

ELCC \$10 Per Day Child Care Webinar (Centres)

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

-TRANSCRIPT-

00:24

Carmen Zubin

Good afternoon. My name is Carmen Zubin and I'm an acting policy analyst with the Early Learning and Child Care division. Thank you for joining us for today's Webinar for center directors and board members.

Today's Webinar will be presented by Tanya Jacob, Business Lead, Continuous Improvement and Engagement, and Jennifer Faulder, Executive Director of Policy and Planning branch.

The Webinar will include information regarding the new Regulated Parent Fees and Reduced Parent Fee Funding, which is supported under the Canada-Manitoba, Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

After the Webinar, we will have some time for questions.

You'll see at the bottom of your screen there is a chat speech, bubble. This is where you can submit your questions. We will try to answer as many as we can.

ELCC staff are on site to document all questions submitted for review in the event that we do not have time to answer them all today. If you have questions that are specific to your center, you can send them to childcare information services.

A full copy of the PowerPoint slide, deck, and transcript will be on our website. After the presentation, you will receive an email once the information has been posted online. And with that, I will turn it over to Jennifer and Tanya.

02:04

Jennifer Faulder

Thanks, Carmen, and thanks everyone for joining us today and taking time out of your busy day to connect and learn more about this initiative. We are going to start with a land acknowledgment.

We recognize that Manitoba is on Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk peoples. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

So we have a PowerPoint that will come up to help go through this. As Carmen mentioned, it will be shared. I know sometimes depending on how the Internet is working it may not always appear clearly.

And so, if that happens for you please do your best to follow along, and you will get a copy of the deck afterwards.

So we have the agenda we're going to just to provide an overview of the new regulated fees. Then we will speak to funding and implementation, next steps, and then we have a couple of frequently asked questions. We are just having a little bit of technical difficulties with getting the PowerPoint up. So I'm just going to pause for a second.

Okay, I will just keep going while we try and get the deck up for you. So if you can't see it right now, I think that's because we are having some technical problems, and we will get it up as soon as we can.

So, under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Manitoba committed to reducing parent fees to an average of \$10 per day by March 31, 2026 for children under the age of 7.

As a first step towards this, in 2022 Manitoba implemented a 45% increase to the child care subsidy program income threshold, making child care more affordable for more families, and in addition, funding was provided to facilities to waive parent fees for a period of time in 2022.

As a result of these initiatives we did achieve an average parent fee of \$10 per day for children under the age of 7, in this fiscal year, three years ahead of the commitment.

And now, with these new fees coming into effect on April 3, sorry, April 2 of 2023, we will be maintaining that average of \$10 per day or less, because, as you know, we now will have a maximum fee of \$10 per day for many families.

Beginning April 2, parent fees are being reduced to \$10 per day per child for regular full-time hours, so meaning 4 to 10 hours for children who are enrolled in infant nursery school and preschool spaces in licensed non-profit centers and child care homes that receive operating grant funding, for school-age children attending funded facilities for three periods per day so before school lunch, and after school parent fees are also being reduced to \$10 per day.

In some cases parent fees will be lower or higher than \$10 per day, depending on the type of care.

For example, an infant or a preschool child requiring care for 0 to 4 hours per day, the maximum will be \$5, and if it's more than 10 hours per day, it would be a maximum of \$15

A preschool child attending a morning or afternoon nursery school session of 0 to 4 hours would be a maximum of \$5 in a funded facility, and school age fees for in-service days and school holidays will remain the same at \$20.80 per day.

We have had some questions about the school age fees, and why they are not changing for those in-service and school holidays. And so just to provide a bit of context and rationale--So under the Federal agreements the funding that is provided is for initiatives that support child care for children, 6 years of age and younger. In order to keep pace with that for school-aged children, Manitoba has been investing significant additional funding to ensure that school age programs are supported equitably.

