

## Who is responsible for paying expenses for children/young people in care?

The weekly/fortnightly carer payment (not including loadings) is paid to you to help cover the day-to-day ordinary costs of caring for a child or young person in an out-of-home care placement, such as food, clothing, recreation, entertainment, basic medical costs, travel etc.

Where assessed as required and appropriate, additional support payments to meet individual needs of children and/or young people in out of home care, that are not covered by the fortnightly carer payment, loadings or other payments made available to carers, may be made by the Department.

The table on the following pages assists to summarise the responsibilities in relation to who pays for various child expenses for children in family based care (general foster care), kinship care and specific child only care.

The responsibilities are designed to help the child in your care feel they are a part of your family.

It does not address in detail other grants and funding, Commonwealth or insurance payments.

It does not cover expectations of contracted agency carers or staff/employee carers.

## Are loadings included in the following information?

No, expectations about who will cover expenses when a child receives a loading have not been included in the following information.

Carers receiving a loading are expected to use the loading payment to pay for the additional costs associated with the care of the child that would ordinarily be paid for by the Department.

The case worker, in conjunction with the carer and, where possible, the support worker, will need to identify the specific areas of expenditure to be covered by the loading payment (e.g. travel, medical or dietary). These expenditure expectations must be agreed to with the carer at the time the loading assessment is completed by the case worker and recorded in an Out-of-Home Care Finance Agreement.

## Are there exceptions?

The number one issue raised by carers about the Carer Payments system is inconsistency. The information in the table on the following pages will help to provide a clear understanding of the expenses carers are responsible for. It aims to assist with maintaining consistency, providing the criteria are followed.

However, there may be instances which require exceptions to be considered. Exceptions will only occur in extraordinary, one-off situations when you face additional expenses because of your circumstances or the circumstances of the child or young person for whom you are caring. You will need to discuss these exceptions with your child's case worker.

## Do I need prior approval to purchase items for which I want to be reimbursed?

Yes, it is important that approval is given by your child's case worker and supervisor prior to you purchasing goods or services for which you wish to be reimbursed. If you are unable to contact the child's case worker, please phone the team's senior practitioner or supervisor. You may not be reimbursed for your out-of-pocket expenses if this approval is not given.

**Do I need to keep receipts?**

Yes, it is important that you keep receipts/tax invoices for goods or services that you have purchased for the child in your care and for which you would like to be reimbursed. It may not be possible to provide reimbursement if you don't have receipts or tax invoices due to financial audit requirements.

**Can I give feedback?**

Yes, you are invited to provide feedback to your DCP caseworker or:

Connecting Foster Carers SA

Phone: 1800 732 272

Email: [carers@cfc-sa.org.au](mailto:carers@cfc-sa.org.au)

Web: <http://cfc-sa.org.au/>

# Carer Reference One | Carer Support Payments Who pays for what?

Child and/or Young Person Needs	Carer's Financial Responsibility (what carers are expected to cover)	Additional DCP funding assistance that may be available
<b>Home and Vehicles</b>		
<p><b>Housing:</b></p> <p><b>Wear and Tear</b></p> <p><b>Repairs and Maintenance and Damages (Insurance)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gradual deterioration, wear and tear and depreciation of home</li> <li>• Routine repairs and maintenance</li> <li>• Unplanned or unintentional accidents and mishaps including but not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ tears to fly wire screens</li> <li>○ broken glass (e.g. caused by a cricket ball)</li> <li>○ spillage on carpets</li> <li>○ wet beds/linen</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Routine repairs and maintenance</li> <li>• Home and contents insurance – damage to carer's property:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ You are required to have and maintain adequate household building and contents insurance</li> <li>○ You are required to claim on your own insurance in the first instance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraordinary expenses to establish and/or maintain appropriate accommodation where large sibling groups are involved</li> <li>• Home and Contents Insurance – damage to carer's property. Where damage to a carers property is caused by deliberate, intentional or malicious acts (this includes uncontrollable actions of a child in care e.g. as a consequence of a disability and also the nature and/or condition of the child), DCP may:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ pay for any out-of-pocket expenses relating to damage to your property caused solely by a child or young person in your care</li> <li>○ pay for any loss of no claim bonus and/or insurance excess payable relating to a claim met by your insurer (only for malicious, deliberate and intentional acts)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The Carer must first claim against their home and/or contents insurance.</p> <p>Special circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<b>Household goods and services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gradual deterioration, wear and tear and depreciation of household goods/appliances</li> <li>• Routine repairs and maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraordinary expenses to establish and/or maintain a placement</li> <li>• Computer / Laptop for educational purposes</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utility bills (e.g. water, electricity, gas)</li> <li>• Telephone</li> <li>• Internet services</li> <li>• Mobile phone (optional)</li> <li>• Furniture and appliances (e.g. bed, desk, chair, lamp)</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Furniture purchased by the carer will remain the property of the carer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bedding and linen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitcase or travel bag</li> <li>• When part of an agreed plan, STD phone calls related to a child or young person maintaining contact with his/her:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Birth parents</li> <li>○ Siblings</li> <li>○ Extended family</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mobile phone, but only when required by DCP for safety and/or security reasons.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Furniture purchased by DCP for a child remains the child or young person's property and will travel with the child or young person should the placement change.</p>
Home help and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you chose to use a house / yard cleaner or other home help service or equipment, you will be required to cover the costs of this service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some extraordinary circumstances (e.g. large sibling groups placed together with an aged relative carer), DCP may provide funding assistance for home / yard cleaning services.</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>		
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutritious daily meals and snacks, including school lunches and recess meals</li> <li>• Meals, snacks, nibbles and infant formula for a child attending family contact (unless it is expected that the birth parent will provide the meal as part of the contact). Please discuss arrangements with your case worker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If food is purchased during family contact (e.g. special outings) the birth parent or, in some cases, DCP may cover the costs.</li> </ul>

