

HARDSHIP POLICY FOR CHANGE IN PROVIDERS

Ops Memo 19-42, CC Manual 17.3 and 17.3.1

Policy restricts the ability of a parent to receive a new authorization for the current month to a different provider after their EBT card has been loaded, the child has attended and a payment has been made except in **reported situations that meet hardship criteria.**

The request for the new authorization must be made by the parent within 10 calendar days of the start of the unforeseen circumstance. Workers may approve a hardship authorization on a case-by-case basis that is requested beyond the 10-calendar day reporting requirement. There may be circumstances that prevent a parent from requesting a timely hardship authorization. Workers must review each case to determine the circumstance for the late request and whether it should be approved or denied.

To be eligible for an authorization in this situation, the child care assistance group must meet one of the Hardship criteria and the situation must create a legitimate and unforeseen hardship for the child or children to continue to attend the current child care provider location for the remainder of the current month. See CC Manual 17.3.1 or the second page of this document for the list of Hardship criteria.

Hardship Procedure:

1. If parent calls to report a change in daycare providers for the current month, you must ask the parent the reason why they are changing providers and document the reason in case comments. Please include the last day at the old provider and the first day at the new provider
2. Inform the parent that the new authorization cannot start until the 1st of the following month and we can not pay the new provider until then. Parents should be told that Wisconsin Shares policy prohibits issuing subsidy for a second provider midmonth
3. End the current authorization for the last day of the current month and enter the new authorization for the 1st of the following month
4. If the worker believes the parent may qualify for a second authorization due to a **Hardship**, the worker can tell the parent their situation will be referred for a possible exemption to the policy. The process can take 24-72 hours for a decision
5. Send an email to Jessie Miller/Patty Porto-Sanchez/Cortney Hebel with **Hardship** in the Subject line with the case number and a brief description of the issue
6. The hardship situations will be reviewed and approved or denied by us
7. We will enter the Denial or Confirm the Hardship in EBT CSAW on the EBT CSAW Hardship page
8. We will email the worker back to inform them if the Hardship was approved or denied
9. The worker will contact the parent to let them if the Hardship was approved or denied
10. If approved, the worker will enter the new authorization for the current month
11. If the two authorization total hours are above 75 hours, then the system will give you an Error Message that it is above 75 hours. Leave the new authorization in Pending Status and send email to Jessie/Patty/Cortney to confirm the pending authorization

If you receive a request which does not fall under the criteria in CC manual 17.3.1 but is demonstrated to be an unforeseen hardship on the family, worker can email Jessie/Patty/Cortney who will send the request to the *Child Care Help Desk* for review and approval or denial.

NOTE: Parents who are requesting a hardship authorization for the current month due to alleged child abuse or neglect by their provider **MUST** report the incident to the appropriate certification or licensing agency. If their provider is a licensed Family or Group Center, they need to contact DCF licensing at 608-422-6765 or if their provider is Certified they need to contact 4-C at 608-271-9181.

Moving is not a hardship situation itself, the policy permits a hardship authorization in certain situations when a family moves. Occurrences of hardship are unforeseen and moving from one home to another is typically a planned event. Workers should find out why the family moved, and when they knew they would be moving, and determine if it was a possible hardship.

NOTE: Parents who do not agree with the denial of a second authorization midmonth may request a fair hearing and dispute the start date of the new authorization.

HARDSHIP SITUATIONS

see CC Manual 17.3.1

- The child is relocated from his or her current residence so the family can escape domestic abuse and it is not reasonable to travel to the current child care provider location.
- The child has a temporary or chronic illness and is not able to attend their current child care provider due to that illness, but another child care provider can care for the child at their facility.
- There is alleged abuse or neglect of the child by the current child care provider and a complaint has been made to the appropriate regulatory agency.
- The child is expelled from the current child care provider for behavior issues.
- The needs of a child with a disability are no longer being met by the current child care provider (for example, a teacher who supported the child has suddenly left the child care facility).
- The safety of the parent or child is threatened by remaining at the current child care provider.
- The family is evicted from their current home, and it is not reasonable to travel to the current child care provider.
- A formerly homeless family finds stable housing and it is unreasonable to use the current child care provider.
- There are sudden changes in a parent's approved activity location which makes the use of the current child care provider unreasonable.
- There are sudden changes in a parent's approved activity schedule and the provider's hours of operation do not accommodate the family's need for child care.
- One (1) parent passes away or unexpectedly leaves a two-parent or multi-generational Wisconsin Shares Assistance Group and the current child care provider either does not have the capacity to handle the family's additional child care need, or the hours of operation no longer supports the family's need for child care.
- There is damage to the child care facility that creates an unsafe environment for children and makes it impossible for them to continue to attend the same provider.
- The child care provider is temporarily closed and is located within an area affected by a state of emergency that has been declared by the Governor.
- The child care provider has a voluntary, unforeseen permanent closure and the family needs to attend an alternate provider.
- The provider does not allow the child(ren) to attend due to circumstances outside of the parent's control (for example, the center has reached their regulatory capacity or provider-to-child ratios).
- The child care provider's regulation is suspended or revoked by a regulatory authority.