We've been focused on priorities around access, workforce and strengthening existing facilities. So, for example, with the wage grid, and the additional funding to support the wage grid, the quality enhancement grants and the creation of new spaces. All of that has been applied across the as 0 to 12

child care facilities and programs, and the funding to support those initiatives for programs for Children's, ages 7 to 12 has all been funded using provincial funding.

And it's also important to note that before signing these agreements and moving forward with these initiatives with Canada, Manitoba had the lowest child care fees across the country other than Quebec. Fees have been kept affordable through provincial operating grants and the provincial child care subsidy program.

And of course, that subsidy program continues to be available for those who require it, and that would, you know it, include families for whom the \$20.80 per day if that's not affordable for those school holidays like summer, then the child care subsidy program continues to be a potential option, if they are eligible.

09:51

Tanya Jakob

Might just take a pause here for a moment, just to address the screen and the Powerpoint presentation. We recognize that some may still not be able to see it. We just take a few minutes and we'll be back on.

10:13

Tanya Jakob

Okay. I think we're back in action. We apologize for this inconvenience of not having the few slides at the outset available for you.

As was mentioned, this will be recorded and available for you, following the Webinar, and certainly any questions that you will have following that Jennifer spoke about at the outset can also be addressed at the end.

So where will these new fees apply? The new fees will apply to funded non-profit centers and funded homes, so, as in the case is now non-profit centers and child care, homes that receive operating funding are required to comply with the regulated maximum fees.

This is for all families, regardless of income, so no application is required to access this for parents.

It will also applied to unfunded centers and unfunded homes. The license centers and child care homes that do not receive provincial funding or the provincial operating grant funding are not required to follow the regulated maximum daily fees for non-subsidized families. However, they cannot charge the subsidized families more than those maximum daily fees.

As Jennifer mentioned that child care subsidy program will continue, will continue to provide financial support for eligible families to ensure that the cost is not a barrier to quality, early learning and child care programming. Manitoba families are currently receiving the child care subsidy will be reassessed, so no families receiving childcare subsidy will have their childcare costs increased as a result of this change.

And as a result of this change, some families now may no longer require the childcare subsidy, If, under the new parent fee rates, they will be paying less than they were paying previously their than they were paying with previously subsidized fees.

So what will happen is very soon that mass reassessment will occur, and so next week the families will be informed of their status as well facilities of where they land with respect to their subsidy.

Current subsidy approvals will be automatically reassessed. As I mentioned at the new parent fee rates. Very soon families will receive either an approval for their childcare subsidy in their child Care Subsidy letter, indicating the amount of their family contribution or a letter indicating that the family is no longer qualified for that subsidy

For all children enrolled in your facility with currently approved subsidy applications, your facility will receive a mass reassessment email indicating the amount of the family contribution for each eligible family and families that are no longer eligible for subsidy.

This, in terms of the funding and implementation, Facility Reports are going to be required to be submitted within 30 days, at the end of each 28 day subsidy reporting or billing period.

This means funded child care centers and funded homes must report those days attended and absent days for all children enrolled.

This includes both subsidized and non-subsidized children in that report.

Unfunded child care centers and unfunded homes must still report those days attended in absent days for each subsidized child in order to receive the subsidy payments and the reduced fee revenue funding for the subsidized children enrolled in the facility.

Absent days on the Facility Reports are the days that a child should have been present in the facility, but was absent. So we've received some questions. Will we receive the reduced parent fee, revenue funding when children are absent? And yes, you will. If you charge fees to the parents, we will pay the reduced parent fee Revenue funding.

This applies when the childre are absent due to illness on holiday, or for any other reason which you would still charge parents based on your facility's normal fee structure. That is why it's important to really include those days attended, as well as those apps and days for all the children. Subsidized and not subsidized on those facility reports.

