

OVERVIEW - BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

CHILD CARE 1-4

Scholarship Rates

Supersedes:	Child Care 1-4 (9/30/16)
References:	Sections 37.80.101, 37.80.102, 37.80.206, 37.80.305, 37.80.306,37.80.316 ARM 52-2-704 & 53-4-601 MCA 45 CFR Part 98.43

General Rule

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program is designed to assist low-income families to access and afford quality child care. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program helps families pay for child care while they are working, attending high school, a post-secondary institution or participating in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] Employability/Service Plan activities.

Child Care Provider Market Rate Survey

The Early Childhood Services Bureau [ECSB] conducts a market rate survey of child care providers following standards outlined in the 2014 Child Care Development Fund Act. Depending on funding levels, the market rate survey is used as a basis for determining child care reimbursement rates.

If funding is available, the ECSB provides families with a level of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship that allows access to 75% of the child care facilities in their district.

ECSB Pays the Lower Rate

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship payments are made at a rate determined by the ECSB, through a market rate survey, or the provider's rate, whichever is lower. Child care providers may not charge the State a higher rate than they charge the public. See the ESCB Procedure Handbook for processing.

Parents are responsible for any costs, including co-payments, not covered by the Best Beginning Scholarship or additional fees that a provider may charge.

Provider Must Report Rates And Associated Changes

Participating child care providers must report their current rates for private-pay families to the Child Care Resource and Referral [CCR&R]. Rate changes, for scholarship payments, become effective the first of the month following the date the change is made. When a provider makes a change to their license the provider will need to contact their CCR&R to update their rates if needed. Any exceptions will be considered by the Early Childhood Services Bureau on a case-by-case basis.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services

The Department of Public Health and Human Services [DPHHS]
Human and Community Services Division Early Childhood Services Bureau [ECSB]
Scholarship Rates are on the Bureau's website at
www.bestbeginnings.mt.gov.