

FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION

Policy Number:	26-07
Policy Title:	Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program Enrollment Freeze and Updated Application Procedures
Release Date:	ASAP
Effective Date:	May 1, 2025
Approved By:	Augustin Ntabaganyimana Executive Director Family Investment Administration
Revision Date(s):	Not Applicable
Supersedes:	Not Applicable
Originating Office:	Office of Programs
Required Actions:	To assist Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients with submitting their Child Care Scholarship (CCS) application package.
Key Words:	Child Care Scholarship (CCS) application, Fast-Track application, Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)
Related Federal Law	42 U.S.C. 9858 et. seq.; 45 CFR Parts 98 & 99
Related State Laws	Family Law Article §5-550, §5-561, §5-570, Ann. Code of Md.
COMAR	COMAR 13A.14.06.00
State Plan Implications?	No Implications to the State Plan

 Maryland Department of Human Services Department of Human Services 25 S Charles Street Baltimore MD 21201	FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION (FIA) ACTION TRANSMITTAL
Control Number: # 25-07	

**TO: LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES (LDSS)
DIRECTORS, LDSS DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY
INVESTMENT, FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: AUGUSTIN NTABAGANYIMANA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 

**RE: CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP (CCS) PROGRAM
ENROLLMENT FREEZE AND UPDATED APPLICATION
PROCEDURES**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

Summary

The Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program (formerly known as Child Care Subsidy Program) helps eligible families in Maryland pay for childcare and early education programs. The program is managed through a centralized vendor, Child Scholarship Central 2 (CCS2), under the management of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Due to budget constraints, effective May 1, 2025, the CCS Program implemented a temporary freeze on **new** enrollments. The number of children served grew from approximately 21,000 in January 2023 to over 45,000 in April 2025. Consequently, the program reached its maximum budget capacity for providing scholarships.

Families who currently receive Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are **not** impacted by the enrollment freeze. Applicants who are issued a Fast-Track application must submit it before submitting the Full CCS Application. Please be aware that all

Fast-Track applications will be denied while the current freeze is in effect.

TCA applicants with a MSDE-Department of Human Services (DHS) referral form who correctly completed and submitted a full CCS application and are approved will be eligible for 24-months of benefits, with the following exceptions:

1. Parents approved for TCA and select informal care, will not be issued a scholarship until the Informal Child Care Provider is **approved**; this could take 60-days. Once the Informal Child Care Provider is approved, the TCA participant will be issued a 24-month scholarship. *(If the parent needs to start TCA Work Participation immediately, the parent may need to select a licensed or regulated childcare option).*
2. Parents approved for TCA, with an approved Informal Child Care Provider and who have a non-school-age child who has not been immunized will be issued a 90-day scholarship to allow the child to be immunized. Once the child is immunized, the parent will be issued a 24-month scholarship.

Applicants will receive notification through the **Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Family Portal** when a scholarship is available for their family. Current CCS recipients, including households receiving or eligible for TCA Transitional Support Services (TSS), will continue to receive benefits as long as they meet eligibility requirements and complete their redetermination on time. Participants currently enrolled in the CCS Program can still renew their scholarship and make changes to their existing case during the freeze (e.g., submitting redetermination applications, updating household information, requesting to add a child, changing providers, etc.).

Required Action

Case Manager's Must:

1. Inform TCA participants that they must complete the Fast Track application, only if presented to them, and the full CCS application in the CCS Family Portal. TCA participants will receive a denial notice for the Fast Track application, and the full CCS application will be processed. Case managers are **strongly encouraged** to promote only the full CCS application over the Fast Track application to reduce TCA participant burden and eliminate the need for two applications.
2. Continue to use the MSDE-DHS Referral Form for all approved TCA

cases.