15:00

Jennifer Faulder

So, just going further into how the funding and implementation will work. So for the funded childcare centers and funded homes, the reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant is will be the equivalent to the difference between the previous or the current fees as they are today, and the new fees, so that it will be in effect April 2, and that will be provided to ensure that facilities continue to receive the same revenue as you are currently receiving in parent fees. It will be provided separately from the operating grant and subsidy payments. So you will be able to see the value of that specific grant funding.

It will be issued in the same manner as you are currently receiving other types of payments

For unfunded childcare centers and unfunded homes, the additional funding equivalent to the difference between the previous and new maximum fees that would only apply to families on subsidy will be provided through the subsidy reporting and payment process.

So again, just to really try to illustrate the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue funding will be the old maximum fee, so including both the subsidized and non-subsidized portion, minus the new maximum fee, and that will be the what is the value of the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue funding.

Now, some facilities might in certain circumstances charge less than the maximum daily fees, and that will not impact the amount of the reduced parent fee revenue funding. Because, again, the same calculation will be used. And of course, if you, if you choose to still charge less than the maximum fee, then that will, you know there will be that impact to you of that amount, but it will not impact our funding amount.

So this table provides the maximum fees based on the type of care and the age of the child, and also shows the amount of the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant per child that will be provided, and shows that in this last column the total Parent Fee Revenue per child is the same as the current maximum parent fees per child. So that's just really demonstrating that the total amount of revenue will be the same.

This table was circulated to facilities when the circular was sent out.

We are going to have a more detailed look at some of these sections in the next couple of slides, because that one we recognize is hard to read because there so much information.

So just to go through this example. So for infants who are attending 4 to 10 h per day.

The maximum subsidized daily fee per child is \$8, there is no change to the maximum non-subsidized daily additional fee per child, so that remains as \$2, which is how we get to the total maximum daily fee that can be charged to parents as being \$10,

And in that case the Reduced Parent fee Revenue Grant per child would be \$20 to provide the facility with a total of \$30.

Here we have for preschool, which would include nursery and kindergarten.

So again, if it's the 4 to 10 hour per day Again, these and first 2 columns are the same, so \$8 is the maximum subsidized daily fee per child. The maximum non-subsidized daily additional fees per child remains at \$2, as it is now resulting in a total maximum fee that can be charged to parents of \$10,

The Reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant for preschool will be \$10.80 for these children per child, so that the total revenue from the parent fee revenue would be \$20.80, which is the same as it is now and then. This last slide with tables shows the school, each so for children in grades one and higher. There are no changes to the one period of attendance. 2 periods of attendance for 3 periods of attendance. The maximum daily fee charged to parents is now \$10, and so in this case the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant is 30 cents per child, so that the total revenue for those children continues to be \$10.30 per child per day.

There are no changes to the fees for in-service and school holidays.

So, in terms of a transition period, we recognize that facilities typically receive fee payments from families at the beginning of a billing period.

Therefore, the initial payment for the reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant for funded facilities will be issued at the beginning of the upcoming reporting period during the week of April 2.

During this transition period the initial payment will be based on full utilization of a facility's childcare spaces. So for infant and preschool spaces it'll be based on 4 to 10 hours of care for school age. It'll be based on 3 periods of care for Nursery School spaces. It will be based on the number of sessions offered, and the full utilization calculations will be compared to Facility Reports that have been previously submitted to ensure sufficient payment for facilities with shared spaces for facilities that have children requiring over 10 hours of care per day, extended hour care, etc. So we are wanting to really ensure that we are airing on the side of providing, so that you will have no reduction in revenue.

Particularly in this I mean, our goal is for you not to ever have a reduction in revenue as a result of the change to parent fees. And so that's why we for this initial payment. It will be based on full utilization.

While also potentially adding to that, if there are circumstances where the facility reports show that you regularly have situations with shared spaces, or extended our care, etc.

Now there was a question previously about direct deposit, as mentioned on a previous slide. Your reduced parent fee revenue funding will be issued in the same manner that you are receiving other payments.