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Clothing, footwear and personal care		
Clothing and Footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All clothing and footwear</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The Placement Start-Up Payment is paid to assist with immediate costs of caring for a child, including clothing and footwear.</p>	
Personal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All personal care products, including toiletries, general hygiene items, nappies etc.</li> <li>Haircuts</li> <li>Ear or other body piercing (only with pre-approval from DCP).</li> </ul>	
Transport		
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport to and from <b>routine, everyday</b> activities and events such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>preschool and school</li> <li>babysitting and child care</li> <li>leisure and sporting activities</li> <li>one-off medical, dental or specialist appointments</li> </ul> </li> <li>Bus and train fares</li> <li>Transport to <b>non-everyday</b> appointments and activities specific to a child or young person in care; it is not ideal for a child or young person to be transported by a taxi or by a volunteer that he/she does not know. The most ideal option is for you to accompany and transport the child or young person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP will ensure that eligible children or young people have access to services through other government agencies (e.g. students with disabilities - transport assistance program)</li> </ul> <p>DCP may cover the cost of travel associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ongoing and recurring specialist medical, dental and psychological (e.g. therapy) appointments</li> <li>transport from remote and very remote country areas to medical or other appointments in Adelaide, but only when approved by DCP</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATS) may provide assistance to people in the country who are required to travel more than 100 km (one way) to obtain the nearest available medical</p>
Motor Vehicle (general)		
Motor Vehicle (insurance)		

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For non-everyday travel you will be reimbursed for providing this transport in accordance with the Department's carer mileage allowances. Non-everyday travel may include travel to/from:

- respite care (in liaison with respite carer)
- ongoing and recurring specialist medical, dental and psychological (e.g. therapy) appointments
- cultural connection activities and events
- family contact and reunification (optional – see Family Contact and Reunification information)
- When you have a vehicle, you are responsible for:
  - fuel
  - maintenance and running costs
  - maintaining registration and roadworthiness
- Motor Vehicle Insurance – damage to your vehicle:
  - you are required to have (as a minimum) Third Party Property Damage Insurance
  - it is recommended that you consider taking out comprehensive insurance

specialist for treatment that is not available locally.

- cultural connection activities and events
- family contact and reunification
- funerals of significant extended family members
- transport to a school outside your local area, but only when approved by DCP
- extraordinary transport costs for children and young people living in remote and very remote county areas, but only when approved by DCP
- DCP will assist you with transporting children when you do not own a vehicle or are unable to transport because of ill health, a family crisis and/or personal medical appointments
- In extraordinary situations (e.g. large sibling groups placed together with a relative carer), DCP may assist with the costs associated with leasing or purchasing a larger vehicle
- Motor Vehicle Insurance – damage to a carer's motor vehicle. Where damage to a carer's motor vehicle is caused by deliberate, intentional or malicious acts, DCP may pay for any loss of no claim bonus and/or insurance excess payable relating to a claim met by your insurer.

**NOTE:** The Carer must first claim against their motor vehicle insurance.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ you are required to claim on your own insurance in the first instance.</li> </ul>	<p>Special circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<b>Child Care / Babysitting</b>		
<p><b>Child Care</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Babysitting</li> <li>• Transport to respite care (in liaison with respite carer)</li> <li>• <b>Child Care</b> Approval must be sought from DCP prior to enrolling a child into child care.</li> </ul> <p>The Australian Government (Centrelink) provides families with financial assistance to help cover the costs of approved child care.</p> <p>DCP may also assist with covering the cost of child care, but only when specific criteria are met.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> You must apply for the child care benefits and rebates provided by Centrelink in your own name and accept full liability for the payment.</p> <p>For more detailed information, please refer to <a href="#">Carer Reference Two – Child Care Assistance</a>.</p> <p>Assistance may also be provided by:</p> <p>The Grandparent Advisor. Grandparent Advisors provide support to grandparents and non-parent carers of children. Freecall: 1800 245 965 Web Page: <a href="#">Non-Parent Carers</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respite care placement (depending on availability)</li> <li>• <b>Child Care</b> DCP may provide financial assistance to cover the costs of child care fees that are not covered by Centrelink (the gap between the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and the child care fees).</li> </ul> <p>To be eligible to receive DCP child care financial assistance specific criteria must be met.</p> <p>Please refer to <a href="#">Carer Reference Two – Child Care Assistance</a>.</p>

