

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)  
Child Care  
Subsidy Program  
  
Family Handbook

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Table of Contents

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ USCG Child Care Program Overview
- ◆ Eligibility Requirements for USCG Families
- ◆ Program Responsibilities
  - ◆ Parent Responsibilities
  - ◆ Provider Responsibilities
  - ◆ GSA Subsidy Administration Section Responsibilities as the Third Party Administrator
  - ◆ USCG Responsibilities
- ◆ Types of Child Care—Qualifications
- ◆ USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Determination
- ◆ Registrations Fees
- ◆ Eligibility Determination and Payment Process
- ◆ USCG Child Care Subsidy Program Statement of Understanding\*

*(\*This page must be completed, signed and returned to the GSA Subsidy Section to activate the processing of your USCG Child Care Subsidy Application for benefits )*

#### How to contact us:

General Services Administration (GSA)

Subsidy Administration Section

2300 Main Street—2SE

Kansas City, MO 64108

Phone: 866-508-0371

Fax: 816-823-5445

Email: [uscgchildcare@gsa.gov](mailto:uscgchildcare@gsa.gov)



## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Introduction

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Child Care Subsidy Program provides a contribution toward the total cost of child care for Active Duty USCG members and Reservists who have been called to Active Duty for a minimum of 180 consecutive days or longer. The benefit was created to assist members whose children attend off base care allowing eligible families to pay fees comparable to those charged on base. Providers and Parent(s) must apply for benefits via the GSA Subsidy Administration Section (GSA) as the 3rd party administrator for the USCG. The family portion of child care costs plus the amount of the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program Benefits will equal the provider rate. Eligibility will be determined based on USCG Child Care Subsidy Program guidance and may be updated at any time throughout the year per the discretion of the USCG.

- ◆ The USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit is available to Active Duty Members and Active Duty Reservists called to Active Duty for 180 consecutive days or longer.
- ◆ Families may qualify for subsidy benefits in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Benefit Table. The subsidy benefit is based on the member's Total Family Income (TFI) which includes Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and may include business income, rental income, and/or any other recurring income as listed on the most recent federal tax information provided plus Annual Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) plus Annual Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).
- ◆ Eligibility to receive benefits can only be determined once all documents are submitted to the GSA Subsidy Administration Section for review.
- ◆ Eligibility will be determined based upon the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program guidelines.
- ◆ Program guidelines may be updated at anytime throughout the year per the discretion of the USCG and will be communicated to the GSA for implementation.
- ◆ Additional information on the Child Care Subsidy program can be found at [www.uscg.mil/worklife](http://www.uscg.mil/worklife).

### USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Program

The intent of USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit Program is to help meet the needs of eligible Families where the spouse/partner is working and/or attending school. Members must use a licensed and/or accredited child care provider in order to be deemed eligible for benefits. USCG Child Care Subsidy benefits are calculated based upon the child's attendance to include hourly care, daily care, and monthly care with benefits being paid directly to the qualifying provider on a monthly basis on or after the 15th of the month for the current month of care.



## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Eligibility Requirements for USCG Families

- ◆ Families of Active Duty and Reservist called to Active Duty for 180 consecutive days or longer may be eligible. USCG Civilians are not eligible for benefits.
- ◆ The member's spouse/partner (Two adults living together who are in a relationship to include same sex couples) be working a minimum of 20 hours per week; enrolled in school a minimum of 6 credit hours for spring and fall semesters and/or 6 credit hours for summer, or actively seeking full-time employment.
- ◆ The child/children for which the Member is applying, must be the legal dependent of the USCG member and must be listed on the member's BAH Dependency Data Sheet, CG Form 4170.
- ◆ The benefit is available for children from birth through 12 years of age.
- ◆ A qualifying child care provider must be used for the care of the member's child.
- ◆ The USCG Child Care Subsidy program requires that the child care provider be licensed, regulated, and/or accredited in order to be considered a qualifying child care provider.
- ◆ Care provided in the home where the family/child resides is not authorized under the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program guidelines.