And so, if you are not already receiving funds via direct deposit, that is something that we strongly encourage, and you can contact CDInfo@gov.mb.ca to connect with our finance department to get you set up with direct deposit.

I just want to really emphasize that there will not be any requirement to pay back any of the revenue Grant funding provided that's been asked as well.

So following the initial payment funding will be based on enrollment data currently provided by facilities. We are still working out exactly how that process will unfold. But we are wanting to ensure that we strive towards a process that minimizes additional workload for facilities that takes advantage of tools and processes currently being used by facilities and by the department and considers the cash flow timing, and that impact for facilities.

So we are still working out the details, and that's partly why we're providing a transition period with an initial payment that's based on full utilization, and we will be communicating with you soon once we've confirmed what the process will be moving forward.

Some key dates here that we just wanted to draw your attention to.

The week of March 27: Next week the subsidy mass reassessment will be completed, and the letters will be issued.

We also anticipate the quality enhancement grants payments will be issued that week.

April 1: It will be the regular payment time for the operating grant installment payments. It's issued for centers and Child Care Homes are to submit their operating grant applications for 23/24 by that date.

On April 2, the new parent fee rates are effective.

April 3-6 is when the initial reduced parent fee revenue. Grant will be issued

April 3 to May 1 Facility Attendance reports will be submitted for the period of March 5 to April 1.

The current maximum fee rates apply for the March 5 to April 1.

Reports processed and subsidy payments issued as reports are received, and as is current practice, reports for homes are prioritized toward processing.

So how can facilities prepare for these new fees?

Facilities can begin the administrative work for implementing and charging the new parent fee Effective April 2, for example, by updating facility, policy, manuals, and bookkeeping tools

Families should be invoiced for the amount of fees that are due to the facility, according to the regular invoicing and payment schedule.

25:57

Tanya Jacob

Okay. So we just have a couple of questions here that we received as sort of themes coming through over the last few days, and in regards to the grant.

When does a preschool child become a school-aged child?

So school each child is defined as a child enrolled in grade, 1 to 6 in a school. Once a child completes kindergarten, they can be considered enrolled in grade 1, and this remains a facility decision as to when a kindergarten child transitions into a school age space. So, for example, July 1 or September 1 or at another point in time during the summer.

Another question that we have received a bit more frequently includes: how will the new fee structure affect currently approved age exceptions for kindergarten to be considered school age?

So when facilities and parents jointly request an age exemption to consider a kindergarten child as a schoolage child and the exemption is approved, all applicable regulations, including school age, fees, and ratios, apply.

So right now we're continuing to explore some of the options for families and facilities within the regulatory framework for licensing and the new fee structure that will be effective April 2.

So for more information about the new regulated parent fees and reduced parent fee revenue funding, you can find them available here on our website.

The section where all of our circulars and facility FAQs, as well as that total parent fee revenue table that was shared is available is on our circular section of our website. And so the link is on the screen as well as in the email correspondence that was sent to facilities...

https://gov.mb.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/current_circulars.html

...with the circular and related FAQs sent a few weeks ago, when we introduced and announced the new child care parent fees.

We also have a page dedicated for public inquiries and family inquiries as well, www.manitoba.ca/10aday

I also wanted to share that, in addition to the circular and FAQs that were shared with our facilities, we also shared a letter from the Minister that you are able to then share with your families speaking to some of the questions as well that families might have in regards to the implementation, and so that matter might also assist you in some of the communications with families. It was emailed to all facilities. It is also available under our circular section of our website as well if you would like to download that, or have that available for your family and any additional inquiries can be directed to CDCInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "10 a day", or you can call information services at the number listed here on the screen.

29:08

Jennifer Faulder

Okay, thanks, Tanya. And now I believe there's been some questions that have been entered into the chat. So we will do our best to answer some of those.