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Education		
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education costs including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ preschool fees</li> <li>○ government primary and secondary school fees not covered by the School Card</li> <li>○ books and stationery</li> <li>○ school uniforms and footwear</li> <li>○ excursions</li> <li>○ travel to/from school (except where the school outside your local area, but only when approved by DCP)</li> <li>○ school photos</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> DCP pays an Education Grant at the beginning of school term to assist with covering these costs.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Approval for ALL non-government school enrolments must be obtained prior to enrolling a child or young person into the non-government school (even if you are willing to pay for all the costs associated with the child or young person attending the non-government school). Please discuss your options with your case worker.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School Card:</b> All children and young people in care are eligible for a School Card</li> <li>• Education costs including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ school camps (overnights stays)</li> <li>○ contributing toward the costs of a young person's year 12 formal</li> <li>○ arranging tutoring (may be through DECD or The Smith Family)</li> <li>○ contributing to special education supports such as School Services Officers (but only when part of the child or young person's Education Plan)</li> <li>○ travel to/from a school outside your local area, but only when approved by DCP</li> <li>○ additional school photos for birth parents, extended family members or the child or young person's file</li> <li>○ an overseas educational exchange or travel experience (e.g. Spirit of Science)</li> <li>○ the hire of clothing and/or equipment required for a school trip or activity (e.g. snow trip)</li> <li>○ school uniforms where a placement changes necessitating changes of school within the school year.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In some exceptional situations, DCP may contribute towards the partial or full costs of pre-approved non-government</li> </ul>



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		<p>school fees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCP will ensure that young people are aware of the TAFE initiative to waive fees for young people under, or previously under, guardianship of the Minister.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational/Social Activities and Life Skills</b>		
<p><b>Recreational and Social Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and leisure activities (hobbies)</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Outings  (including lunches, snacks and nibbles for the above)</li> <li>• Toys</li> <li>• Safety equipment (including but not limited to bike helmets, knee and elbow protectors and other sporting protective equipment)</li> <li>• Holiday and recreational camps</li> <li>• Holiday activities and events</li> <li>• Carer family holiday costs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCP may assist with covering the cost of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ cultural connection camps or activities for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children or cultural activities for children from other cultural backgrounds</li> <li>○ a child attending a holiday, camp, activity or event where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ there is no respite care placement available (the respite care request must be supported by DCP)</li> <li>▪ attendance addresses a specific child need</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• DCP may make a contribution toward the cost of a child taking part in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a holiday, camp, activity or event when you are unable to meet the costs due to your financial circumstances</li> <li>○ specialist sports training, coaching or activities and events at an elite or representative level (e.g. SAPSASA or representing South Australia).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Extra-Curricular Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are expected to pay for the costs of at least one extra-curricular activity per school term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCP may pay for additional extra-curricular activities each term, but only when these activities are pre-approved</li> </ul>

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	<p>as agreed to with DCP. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ongoing costs associated with sporting activities (e.g. weekly fees), uniforms and equipment</li> <li>○ ongoing costs associated with recreational activities (e.g. weekly fees), uniforms and equipment</li> <li>○ club memberships, equipment and events (e.g. Scouts).</li> </ul>	by DCP.
<b>Life Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You are expected to assist in developing skills in cooking and home management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DCP may assist young people to attend specialised life skills or training programs</li> <li>● Support for young people to enable them to live independently (e.g. referral to Youth Support Services)</li> <li>● Driver education and training up to 10 one (1) hour lessons per child.</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>		
<b>Pocket Money and Savings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide weekly pocket money (this amount should be on par with an amount given to other children in your family or at the rate suggested by DCP. The suggested rates are available on the website.</li> <li>● Assist the child or young person develop savings and budgeting plans and develop money management skills</li> <li>● Information about pocket money is available in the Parenting SA Parent Easy Guides – General Parenting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DCP will assist you establish and maintain a savings and budgeting plan for the child or young person in care and develop the child’s money management skills</li> <li>● DCP will ensure that the young person is linked to financial support to help them live independently.</li> </ul>

