Requesting evidence for Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)

Guidance for Child Care Providers

This guidance is to support you as a child care provider when seeking evidence to apply for a determination for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS - child wellbeing) - only if you have made a mandatory notification about a child at risk to the South Australian Department for Child Protection (DCP).

If you have made a referral to a support service other than DCP, please refer to the Australian Government Guide to ACCS (child wellbeing) for guidance on seeking evidence.

What is the ACCS (child wellbeing)?

The ACCS (child wellbeing) is an element of the Australian Government’s childcare package that gives the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children a strong start through access to quality early learning and care.

ACCS (child wellbeing) supports families who need practical help with the cost of child care to support their child’s safety and wellbeing.

Further information on the ACCS (child wellbeing) can be accessed at the Guide to ACCS (child wellbeing).

Risk and Mandatory Notification

The Guide to ACCS (child wellbeing) sets out the definition of ‘at risk’ and the process to apply for this subsidy. This guidance material should be used in conjunction with the Child Care Provider Handbook.

For ACCS (child wellbeing) eligibility purposes, the definition of ‘at risk’ is a lower threshold than the definition of risk requiring a mandatory notification in South Australia.

As mandated notifiers, child care providers are required to make a mandatory notification report where they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is or may be at risk under the South Australian Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

All notifications must be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78.

Applying for ACCS (child wellbeing) where a mandatory notification has been made

Child care providers will only need to seek evidence from DCP to support an application for a ACCS (child wellbeing) determination where a CARL notification has been made about a child, or they are already under the care of the DCP.
Initial 6-week certificate for ACCS (child wellbeing)

Where a child care provider considers a child is at risk, they can issue a certificate immediately for the child to receive the ACCS (child wellbeing) for up to 6 weeks.

A provider can only provide a certificate for ACCS (child wellbeing) for an individual child for a total of 6 weeks within a 12 month period in relation to a particular service. If a child has received a certificate for ACCS (child wellbeing) in the past 12 months for the same provider then a determination will need to be sought.

Applying for a determination

When a child care provider has given a certificate and considers the child will continue to be at risk beyond those 6 weeks, they can apply for a determination from the Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHS) for additional periods of ACCS (child wellbeing).

The provider will need to submit evidence for DHS to make a decision. The Guide to ACCS (child wellbeing) outlines minimum evidence required for a determination application. Child care providers can apply for a determination through their third party provider software or the Provider Entry Point (PEP).

When the ACCS (child wellbeing) is approved by DHS the family can receive ACCS (child wellbeing) for a further period up to 13 weeks. Where a child continues to be at risk, DHS can approve additional periods of ACCS (child wellbeing) by making subsequent determinations.

If a child care provider considers the child will continue to be at risk (under the ACCS (child wellbeing) definition) they are advised to start seeking evidence for a determination within the first 2–3 weeks of the initial certificate being issued.

Child care providers do not need to wait until the 6 week certificate period has ended to make an application for a determination. DHS has advised that a decision on eligibility for a determination for ACCS (child wellbeing) can be expected within 28 days of application.

Requesting evidence to support an ACCS (child wellbeing) determination

To request evidence that a mandatory notification has been made to DCP via CARL and that the child is considered by DCP to be at risk for the purposes of providing evidence to support an application for ACCS (child wellbeing), please email DCP.ACCS@sa.gov.au.

When seeking evidence from DCP, providers need to be able to convey as much information as possible, including:

- the child’s name, age, date of birth, address
- that the evidence is required for the purposes of an ACCS (child wellbeing) determination.
Providers need to be prepared to answer further questions about:

- the caregivers, parents and/or siblings
- their full name, job title, agency name and address, contact number
- the type of contact the provider has with the family
- whether the caregivers are aware that a report has been made.

DCP will provide a standard letter that meets DHS requirements advising that the child was referred to the department during the initial 6 week period.

The evidence will state:

- the name of the child
- the child’s date of birth
- the contact details for DCP including the name and title of the person giving evidence
- the date the evidence was given
- if the child meets the description of being at risk in accordance with the definition under the Children and Young People’s (Safety) Act 2017.

For more details about the ACCS (child wellbeing) visit the Australian Government’s Department of Human Services website: https://www.education.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy-0