29:16

Carmen Zubin

Great we will start then. We have questions, all related, from Chana, Deepa, Patricia, Michelle, and Aaron all in regards to absent days. So if a child is absent, will we still receive funds for that day?

29:43

Jennifer Faulder

Yes, so the principal behind the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant is that you will receive that funding for any day that you are charging a parent the related maximum fee. So if you are charging a parent \$10 a day for that day, whether the child is present or absent, then we will provide the funding for that day as well. That's why it's really important that the facility reports include both days attended and absent.

30:09

Carmen Zubin

Excellent! Thank you.

We have a question from Tammy in regards to the Nursery School. So for Nursery School sessions can you clarify that that would be \$5 a day for session now?

30:32

Jennifer Faulder

So if the session it's based on the number of hours. If the session is 0 to 4 hours, then the maximum fee is \$5

30:36

Carmen Zubin

Great. Thank you. We have a question from Tara.

Will the additional funding be provided by an increased operating grant, or as a separate payment?

30:55

Jennifer Faulder

It will be a separate payment, so you will see it separately from the operating grant, and any other like subsidy payment.

31:03

Carmen Zubin

We have a question from Tyler and Chantelle in regards to school age fees. So for Tyler and Chantel – in-service days and school holidays have been used to describe care for school age children. So is summer considered a school holiday?

31:25

Jennifer Faulder

Yes.

32:01

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Marla has a question in regards to the mass subsidy reassessment. Do we know when that will be happening?

32:08

Jennifer Faulder

Yes, the mass reassessment will be occurring next week.

So March 27 to 31, is when letters will be sent both to families and facilities confirming who is remaining on subsidy, and who is coming off of subsidy

32:13

Carmen Zubin

Also related to subsidies-- from Sylvie: Before the mass reassessment arrives we have to charge subsidized family, as it states, on their subsidy approval as long as it's not more than \$10. Is that correct?

32:30

Jennifer Faulder

Can you repeat the question?

32:40

Carmen Zubin

I think it's if the subsidy cost is higher than the \$10, should they be then charging?

32:47

Jennifer Faulder

If it is, yeah, if it's for child care starting April 2, then yes, families should not be charged more than the maximum daily fees starting April 2.

32:53

Carmen Zubin

Okay. Thank you.

A question from Carly. Do we know how often we will be receiving the payments?

33:09

Jennifer Faulder

We are still finalizing that the transition period will cover the first 3 reporting periods. So for the 3 reporting periods beginning April 2, we'll be using the transition approach of providing funding based on full utilization as well as the other factors mentioned, and we will be getting back to everyone as soon as possible about the Go forward plan following that initial 3 month transition period or a 3 reporting period. Okay.

34:05

Carmen Zubin

From Chantelle: If the facility decides that a kindergarten student is not in a school age spot until the beginning of grade 1, will the facility still receive the additional funding over the summer while the facility still only charging \$10 a day.

34:09

Jennifer Faulder

Yes.

34:16

Carmen Zubin

That was an easy one. We have a couple from Bridget and Leonora and Jennifer in regards to if we can explain why the school age children were not included?

34:39

Jennifer Faulder

As mentioned under the Federal agreement, the Federal Government is providing funding for various initiatives to improve accessibility, quality, inclusion for early learning and child care for programs that serve children ages 6 and under. Manitoba has been working to provide additional provincial investments to ensure that our school age programs are supported equitably and to date we've really focused on our priorities around access workforce and strengthening our existing facilities. So in the initiatives that we have already rolled out, including the wage grid, to support increased wages for child care staff across the sector, for the quality enhancement grants that are going to be rolling out next week, and for the creation of New Spaces, the province has invested significant funds in and around \$27 million dollars to support, having all of those initiatives applied across the sector, and not only for programs serving children ages 6 and under because, as mentioned, the Federal funding is only available for programs that serve children ages 6 and under. So the province is working to try to keep pace with that. I also just wanting to note that, prior to these agreements, Manitoba already had the lowest child care fees outside of Quebec.

