

Government Financial Assistance for Childcare **A Ten-Step Guide for Parents**



A Note For Parents

Following the first UNESCO World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) held in Moscow in 2010, the Government of Seychelles wholeheartedly pledged its commitment towards the adoption of a broad and holistic approach towards the advancement of ECCE in the country.

It is in keeping with its commitment that the Government has developed a framework to finance initiatives in ECCE. One of the initiatives is the recent introduction of a financial assistance scheme for parents with children in registered childcare services. It is on this premise that investing in young children is considered as one of the soundest economic investments that a country can make. In addition, it will help to improve quality in ECCE, its services and contribute towards children's' overall development.

Since its introduction in April 2020, the financial assistance initiative has been well received and there has been wide take up by parents and childcare providers alike. I wish to extend my appreciation to all parents, who are benefitting from this new assistance, for their engagement and support during this process. I take this opportunity to encourage unregistered service providers to come forward to register their services and benefit from the assistance.

I have the pleasure to present to you, this first of its kind guide on the financial assistance. This ten-step guide is a great tool for parents, families as well as the childcare providers to learn more about the initiative. It provides practical and useful information on the conditions for eligible parents, procedures for registration, and roles of various partners among other relevant aspects. I encourage you to make full use of the information provided in this guide for effective registration of your child or children for the assistance, and to share this resource with others in their workplace and community.

I would like to thank the IECD staff members for their hard work and collective efforts to make this guide a reality. I would like to convey my gratitude to the team at the Agency for Social Protection and Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development, and acknowledge their contribution and great collaboration during the implementation of this new initiative.



Mrs. Shirley Choppy
Chief Executive Officer
Institute of Early Childhood Development

1. Introduction

The Financial Assistance for Parents accessing a registered childcare service¹ is a new initiative that provides financial support to help parents meet the costs of childcare. This assistance provides childcare financial assistance for children from 4 months of age (16 weeks) to 3 years (36 months). The previous assistance, which included a means testing component, has been discontinued and is replaced by a universal and automatic financial assistance.



1.1 Eligibility & Formalities for Financial Assistance

Your child must be enrolled and attending a Day Care Centre, which is registered with the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development (MEHRD) or a Childminding Establishment registered with the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD). These registered services are implementing quality national standards as prescribed by the relevant laws – Education (Non-Formal Early Childhood Education Centre) Regulation (SI 44 of 2005) and IECD (National Standards for Childminding Regulation) 2016.

The financial assistance is paid directly to your childcare provider on a monthly basis. However, as parents you must register for the financial assistance yourself, through your childcare provider². Your childcare provider then subtracts your financial assistance from your childcare fees. In the event that fees are paid on a termly basis (depending on the number of months in a typical term), the childcare provider will make arrangement to deduct the assistance according to the number of months per term.

You can register for the financial assistance on behalf of your child or children as from March 2020 and at any time during the year. You will be able to apply by completing a paper form - Parental Confirmation Form ([IECD/PCF/2020](#)) - available at your childcare provider. Alternatively, you may wish to download the form on the IECD website – www.iecd.gov.sc

1.2 Roles of the Relevant Authorities

The IECD in collaboration with MEHRD is responsible for the oversight of this new financial assistance, including its registration and verification process, and its promotion and sensitization among parents and the population. The Agency for Social Protection (ASP) is responsible to process and make payments.



1. *Childcare Service: A general term which comprises both registered Day Care Service (Centre-based) and Childminding Service (Home-based).*
2. *Childcare Provider: A general term which relates to registered Day Care Operator or Childminder.*



2. Key points about the Financial Assistance for eligible parents

- The financial assistance is only for children aged between 4 months (16 weeks) and 3 years (36 months) attending registered childcare services before they start private pre-school or public crèche.
- It is available to parents with any income level, including Day Care Operators or Childminders whose child is/children are enrolled in their own childcare service
- It is a universal financial assistance, which is not means tested.
- The financial assistance is SCR750 per child, per month and it will be automatically discontinued when the child moves from Day Care to Pre-School programme within the same Day Care Centre (goes to pre-school or public crèche).



