for an extended absence (e.g. termination fee, one-time registration fees, deposits, holding fee)? This would be a fee outside the Affordability Grant.
- Is it a fee related to being a non-profit program (e.g. society fee, fundraising fee)? This would be a fee outside the Affordability Grant.
- Is it a non-essential service that is not universally applied to all children in the program, but is optional for the parent (e.g. meals, transportation)? This could be considered an optional service eligible for a supplementary fee pursuant to the terms of the Affordability Grant.
→ *Participation in optional services must be voluntary, and parents must actively opt-in. Automatic enrollment approaches that require a parent to opt-out are not permitted.*

If the answer is “yes” to any of the questions below, then the combination of Affordability Funding and flat monthly parent fees is intended to cover this cost and programs should not charge parents through an additional fee:

- Is the fee intended to cover a program's equipment, toys, or general supplies for programming? (e.g. toys and crafts, tables)
- Is the fee intended to cover a program's overall curriculum? (e.g. Flight)
- Is the fee intended to cover the general day-to-day costs of programming usually expected to be provided to all children in the program? (e.g. value-add, coverage for school holidays during the school year)
- Is the fee intended to cover Early Childhood Educator related costs? (e.g. wages, increased ratios, higher ECE qualification child care room, Family Day Home back up care)
- Is the fee mandatory and universally applied to all children on a one-time or annual basis during care (e.g. annual membership fee, annual registration fee, annual application fee)?

In addition to not showing preferential access to families participating in optional services, including limiting or denying access to child care, the choice to participate in an optional service or suite of optional services, cannot be a factor when choosing to send children home due to staff shortages (e.g. due to illness).

Optional Services and Supplemental Parent Fee Guideline

For Daycare Facilities

Affordability Funding and Monthly Parent Fees combine to enable the continued delivery of high-quality child care. This includes the reasonable costs associated with:



HR and Staffing Costs



Facility and Operational Costs



Programming Costs



Administrative Costs

Programs will be permitted to charge supplemental parent fees for services that are optional for parents to choose for their child. The supplemental parent fees for optional services can be charged directly to parents and are in addition to the flat monthly parent fee.

- ✓ Programs are permitted, but not required, to charge supplemental parent fees for optional services.
- ✓ Optional services may include services that programs were not able to charge additional fees for previously.
- ✓ Parents must have the choice whether to participate in and pay for an optional service.
- ✓ Programs will be required to report to the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Trade on the optional services they provide for a supplemental parent fee.

- ✗ Except for the flat monthly parent fee, any mandatory parent fees currently being charged must be optional as of April 1, 2025.
- ✗ Programs will continue to be prohibited from charging additional general administrative, operational, and equipment fees to parents.
- ✗ Programs cannot show preferential treatment to children whose parents pay supplemental parent fees for optional services.
- ✗ Providers cannot limit or deny access to care if parents choose not to receive optional services.

Examples of optional services for which a supplemental parent fee may be charged include:

- Field trips
- Meals and/or snacks
- Transportation
- Extended hours care
- Overnight care
- Diapers/Sunscreen
- Cultural activities
- On-site experiential learning
- Specialized classes

Examples of ineligible operational, administrative, and equipment fees include:

- Child contract fees
- Supply fees
- Value-add fees
- Nap fees
- Technology fees
- Toy fees

Programs are permitted to charge parents penalty fees for certain targeted actions such late pick-up, late payment, or insufficient funds.

Optional Services and Supplemental Parent Fee Guideline

For Family Day Homes

Affordability Funding and Monthly Parent Fees combine to enable the continued delivery of high-quality child care. This includes the reasonable costs associated with:



Home and Utility Costs



Programming Costs



Administrative Costs

Programs are permitted to charge supplemental parent fees for services that are optional for parents to choose for their child **provided it is in alignment with their FDH Agency standards and policies**. FDH educators should work with their FDH Agencies to determine the optional services they can provide for a supplemental parent fee. The supplemental parent fees for optional services can be charged directly to parents and are in addition to the flat monthly parent fee.

- ✓ Programs are permitted, but not required, to charge supplemental parent fees for optional services.
- ✓ Optional services may include services that programs were not able to charge additional fees for previously.
- ✓ Parents must have the choice whether to participate in and pay for an optional service.
- ✓ Programs will be required to report to the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Trade on the optional services they provide for a supplemental parent fee.

- ✗ Except for the flat monthly parent fee, any mandatory parent fees currently being charged must be optional as of April 1, 2025.
- ✗ Programs will continue to be prohibited from charging additional general administrative, operational, and equipment fees to parents.
- ✗ Programs cannot show preferential treatment to children whose parents pay supplemental parent fees for optional services.
- ✗ Providers cannot limit or deny access to care if parents choose not to receive optional services.
- ✗ Family day home agencies are not permitted to charge general administrative or agency fees to parents.

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