



UK Government

15 and 30 Hours Childcare Support

How it Works

Government funding is intended to pay for 15 or 30 hours a week of childcare. From September 2025, this will increase to 30 hours per week as standard.

Government funding does not cover:

- meals
- nappies
- additional hours
- additional activities, such as trips

You might be asked to pay for these things additionally.

You are not able to use the funding entitlements for a nanny, home carer, or for childcare provided by a relative, such as a grandparent.

Eligibility

Working Parents Offer

If you live and work in England you may be entitled to 30 hours funded childcare support from the term after your child turns 9 months old, until they start school.

You can usually get funded childcare for working parents if you (and your partner, if you have one) are:

- in work or starting a new job
- on sick leave or annual leave
- on shared parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave

The amount of funded childcare you can get depends on:

- your child's age and circumstances
- your income (and your partner's income, if you have one)
- your immigration status

Not Employed?

If you are not eligible for the working parent offer **you will still receive the 15 hour entitlement for all 3 and 4 year olds from the term after your child turns 3** until they start school, irrespective of your income level, benefit status, or family circumstances.

You may still be eligible if your partner is working, and you are on carer's leave or if you get any of the following:

- Incapacity Benefit
- Severe Disablement Allowance

- Carer's Allowance
- Limited Capability for Work Benefit
- contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance

Immigration Status

To be eligible for funded childcare for working parents, you (and your partner if you have one and if they live with you) must have a National Insurance Number.

The person who applies must also have at least one of the following:

- British or Irish citizenship
- settled or pre-settled status, or you have applied and you're waiting for a decision
- permission to access public funds - your UK residence card will tell you if you cannot do this

Application Process

Before you apply, you'll need to make sure you have the following information to hand:

- your National Insurance Number (or unique taxpayer reference if you are self-employed)
- the date you started or are due to start work
- details of any government support or benefits you receive
- the UK birth certificate reference number (if you have one) for your child

If you are a foster carer, there is a separate application process. Speak to your social worker to find out more.

Once you have applied, you will receive an 11-digit code to give to your childcare provider to access the entitlements.

You'll need to take the code to your childcare provider, along with your National Insurance number and your child's date of birth. Your childcare provider will check the code before allocating a place to your child.

Reconfirmation

Once you have received your code, you will need to reconfirm every 3 months even if you have not yet started using your entitlements.

Remember to log in to your childcare account on GOV.UK to check when your reconfirmation dates are so that you can renew your code on time. You will also receive reminders from HMRC when it is time for you to reconfirm.

If you aren't able to renew your code by your reconfirmation deadline, you may be able to retain your child's childcare place for a short period; this is known as a grace period. Your provider will be able to tell you if you are in a grace period.

If your code is not renewed on time before the end of your grace period, your provider may withdraw the place for your child.

Any Questions?

If you have any other questions about how childcare entitlement works, please visit:

<https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/>