

Family Eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy Program

Child care assistance is intended to help Virginia parents afford child care and secure or maintain stable employment while supporting school readiness for young children across the Commonwealth.

Eligibility Based on Income

- **WHO CAN APPLY?** Income eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy Program varies based on the age of the children in the household. Here's a breakdown:
 - **Households with Young Children (Ages 5 or Younger, Not Yet in Kindergarten):** Parents may be eligible for assistance if the household income is up to [85 percent of the state median income](#).
 - **Households with ONLY School-Age Children:** Eligibility is determined based on income cap groups (Group I, II, and III), which vary by locality. Each group has different income limits, the highest of which is Group III, 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines. [Local Departments of Social Services](#) can offer more information to help families understand which income cap group applies to them.
 - **Households with both Young and School-Age Children:** If a family has **at least one young child** (not yet in kindergarten), parents may be eligible for child care assistance for all children in the family who are 12 years old or younger, if the household income is up to [85 percent of the state median income](#).
- **HOW DO I APPLY?** Families can submit their application [online](#), by mail, or in-person at their [Local Department of Social Services](#). Applications are available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and other languages upon request.
- **ARE THERE OTHER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS?** Yes, there are other eligibility requirements for the Child Care Subsidy Program. Parents must be employed, actively seeking employment, or participating in an education or training program. More information is [here](#).
- **HOW LONG CAN I RECEIVE HELP PAYING FOR CHILD CARE?** Families are eligible for a minimum of 12 months or until household income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income.
- **HOW SOON CAN I GET HELP?** After you submit your application, caseworkers at your Local Department of Social Services have 30 days to process it. This process includes a short phone interview and requesting documents to verify certain information. However, please be aware that some localities may have a waitlist for child care assistance due to high demand. Your caseworker will inform you if a waitlist is in place and what that may mean for receiving assistance.
- **HOW DO I CHOOSE A CHILD CARE PROVIDER?** Virginia will help you pay for child care from an approved subsidy vendor. If you already have a child care provider and they are not an approved vendor, they may apply to become one. You can use the [child care search tool](#) to find an approved subsidy vendor near you. If you are looking for more personalized guidance, [Child Care Aware of Virginia](#) can help you find the right child care provider for you.

What is 85% State Median Income?*

Family size	Monthly income	Annual income
2	\$6,455	\$77,455
3	\$7,973	\$95,680
4	\$9,492	\$113,904
5	\$11,011	\$132,129
6	\$12,529	\$150,354
7	\$12,814	\$153,771
8	\$13,099	\$157,188
9	\$13,384	\$160,605
10	\$13,669	\$164,022

Note: Some types of income are not counted in your monthly income when determining your eligibility for assistance. For example, tax credits--including the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit--and stimulus payments do not count as income. Your caseworker at your Local Department of Social Services can help you calculate your monthly income.

**Income guidelines are updated annually. This scale is effective 10/1/2024.*

State Income Eligibility Scale for Child Care Subsidy

Excerpted from Appendix A of [Virginia’s Child Care Subsidy Program Guidance Manual](#) (updated October 2024). The manual provides detailed information about policies and procedures in the Child Care Subsidy Program.

Maximum Monthly Income Level Effective 10/1/2024

Family Size	Group I* 150% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (monthly)	Group II* 160% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (monthly)	Group III* 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (monthly)	85% of Monthly State Median Income (Entry limit for families with young children; Exit Limit for all families)
2	\$2,555	\$2,725	\$3,151	\$6,455
3	\$3,228	\$3,443	\$3,981	\$7,973
4	\$3,900	\$4,160	\$4,810	\$9,492
5	\$4,573	\$4,877	\$5,639	\$11,011
6	\$5,245	\$5,595	\$6,469	\$12,529
7	\$5,918	\$6,312	\$7,298	\$12,814
8	\$6,590	\$7,029	\$8,128	\$13,099
9	\$7,263	\$7,747	\$8,957	\$13,384
10	\$7,935	\$8,464	\$9,787	\$13,669

Note: Income cap groups* (group I, II, and III) are set by locality. Your caseworker at your Local Department of Social Services can help you understand which group applies to you. Groups can also be found in Appendix Z: Metropolitan Statistical Area Groupings of [Virginia’s Child Care Subsidy Program Guidance Manual](#).