

Public Private Partnership Terms and Conditions

Service providers' terms and conditions

1. The Government is willing to enter into Public-Private Partnerships with Child Day Care Facilities, thereby establishing the free childcare scheme. Children whose parents are in work can benefit from the scheme. 'Parents in work' is defined as both parents/guardians who are in work, or single mother/father/guardian who are in work and paying social security contributions.
2. Government will pay the childcare centre a uniform rate of €3.00 per hour per child availing of the free childcare scheme in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
3. Government will settle the amounts due for the month, one week before end of month.
4. Government will pay childcare facilities the full rate even when the child is absent, provided that days of absence do not exceed:
 - 35 days pa (average attendance of 5 days a week)
 - 28 days pa (average attendance of 4 days a week)
 - 21 days pa (average attendance of 3 days a week)
 - 14 days pa (average attendance 2 days a week)
5. These absence days will apply pro-rata on a calendar basis. The provision includes the allowance for absence for medical reasons. Parents are to pay child care centres for absence days in excess of the above.
6. Service providers will not be paid nor will be able to charge for days for which parents advise at least 1 month in advance that they will not be making use of childcare.
7. The Government appreciates that the needs of the children and the parents may change from time to time. For this reason, the Government encourages flexibility on the part of the service provider. Parents have the right to change the number of hours and/or days or times, provided that they give one month notice. This does not apply to parents who send their children to independent schools.
8. The Government understands the service providers' need to have occasional breaks in the service. However, the service provider will not be paid by the Government nor will be able to charge parents who avail themselves of the free childcare scheme fees for shut-down or closed days.
9. Legal procedures apply if providers are found guilty of fraud or attempt to fraud the PPP system.

Users' terms and conditions

1. Children whose parents are in work can benefit from the free childcare scheme. 'Parents in work' is defined as both parents/guardians who are in work, or single mother/father/guardian who are

in work and paying social security contributions. Parent/s is/are entitled to free child care for all children of childcare-age, at a rate which is pro-rata to the mother's (or single father) employment hours, and an additional 60 minutes per day for commuting (NB commuting time is paid per family).

2. Parent/s is/are to inform the provider of the number of hours and days of service one month in advance. This does not apply to parents who send their children to independent schools.
3. Parent/s cannot over-book hours, even if they are entitled to. Over booking is defined as booking over 10 unutilised hours per month. The parent/s will be charged €3.00 per hour (chargeable to the department responsible from free child care) for every additional unutilised hour over and above the 10 hours. Failure to do so within a month will result in the termination of free childcare.
4. Parent/s can consume more hours than they are entitled to with the free child care scheme, provided that they pay the provider's rate. Providers must inform parents of the chargeable rate prior to registration.
5. Parent/s has/have to present a medical certificate when a child is sick for more than 3 days, in order to be allowed to re-attend child care.
6. Parent/s is/are free to avail themselves of free childcare within the childcare centre of their choice (provided that the childcare centre enters into a PPP agreement with Government). Parents are to advise the Department for Education one month in advance if they would like to start availing of the free child care scheme, change centre or will stop making use of free child care.
7. Free child care is terminated once the child is eligible to enrol into kindergarten I.
8. Government will continue to pay for free child care while the mother is availing herself of maternity leave. Free child care is not extended to parental leave.
9. Parent/s will be able to opt either for free child care or the tax rebate system.