### Program Responsibilities

Once you determine that you may qualify for benefits based upon the criteria above, you may apply for a USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit. Please be aware that there are responsibilities that you, your provider, the GSA Subsidy Administration Section, and the USCG have once this process begins. These responsibilities are to ensure that USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit Program guidelines are adhered to based upon the intent of the program.

The responsibilities for each party are outlined below.

#### Parent Responsibilities:

1. The Member/Family will be financially responsible for all child care costs until their application for child care subsidy benefits has been approved and the Member and their child care provider have signed and returned their USCG Child Care Subsidy Program Benefit Letter.
2. Complete the application process ensuring that all required forms have been submitted to the GSA in order to determine eligibility.
3. Meet program guidelines and use a qualifying child care provider.
4. Sign the GSA Invoice/Attendance form each and every month to request payment.
5. Pay the Family portion of child care costs directly to the provider including any additional charges for services that you may incur including field trips, non-essential supplies, late fees, etc.
6. Report any change to your child care needs immediately to the program administrator (GSA) and your child care provider.
7. Report **immediately** any changes in:
  - ◆ Your Family's size, such as someone moving in or out of the household
  - ◆ Work, training, or education schedule
  - ◆ Your Family's address or telephone number (work and home)
  - ◆ Your Family's legal obligation to pay child support
  - ◆ Any change in marital status
8. Make payment arrangements for child care needed for personal reasons that are not authorized.
9. Ensure that child care providers used while participating in the USCG Child Care Program are promptly paid for all child care services rendered. Failure to pay the required Member portion to any child care provider may result in the Member being disqualified from the program for one year.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Provider Responsibilities:

- 1) All providers must meet the USCG child care licensing and accreditation requirements for the type of child care business they operate under the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program. The following types of child care programs are accepted under the USCG Program guidelines:

#### Family Child Care:

Family child care is home-based care provided for a portion of the day in a private family home for compensation on a regular, ongoing basis and must be inhabited by the family/individual that is providing care. States limit the provider's hours of operation and number of children who can be cared for in a home environment. Family child care providers must be licensed by the state and the care providers must have basic training in first aid, safety, and child care, child abuse and neglect prevention. Many in-home providers also have training in early education.

#### Center Based Child Care:

Commercial child care centers/day care centers provide child care in a group setting for a set number of hours and provide standardized and regulated care. There are planned educational activities and children may be grouped by age or placed in mixed age groupings. Day care centers are licensed to provide care for infants, toddlers, and/or pre-school age and they are usually open all day. Classes are usually largest in this type of care; ratios of children to adult caregivers will vary according to state licensing requirements. This type of environment will allow for the children to gain independence, academic achievement, and socialization skills.

#### Federal Based Child Care:

Some Federal agencies sponsor on-site child care centers for their employees and families seeking to use this type of child care. The space at federal child care centers may be available to non-federal employees however, priority for child care services will be given to federal employees.

Please note that the U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program benefit offered through the GSA is not available to Members who are using a USCG Child Development Center (CDC) or a Department of Defense (DOD) Child Development Center as you are currently paying child care rates that are comparable or equal to this program benefit.



## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Provider Responsibilities: (continued)

2. Meet program rules and requirements in order to receive a USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit.
3. Keep complete and accurate attendance records according to licensing and accreditation regulations and/or contract requirements. Maintain records for future reference as needed.
4. Bill for the USCG Child Care Subsidy using the directions and invoice/attendance form as provided.
5. Submit to the program administrator (GSA), any changes/updates to status as a licensed and/or accredited child care provider.
6. Provide timely notification if/when a USCG member's child or children have left care.
7. Provide timely notification if/when a USCG member's child's rate and/or attendance changes.
8. Providers may submit **one rate** change per year and will be required to notify the GSA at least 15 days prior to the effective date of the change. Failure to promptly report updates and/or changes to your child care rates may result in an over or underpayment. Additional rate changes not associated with an attendance change or when the child ages up will not be processed.
9. Must submit Invoice & Attendance records to the GSA that are properly completed and signed by both the Member, Spouse or POA along with a representative of the child care center for payment. Invoices not properly completed and submitted to the GSA within 3 months of the period of service, will be considered void and will not be honored for payment.