3. Conditions for eligible parents to register for the Financial Assistance

- **Relationship to the Child:** You or your current partner must be a parent of the child or acting as is/her guardian and/or legal guardian.
- **Residency Status:** Your child must be a Seychellois national.
- **Registered Childcare Provider:** Your child must enroll in a registered Day Care or Childminding Service as per the approved quota provided by the regulators of childcare in the country.
- **National Identity Number (NIN):** You must provide your own NIN and that of your child/children you are registering for.
- **Age of the Child:** To qualify for the financial assistance, your child must be between 4 months (16 weeks) and 3 years (36 months).



4. How to register for the Financial Assistance?

Four-step process for parents:

1. You should collect a *Parental Confirmation Form* ([IECD/PCF/2020](#)) from your childcare provider or download it from the IECD website at www.iecd.gov.sc
2. You fill in the form and attach the relevant supporting documents.
3. You submit the completed form together with relevant supporting documents to your childcare provider.
4. You should not submit the completed form directly to IECD.

Four-step process for childcare providers:

1. Your Day Care Operator or Childminder compiles and verifies the information obtained from the Parental Confirmation Forms on the *Children's Confirmation List* ([IECD/CCL/2020](#)).
2. Your Day Care Operator or Childminder fills out the *Registered Day Care and Childminding Services Confirmation Form* ([IECD/DCCS_CF/2020](#)) with all essential details about the service, and attaches the relevant supporting documents.
3. Your Day Care Operator or Childminder submits the completed signed form (in 2), together with the compiled list (in 1) and other supporting documents to IECD for further actions. For subsequent form or batch of form, your Service Provider will not be required to re-submit the form (in 2) but only the Children's Confirmation List with fresh information.
4. Your Day Care Operator/Childminder Updates and submits a certified Children's Confirmation List to IECD **every quarter** for monitoring and reporting purposes.

For a step-by-step practical guide on the registration process and the types of supporting documents, and for other information, see this link: <http://www.iecd.gov.sc/download/financial-assistance-parents-cm-dc-sona/>



5. What happens after registration?

- IECD will verify the completed submitted forms from both parents and childcare providers, and all relevant support documents, through physical spot checks and consulting documents at the facilities among others.
- You will receive an email notification or phone call asking you to confirm your particulars and that of your child and childcare provider.
- Your monthly financial assistance is paid directly to your childcare provider's account on your behalf by ASP.
- Your childcare provider subtracts the financial assistance from your childcare fee (either on a monthly or termly basis).
- You will receive a Confirmation Letter from IECD when your child is registered for the financial assistance and after the first payment is made.





6. How will the Financial Assistance be implemented?

Following the State of the Nation Address 2020, the introduction of the financial assistance is effective 1st April 2020. Payment of financial assistance will be made to childcare providers on a monthly basis, and signed forms, and in line with the approved quota provided by either the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development or Institute of Early Childhood Development.

The paper-based registration can be submitted at any time after this date, but service providers should ensure that completed forms and relevant documents reach IECD before or on the 5th day of each month for payments to be effected in the same month. However, in the event that the information is obtained after this date, the Agency for Social Protection will pay the service providers in the subsequent month on behalf of your child or children, and you will have to pay the full monthly fee. The Agency for Social Protection will issue a payroll electronically to your service provider after each monthly payment for verification and record purposes.

Unlike the previous scheme, the new Financial Assistance for Parents is automatic for all children enrolled in registered childcare services and there is **no renewal process**. The Agency for Social Protection system will automatically annul the payment for the childcare provider each time a child turns 3 years of age (36 months). Childcare provider may liaise with the IECD in the event of any changes.

7. What happens if my child turns 3 (36 months) while he/she is still enrolled in a registered childcare service?

Your child will still benefit from the financial assistance until he or she starts public crèche or private pre-school, as per the scenarios below.

Scenario 1:

As for enrollment in public crèche, if your child turns 3 (36 months) on or before the 30th of September (i.e. the cut-off date as per the administrative arrangement by the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development) the financial assistance will continue until end of December in the same year.