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	PEGS – Pocket Money available at <a href="http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au">www.parenting.sa.gov.au</a>	
<b>Family and community relationships</b>		
<b>Family Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for children to be involved in cultural connection activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP will pay for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>costs associated with the child's involvement in cultural activities and events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Gifts and Presents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents for birthdays, Christmas, other religious festivals or special events</li> <li>Birthday parties and special parties for the child or young person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP will pay for a birthday and Christmas present (or appropriate alternative e.g. voucher) for the child or young person (in additional to gifts/presents you give him or her)</li> <li>DCP may contribute toward the cost of gifts from the child to birth parents or siblings for birthdays and special occasions, where this is assessed as being appropriate, especially during a period of reunification.</li> </ul>
<b>Family contact and reunification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meals, snacks, nibbles and infant formula for a child or young person attending family contact</li> <li>Transport (<b>optional</b>):</li> </ul> <p>Ideally you will be involved in the process of family contact and reunification. Where possible, this includes transporting. This will avoid a child travelling in taxis or being transported by a volunteer they may not know. However, it is acknowledged that sometimes you may not be able to transport the child or young person in instances where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there are physical or emotional safety issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family contact and reunification costs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the cost of transport to and from family contact. If you do the transporting then DCP will reimburse you in accordance with the Department's carer mileage allowances</li> <li>activities and events associated with reunification</li> <li>if food is purchased during family contact (e.g. special outings) the birth parent or, in some cases, DCP may cover the cost.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ there are relationship issues between you and the birth family that make the transporting unworkable</li> <li>○ you have other commitments that prevent you from transporting (e.g. employment)</li> <li>○ you are ill</li> <li>○ the amount of time that you need to 'wait around' while the family contact is occurring makes the transporting impractical for you.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● For family contact or reunification travel you will be reimbursed for providing this transport in accordance with the Department's carer mileage allowances</li> </ul>	
<b>Court, Legal and Official documents</b>		
<p>Court attendance</p> <p>Legal costs</p> <p>Official documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transport for court attendance <b>(optional)</b>. If you provide transport you will be reimbursed in accordance with the Department's carer mileage allowances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DCP will cover all court costs, including transport and attending appointments. If you provide transport you will be reimbursed in accordance with the Department's carer mileage allowances</li> <li>● the child or young person's birth certificate</li> <li>● obtaining a passport</li> <li>● costs associated with locating or retrieving other personal records.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthcare</b>		
<p>Physical,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Basic medical treatment including</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medicare card and Health Care card:</b></p>

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## Emotional and Behavioural

everyday visits to a general practitioner (GP). This includes any Medicare gap payment applied

- One-off treatments through a registered alternative health provider
- Optometrist consultations (bulk billed)
- All over the counter medications, prescriptions, pharmaceuticals or natural remedies/medications for every-day, temporary conditions and ailments

*For example:* a visit to the doctor and a subsequent prescription for antibiotics for tonsillitis.

**NOTE:** All non-basic medical treatment must be pre-approved by DCP.

### Private health cover:

You may choose, at your own expense, to place a child in care on your private health insurance policy.

DCP may cover the private health cover gap costs for specific medical or dental treatment, but only when pre-approved by DCP and in specific circumstances (see 'Additional DCP funding assistance that may be available' opposite).

All children in care will have a Medicare card and eligible to receive a government Health Care card. If your child does not have either of these cards please contact your child's DCP case worker.

### Public health and dental care:

Children in care have priority access to public health and dental services. Medical and dental treatment should, in the first instance, be carried out through the public health and dental system. Initial health and dental assessments need to be arranged by the child's DCP case worker.

### Private health cover:

DCP may cover the private health cover gap costs for specific medical or dental treatment, but only when pre-approved by DCP where:

- the service or treatment required is unavailable through the public health system, or
- there is a long waiting list for the specific treatment in the public system and this may create significant difficulties for the child

**NOTE:** If not approved by DCP and you still choose to have the child in care treated through the private health system, DCP will not pay the gap.

DCP may cover the costs for:

- On-going treatment for chronic conditions through a registered health provider
- Pre-approved ongoing alternative health treatment from registered providers

- Repeat prescription medications that must be taken over a long period of time or on an on-going basis (not for every-day, temporary conditions and ailments)
  - Prescription medication not covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
  - Optical costs (frames and lenses)
  - Ambulance cover
  - DNA testing of a child or any other person when required by DCP in the process of court proceedings or to determine appropriate family contact arrangements
  - specialist medical and allied health services, as recommended by a general practitioner, specialist or other qualified professional where the child is not able to access the service in the public health system (particularly speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy)
  - counselling, therapy and other psychological interventions
  - costs of dental services not available in the public system
- For example:* dental treatment for a child/young person, requiring general anaesthetic, not eligible for services at the Women's and Children's Hospital.