



Payment of Service Fees Policy



Policy Number	QA 7/2	Title	Payment of Service Fees Policy
Revision	2.2	Written By	Nominated Supervisor
Reviewed By	EHOOSH Management Committee	Approved By	EHOOSH Management Committee
Supersedes	Version 2.1	Effective Date	November 2024

1. Policy Statement

Eastwood Heights OOSH (the Service) aims to provide a quality Education and Care Service and at the same time set and maintain fees that are reasonable. As a not-for-profit organisation, any profits generated are used to further the objectives of the Service. We understand the importance of maintaining accurate fee statements and receipts and will provide clear information to families on the fee payment processes.

All families must keep their fee payments up to date. However, where payment of child care fees becomes a genuine issue, we will endeavour to offer the family support and continuity of care for their children during times of hardship. Issues regarding fees will never impact negatively on the relationships between educators, children and families.

The setting and payment of fees takes into account the legal requirements of the national Education and Care Services Regulations, the Australian Tax Office and the Privacy Act 1988,

as well as the guidelines contained in the Department of Education's Child Care Provider Handbook. All records held at the Service will be maintained in accordance with the Service's Confidentiality Policy.

We are committed to providing all families the opportunity to enrol their children at our service, with a clear, transparent, fair and inclusive fee structure.

2. Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for the payment of fees and the provision of a statement of fees charged by the service.

3. Procedure

The EHOOSH Parent Management Committee will annually determine the required fee level to meet the budget prediction for the following year. Fees may also be reviewed on a term-by-term basis, based on attendance and the Service's ability to meet its running costs. Parents will be given a minimum of 14 days' notice of any changes to the fees schedule.

The fees schedule and fees payment process will be fully explained to families during the enrolment process. Fees are charged per session, not by the length of time a child attends a session. The same fees will be charged to all families for equivalent care arrangements.

Fees are invoiced and direct debited via HubWorks, our child care software provider. Payment takes place twice a term two weeks in arrears and three weeks in advance of care. A monthly statement of fees will be issued to each family via email. Vacation Care fees are direct debited prior to vacation care. Passwords can be issued to families to allow the viewing of fees, rebates and enrolment information in Hubworks. Details of family accounts and all completed forms retained by the Service will be kept confidential and stored appropriately.

4. Child Care Subsidy

The Service will comply with Australian Government requirements to be an approved Education and Care Service for the purposes of Child Care Subsidy and assistance payments. We will comply with the online Child Care Management System (CCMS) reporting requirements and any other requirements for claiming and administering CCS. It is a family's responsibility to register with the Family Assistance Office for CCS.

Families will only be eligible for CCS if child care attendance records are accurately completed and signed by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, and other eligibility requirements are met. Families are entitled to 42 absence days for each registered child in each financial year. CCS is paid for these days provided that the child would normally have attended on that day and fees have been charged. Additional absences can be claimed when the first 42 days have been used, however supporting documentation may be required for approval of such. All documentation pertaining to CCS will be kept for the specified period of time and made available to Australian Government officers on request.

5. Absent Days

Families should contact the Service to advise of their child's inability to attend a booked session as soon as that is known. Fees still apply for sessions the child would normally attend but is absent from unless a 'Change of Booking Form' has been submitted within the appropriate timeframe. Parents who fail to notify the Service of their child's non-attendance before the start of the relevant session will incur a no notification fee of \$10.00 in addition to the prescribed fee for the session.

6. Membership

The Service is an Incorporated Association and, as such, families enrolling their child in the Service are bound by the rules of the Association for the period of the child's enrolment. As a member of the Incorporated Association, one representative of the child's family is entitled to voting rights at any General Meeting held by the Service and may be nominated (with consent) for a position on the EHOOSH Parent Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting. A \$60 annual membership fee is charged per family at the start of the year (this fee reduces by \$15.00 per term as the year progresses).

7. Overdue Fees

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss any difficulties that they may have in paying fees with the Nominated Supervisor of the Service, who will make suitable arrangements for the payment of fees as well as informing families of other avenues for financial support if required.

After 4 weeks' overdue: If no arrangements have been made to pay the fees, or an arrangement made has not been kept, the child's place may be cancelled.

If the above procedures prove ineffectual, details of unpaid fees will be referred to the Parent Management Committee to commence debt recovery procedures.

8. Late Pick-up Fee and Non-notification Fee

Whenever possible, the parent/guardian should ring the Service to advise if they will be late to collect their child. A late pick-up fee will apply for each child not collected from the Service by closing time. The late pick-up fee of \$50.00 applies any time a child is collected after 6.00pm and before 6.10pm. Thereafter an additional charge of \$1.00 per minute applies.

The fee charged for late collections is imposed due to:

- The Service's need to recoup expenses incurred in employee overtime wages
- The need to deter families from making a habit of late collections.

Special circumstances will be considered in relation to the administration of late collection fees. If a parent or guardian is continually or regularly late in collecting their child, the Nominated Supervisor will discuss other child care options with the family and the child's place may be cancelled.

A non notification fee of \$10.00 (in addition to the prescribed fee for the session) will be imposed where parents fail to inform the Service of their child's non-attendance before the start of the afternoon session.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Set fees for children to enroll at the service and ensure policies and procedures are in place relating to the fee schedule and payment options.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the *Payment of Service Fees Policy* and procedures.
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection.
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - Affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - Significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - Significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to payment of fees.
- Implement procedures for the payment of service fees.
- Communicate with families at enrolment about fees, including:
 - The amounts charged
 - Financial hardship considerations and payment plans.

Admin Officer

- Communicate with families at enrolment about fees, including:
 - The amounts charged
 - Payment periods and methods
 - How the child care subsidy or other government subsidy will be applied
 - Notice periods
 - How they can access copies of statements/receipts
 - Financial hardship considerations and payment plans
 - Ongoing communication with families about their account.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure families receive statement of entitlement and receipts for fees paid. • Monitor the application of the child care subsidy or other government subsidy.
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the <i>Payment of Service Fees Policy</i> and procedures. • Support families to approach the person whose role it is to collect fees with any fee-related questions.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure they understand the service's fee requirements and expectations at enrolment and any ongoing changes. • Meet the fee requirements. • Raise any fee-related questions with the person responsible for fee collection at the service.

9. Fee Schedule

Session Type	Morning	Afternoon
Permanent	\$23.00	\$30.00
Casual	\$27.00	\$33.00
Failure to collect children by 6:00pm		\$50.00 per child
Failure to notify service of children's non-attendance		\$10

10. References

Statutory Authority

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Regulation 158, 168, 172, 173)
- National Quality Standard (Standard 7.3)
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- Privacy Act 1988

11. Legislative Requirements

Regulation 111	Administrative space
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

12. Relevant Service Policies

- *Confidentiality and Privacy Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- *Governance and Management Policy*
- *Maintenance of Records Policy*

Revision Chronology

Version Number	Date	Reason for Change
1.0	August 2018	Creation
1.1	August 2018	Endorsed by OOSH executive committee
1.2	15 October 2019	Review and evaluation
2.0	9 June 2021	Review and evaluation / Increase in fee structure
2.1	July 2023	Review and evaluation / Increase in fee structure
2.2	November 2024	Review and evaluation/ Increase in fee structure