Scenario 2:

In the instance that your child turns 3 (36 months) after the 30th of September, he or she will not be eligible to enroll for crèche the following year. This is as per the administrative arrangement by the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development. If your child is still in a registered childcare service, he or she will continue to benefit from the financial assistance for the duration until he or she starts public crèche. Meaning, your child will remain in a registered service for at least one more year.

For both scenarios presented above, you should re-register your child and the procedures are outlined in the next section.

Scenario 3:

If your child turns 3 (36 months) at any time during the year whilst in a registered childcare service and will commence private pre-school the following year, he or she will benefit from the financial assistance until end of December in the same year. In this instance, you have to re-register your child. On the other hand, if he or she commences private pre-school just after his or her 3rd birthday at any time during the year, the financial assistance will be discontinued.



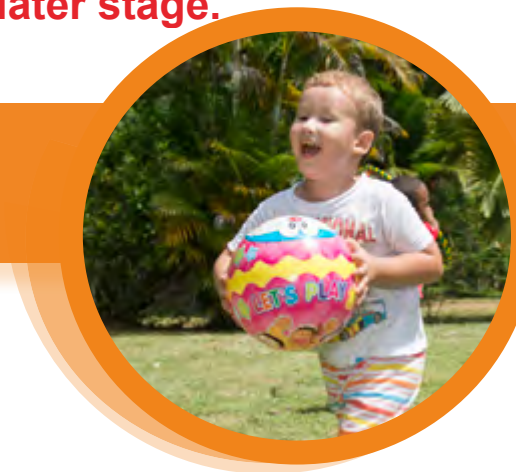
8. How to re-register for the Financial Assistance?

Four-step process for re-registration:

1. You should write a letter informing your registered childcare provider of your intention to extend your child's enrollment in the current service and to re-register for the financial assistance, until he or she starts public crèche or private pre-school. In the event that IECD receives forms above the approved quota, payment will not be entertained. The forms will be sent back to the childcare providers or persons who have submitted the forms at IECD.
2. You submit the letter to the Day Care Operator or Childminder, at least two months before your child turns 3 years of age (36 months) and, in turn, the letter will be forwarded to IECD for the next step.
3. IECD will validate and make appropriate recommendation to the Agency for Social Protection depending on your specific request and you will be notified of the outcome in writing.
4. If you decide not to re-register or to remove your child completely from a registered service, for whatever reason(s), you should communicate your intention in writing to your childcare provider as soon as possible. In that case, the childcare provider should inform IECD within one week and the financial assistance will be discontinued.



NB. Re-registration will be effective from January 2021. IECD will communicate more information at a later stage.



9. What happens when I transfer my child to another childcare service?

1. You can transfer your child at any given time provided that you enroll her or him in a registered childcare facility. However, you must inform your current childcare provider of the transfer in writing, who will in turn notify IECD according to the laid down procedures.
2. The Financial Assistance will be temporarily suspended pending receipt of a fresh Parental Confirmation Form ([IECD/PCF/2020](#)) with relevant documents from your new childcare provider to IECD, after which the financial assistance will be reinstated.





10. Can I enroll my child in any childcare service to benefit from the Financial Assistance?

- In order to benefit from the financial assistance, your childcare provider must be registered and satisfied the conditions of registration by the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development or Institute of Early Childhood Development.

- You can get a list of registered Day Care services at the [MEHRD Headquarters](#).
- You can get a list of registered Childminding services at the [IECD Headquarters and on its website and the Seychelles Government eDoc Repository at <http://www.gov.sc/edoc/pubs/pub.aspx>](#).

Further Information

For more information on the registration and implementation on the Financial Assistance initiative offered by the Government, contact IECD:

Telephone: (+248) 4673700 (Monday to Friday 8am - 4pm)

Email: ceooffice@iecd.gov.sc

Website: www.iecd.gov.sc

Or Pay Us A Visit At:

**Institute of Early Childhood Development
3rd Floor, Le Chantier Mall
Francis Rachel Street, Victoria**

**And Consult our
Social Media Platforms:**



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