### GSA Subsidy Administration Section Responsibilities as the Third Party Administrator:

1. Determine a family's eligibility for child care subsidies based upon USCG Child Care Subsidy Program guidance and benefit tables.
2. Authorize benefits based on the amount of child care needed by eligible families for approved child care.
3. Pay providers for authorized and billed child care services provided to an eligible family.
4. Inform families and providers of USCG Child Care Subsidy Program updates as applicable. (e.g. Start/end date, payments, notifications of expired documents, etc.).
5. Assess and resolve overpayments and underpayments.
6. Answer questions related to eligibility, authorizations, and payments.
7. Will inform the Member within 10 days of the receipt of a Family's application that their application has been accepted and is either **Complete** or **Incomplete**. If the application is incomplete, the GSA will inform the Member of the information/documents needed in order to complete the application process.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### USCG Responsibilities:

1. Develop operational guidance for the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program and ensure that the GSA has the most current guidance and applicable policies.
2. Ensure that the GSA, as the third party program administrator, follows all established guidelines as set forth by the USCG.
3. Perform audits on records and files ensuring proper documentation is maintained in accordance with established operational guidance.

### Child Care Qualifications: Full Time vs Part Time

The child/children's attendance will determine the calculation of benefits as full time or part time with the family being responsible for any balance above the authorized benefit. The type of care and status of the spouse must be evaluated to determine if the USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit should be full-time, part-time, or unauthorized due to insufficient hours. Full-time and part-time care is authorized based upon the USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit and is defined as follows:

### USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Important Facts

- ◆ The Fee Category Table below provides the Total Family Income Fee Category and the Maximum Benefit allowed per child per year. The U.S. Coast Guard updates the Fee Category Table each year effective 01 January.

The table below is effective Date: 01, January 215 through 31, December 2015

TFI Category		Maximum Subsidy Allowed per Year		
		1 <sup>st</sup> Child	2 <sup>nd</sup> Child	3 <sup>rd</sup> Child
Category I	0 – 30,466	7800 dollars	6800 dollars	6800 dollars
Category II	30,467 - 36,993	6630	5630	5630
Category III	36,994 – 47,873	5320	4320	4320
Category IV	47,874 – 59,841	4800	3800	3800
Category V	59,842 – 76,162	4020	3020	3020
Category VI	76,163 – 88,079	3240	2240	2240
Category VII	88,080 – 103,622	2560	1560	1560
Category VIII	103,623 – 129,572	1680	680	680
Category IX	129,573 +	900	0	0

- ◆ Both parents and providers must remain eligible for the USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit in order to receive payment.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Important Facts - continued

- ◆ The amount listed on the USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Authorization Letter is the amount that will be paid monthly directly to the child care provider. If the family terminates child care and/or switches to a new child care provider, the monthly USCG child care subsidy benefit is pro-rated. In either case, the member/family is responsible for any remaining balance.
- ◆ Providers may submit **one rate** change per year and will be required to notify the GSA at least 15 days prior to the effective date of the change. Failure to promptly report updates and/or changes to your child care rates may result in an over or underpayment. Additional rate changes not associated with an attendance change or when the child ages up will not be processed
- ◆ During summer months, school-age child care rates may change based upon attendance, at which time the benefit will be recalculated.
- ◆ Child care rates submitted as a weekly rate will be multiplied by 4.33 to determine the monthly rate.
- ◆ The USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit will **NOT** pay fees for:
  - Months in which no care occurs
  - Lateness/Tardiness
  - Transportation
  - Field trips
  - Food
  - Any other miscellaneous fees
  - Tuition for part-day kindergarten and/or elementary education
- ◆ USCG Child Care Subsidy benefits will not be made to more than one provider for the same child/children for the same hours of care.
- ◆ All child care payments are made directly to the child care provider. Payments are made within seven (7) to ten (10) business days from verification of a complete and accurate attendance record.
- ◆ USCG Members must ensure that their provider submits invoices in a timely manner in order for payment to be issued on their behalf. Invoices may be submitted by the Provider or the Member directly to GSA for payment.
- ◆ Under no circumstances will child care payments be made to the Family. Families are required to make clear and concise arrangements with their child care provider related to account credits or reimbursements.
- ◆ Child care providers will only be paid for child/children listed on the USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Authorization Letter. If the family adds a child or children to the program after their original authorization date, they must submit information for program benefit recalculation.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Registration Fees