Manitoba was able to maintain low fees, keeping childcare affordable through significant investment of provincial dollars in the operating grants and the provincial subsidy program that the province invests a total of \$139.5 million dollars annually. So there are significant provincial investments happening. And so you know, we're working to try to apply this across the board, and in this case for school age, we are starting with the 3 periods per day, and making that the \$10.

37:05

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Question from Shana. If we can clarify in regards to the slide that has the fees for infants and preschool children; Are they both \$10 a day, or are they a different rate?

37:33

Jennifer Faulder

The fees for parents for infant and preschool are the same in that. The total amount that can be charged to parents is \$10. The Reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant is different between infant and preschool and that is because the current parent fees are different for infant versus preschool, and so the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue grant is again the difference between the current fees and the new fees.

But the parent fees, for both infant and preschool are the same at \$10 per day for the 4 to 10 hours of care.

38:28

Carmen Zubin

We have a question from Bernadette. Is there a plan to eliminate the \$2 a day fee to low-income families?

38:44

Jennifer Faulder

At this time we are not moving forward with any changes to the non-subsidized part of the fee, and you know that's something that we might look at in the future. But at this time there are no plans to eliminate that fee.

39:07

Carmen Zubin

Okay, From Karen: we charge a snack fee. Does that mean that maximum fees now includes this snack fee, or are we able to continue with additional charges allowed as before?

39:18

Jennifer Faulder

Yes, there are no changes to what other fees are allowed to be charged. The changes that are being made are to the maximum daily fees that can be charged to parents. So, just as right now there is a maximum daily fee that can be charged for an infant of \$30 per day for the 4 to 10 hours per day.

The only thing that is changing is that that is being reduced to \$10 rather than \$30.

39:39

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. From Cheryl, and again, in regards to school age fees and parents: Is the province going to make an effort to follow with the same fees for school-age parents? Or do we have any information on that?

40:08

Jennifer Faulder

At this time there are no plans to further reduce parent fees. None of us have a crystal ball, so it's hard to say what the future might hold. But at this point there are no plans to make further changes

40:45

Carmen Zubin

From Donna: currently, we do not offer 1, 2 and 3 periods for school aged care. Will this affect how we are paid for the parent fee revenue grant?

41:02

Jennifer Faulder

Well, so I'm not sure I entirely understand this specific scenario, but the reduced parent fee revenue. Grant will only be provided for care that is impacted by the reduced parent fee.

So if you have school-age, children who are attending 3 periods per day, then you will receive the Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant for those children.

If you do not offer 3 periods of care for school age, then there would not be any funding provided because there is no reduction to parent fees.

41:43

Carmen Zubin

Okay, thank you from Sheena. What about kindergarten children? So those who had had full day so they only attend before and after school every day of the week. and this instance they take up a preschool space. So many parents would want their kindergarten children to stay in this space because it's less and expensive. Is this a facility decision to care for the kindergarten in these spaces or not?

42:22

Jennifer Faulder

So we did have a slide on this. I think what you're asking about is the exemptions that can be applied for a kindergarten child to be considered a school-aged child for the purpose of well, both parent fees and and ratio. So we are still working on exactly how the kindergarten exemptions should be handled. The way it currently works is that it does have to be a facility and parent that jointly request an age exemption to have a kindergarten child considered a school-age, child.

And so we're we're continuing to explore options and we'll get back to you. We'll have to send some information about that as soon as we have something further to say about it.

43:08

Carmen Zubin

Thank you.

So we'll end with those questions here, and just a reminder to everybody that center specific questions should be sent to childcare information services. So you can get a specific answer that might pertain to you.

43:42

Jennifer Faulder

Well, thank you again everyone for joining us, and we also will be providing, as mentioned, a transcript and reviewing the questions again. So if we missed anything here today, we'll do our best to answer it when we distribute the information. So thank you so much for making time to be here with us today.