3. Email the MSDE-DHS referral and full CCS application to:
CSCentral2DHSReferral@maryland.gov.
4. Continue to assist TCA participants as needed by submitting their full application through the CCS Family Portal. Full CCS applications must meet the following requirements for DHS referrals:
 - a. Applicants must be actively engaged in a TCA-approved activity, or they must begin the approved activity within 10 business days of the TCA referral submission.
 - b. DHS Case Managers must include the hours, days per week, and location for each head of the household's approved activity in the referral.
5. Provide a copy of the completed DHS Referral to the participant eligible for TCA benefits if the participant is submitting the CCS application on their own via the CCS Family Portal.
6. Once the participant is eligible for TCA benefits, submit the Full CCS Application. The participant will provide the CCS Application ID to their DHS Case Manager. Upon receipt of the CCS Application ID, the DHS Case Manager will submit the DHS Referral via the DHS email CSCentral2DHSReferral@maryland.gov. The DHS Case Manager will write the CCS Application ID across the top of the DHS Referral Form.
7. Explain to the TCA participant they can choose to upload the DHS Referral as "Proof of Activity" when submitting the CCS application(s) via the CCS Family Portal.
8. Follow up with CCS2 utilizing the referral email address (CSCentral2DHSReferral@maryland.gov) if the TCA participant has any problems or questions.
 - a. If scholarships are not issued to TCA participants within five (5) days of a completed referral, the DHS case manager can email the following staff:
 - i. MSDE - Jennifer Egan jennifer.egan@maryland.gov
 - ii. CCS2 - Barb Darsow bdarsow@deloitte.com
 - iii. CCS2 - Michelle Kinkead michelle.kinkead@maryland.gov

- b. When TCA participants are approved for CCS benefits, the DHS case manager who sent the referral will receive the following email from CCS Central:

i. Dear <DHS Rep Name>,

The Child Care Scholarship application for <child name> has been approved. Please work with <applicant name> to ensure they understand the next steps. Before their child can begin attending childcare, their scholarship must be attached to a provider. Advise <applicant name> to log in to the Child Care Scholarship Portal and select their desired provider. To do this, once logged in, they should click the Scholarship Tab, then expand the Pending Scholarships tile. From there, they should see the Select Provider button. Direct them to click that button to search for and select their provider of choice.

NOTE: They must take this step right away. After they select the provider, the provider must accept. Both steps must happen within 15 calendar days, or the issued scholarship will expire, and <applicant name> must submit a Scholarship Extension Request to get a new Scholarship issued. <Applicant Name> should have received an email providing these same instructions.

Please remind your applicant to log into the portal and complete this step ASAP. Please reply in this thread if you have any questions, and DO NOT attach any files to your email. Thank you.

Sincerely,
CCS Central 2

Reminders:

1. Only children listed in the “Child Information” section of the DHS Referral will be eligible for CCS benefits.
2. If TCA is active and/or the participant wishes to add another child needing a scholarship to the household, the participant must complete and submit a Change of Circumstance Form via the CCS Family Portal. The DHS Case Manager will submit a Referral Update Form to CCS2. The form will be located on Money4ChildCare.com.

3. All Fast-Track Applications will be denied, due to the CCS Program Freeze. For this reason, all CCS applicants must submit the Full CCS Application to be approved or denied for CCS benefits or placed on the Frozen Status List.
4. The participant eligible for TCA benefits must complete the Fast-Track Application, if provided, and upload all required documents via the CCS Family Portal. Immediately following the submission of the Fast-Track Application, the participant eligible for TCA benefits must complete the Full CCS Application and upload all required documents via the CCS Family Portal.

Resources

CSCentral2DHSReferral@maryland.gov

[CCS Family Portal](#)

[MSDE-DHS Referral Form](#)

[Written Communication from MSDE](#)

Money4ChildCare.com

Inquiries

Please direct policy questions to FIA Policy by completing the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#). Montgomery County staff may submit their policy questions via email at fia.policy@maryland.gov.

cc: DHS Executive Staff
Constituent Services
DHS Help Desk
FIA Management Staff
Office of Administrative Hearings