Providers will be paid for registration fees up to \$200 per year per child as long as the Member has not exceeded the maximum benefit as authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program guidelines

### Payment Process

Payments are issued directly to the family's child care provider. Each provider will received a USCG Child Care Subsidy Benefit Invoice & Attendance Form for each family that qualifies for USCG child care subsidy benefit. Per USCG guidance, each Invoice & Attendance Form submitted to the GSA for payment must be properly completed and must include the signature of a qualifying child care provider program official along with the Member, the Member's Spouse/Partner, or the Member's Power of Attorney.

Please note that if a Power of Attorney (POA) is signing the form on behalf of the Member, the program administrator (GSA) must have a copy of the most current POA in order to process for payment.

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Child Care Subsidy Program Invoice & Attendance Form															
Provider:		ABC CHILD CARE													
Address:		123 MAIN STREET ANYTOWN, USA 12345													
<small>Remit to Address if different than above:</small>															
<small>Email address: <a href="mailto:ABCCHILDCARE@XXX.COM">ABCCHILDCARE@XXX.COM</a></small>															
Tax ID #		987654321				&		00001		Agency Rep		USCG00			
Phone #		(555) 456-7899						Fax #		(555) 456-7888					
Member Name JOHN SMITH															
Month of Service _____															
<small>To complete the attendance record, place an "X" for each day of care provided or day that the family will be billed, "N C" for NO CHARGE or "T" if service was TERMINATED</small>															
Attendance & Billing Record:															
Child Name		CINDY SMITH													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Total Cost \$ _____															
Less Member/Family Monthly Portion \$		300.00													
USCG Balance Due \$		_____													
<small>MAXIMUM BENEFIT \$400.00 PER MONTH</small>															
Provider Signature _____															
Member Signature _____															
<small>Providers or parents who misrepresent information used to calculate Child Care Subsidy Benefits may have their benefit terminated and be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or other legal consequences.</small>															
Return completed Invoice & Attendance Form via any of the following:															
Fax: (816) 823-5498				Mail: General Services Administration / Attention: Child Care											
Email: <a href="mailto:uscginvoices.childcare@gsa.gov">uscginvoices.childcare@gsa.gov</a>				2300 Main St - 2SE											
Questions: (866) 508-0371				Kansas City, MO 64108											
USCG 200242															

Example of a U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Invoice & Attendance Record issued by the GSA Subsidy Administration Section to a qualifying child care provider to bill for their services.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Payment Process, continued

Please see below a sample USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit Invoice and Attendance Form which provides instructions on the completion of the form. All Invoice & Attendance Forms must be submitted to the GSA Subsidy Administration Section within 90 days/3 months of the period of service that child care was provided.

By signing and certifying the invoice for payment, your provider and you attest that the total cost written on the form is the actual amount of child care costs billed to your family for the period of service indicated and that you have paid or have made payment arrangements for the member portion as listed on the invoice. **Please note that you are required to pay the member portion as listed prior to any benefits being issued to your provider on your behalf.**

**Please note that Members are required to pay the Member portion as listed on their benefit letter and invoice prior to any benefits being issued to your provider on their behalf.**

**Invoices containing "NC" with the Attendance & Billing record will be prorated and paid based upon the attendance as listed. Qualifying USCG Members need to ensure that the invoice correctly reflects the proper attendance in order for their USCG Subsidy Benefit to be properly paid.**

**U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Child Care Subsidy Program  
Invoice & Attendance Form**

**Provider:** ABC CHILD CARE  
**Address:** 123 MAIN STREET  
ANYTOWN, USA 12345

Remit to Address if different than above:  
Email address: ABCCHILD.CARE@XXX.COM

**Tax ID #** 987654321 & 00001 **Agency Rep** USCG00  
**Phone #** (555) 456-7899 **Fax #** (555) 456-7888

**Member Name** JOHN SMITH  
**Month of Service** March 2015

To complete the attendance record, place an "X" for each day of care provided or day that the family will be billed, "NC" for NO CHARGE or "T" if service was TERMINATED.

**Attendance & Billing Record:**

**Child Name** CINDY SMITH

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			X
														31
														X
														X

**Total Cost \$** 500.00  
**Less Member/Family Monthly Portion \$** 300.00  
**USCG Balance Due \$** 200.00  
MAXIMUM BENEFIT \$400.00 PER MONTH

**Provider Signature** *Barbara Anderson*  
**Member Signature** *John Smith*

Providers or parents who misrepresent information used to calculate Child Care Subsidy Benefits may have their benefit terminated and be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or other legal consequences.

Return completed Invoice & Attendance Form via any of the following:

**Fax:** (816) 823-5498      **Mail:** General Services Administration / Attention: Child Care  
**Email:** useginvoices.childcare@gsa.gov      2300 Main St - 2SE  
**Questions:** (866) 508-0371      Kansas City, MO 64108

USCG 100242

Your provider will complete the following:

- ✓ MONTH OF SERVICE
- ✓ ATTENDANCE & BILLING RECORD
- ✓ The TOTAL COST they are charging for their child care services
- ✓ The USCG BALANCE DUE, the Total Cost Less the Member/Family Portion
- ✓ Sign the Invoice certifying that the information is correct

You as the USCG Member, your spouse or Power of Attorney (POA) will sign certifying all the information is correct and that you have paid to your Provider the Member/Family Portion.

## U.S. Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program Family Handbook

### Billing Errors

Billing errors may cause an underpayment or an overpayment. The parent and provider are required to provide correct information in relation to the USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit received. If the provider was to receive an over-payment of USCG Child Care Subsidy benefits, a refund or offset of the amount of the overpayment would be due. Any overpayments, including those due to a GSA /USCG error, must be reported immediately to the families' assigned agency representative.

Once GSA has determined that an over-payment was issued and the information has been validated, the provider or family will receive an official notification which may include a request that funds be returned for further credit to the USCG *or* that future invoices will be offset (maximum offset period allowed is 90 days).

The GSA Subsidy Administration Section is responsible to collect erroneous payments made to providers for the following reasons which include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Erroneous or false information regarding eligibility or care provided
- ◆ Duplicate payments or payments made for services not rendered
- ◆ Payments made for ineligible providers or families

The GSA Subsidy Administration Section will make reasonable efforts to collect overpayments making a minimum of three notifications to providers and families. Failure by the provider to return any requested overpayment/erroneous payment will result in a federal debt being established to collect the monies. For family's that incur an overpayment due to incorrect information provided in order to calculate the benefit or a change in the family status that effects their eligibility, the GSA Subsidy Administration Section will provide documentation to the USCG Coast Guard Child Care Subsidy Program for review and action. The GSA will act on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard for all financial decisions pertaining to child care subsidy payments issued.

Families or providers who give erroneous or false information may be permanently disqualified from participating in the USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit programs upon approval of the USCG Child Care Subsidy Program Manager.

### Payment Reconciliation

Families are required to make their portion of the total child care costs directly to their providers. Neither the GSA, nor the USCG, has any responsibility for ensuring that the family pays their portion. Failure of families to make their portion of child care costs may result in discontinued USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit. In addition, failure by the providers to reimburse families or credit their account for USCG Child Care Subsidy benefit received may result in disqualification from the program and repayment of funds.

