

Q: How is my child care provider chosen?

A: You choose your own Licensed or Registered child care provider. These providers meet Montana's basic regulations regarding child development, health, and safety. Generally, your child care provider receives a direct payment from the state if you are approved for one of our child care scholarships.

Q: Can I choose a family member or friend as my provider?

A: Family members and friends are often eligible to be paid as "Legally Certified" child care providers through the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. For more information about Legally Certified Providers, [click here](#).

Q: How much do I pay to my provider?

A: Families using scholarships make co-payments to providers. These co-payments are determined on a [sliding fee scale](#) beginning at \$10 per month and increasing based on family size and income. Families must pay their providers the required co-payment and any other fees or charges that may exceed the region's reimbursement rates.

Q: How does the scholarship pay my child care provider?

A: A preprinted invoice is mailed to the child care provider each month. Child care providers receive one invoice for every eligible family in their care. The invoice lists the family's children for whom care will be paid, the certification end date, and the amount of the family's co-payment. The hours billed on the invoice must reflect the child's actual attendance rounded to the nearest ¼ hours as it relates to approved activities. The child care provider must enter the daily attendance hours for each child and co-payment received. The invoice must be completed, signed, and dated by the child care provider. The completed invoice must be mailed, faxed, or delivered to the families' [local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency](#) within 5 days following the month in which care was provided.

Q: How do I know when I am approved for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship?

A: Family Connections (or the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency) sends a copy of the family's child care certification plan to the family and to the child care provider when the family has been approved to receive a Best Beginnings Scholarship. The certification plan shows the days and hours of care, the beginning date and ending date of care, the children authorized for care, and the co-payment amount. The certification plan shows the minimum benefit available to the family, and the provider may bill only for actual attendance, rounded to the nearest 1/4 (0.25) hour each day as it relates to approved activities. The provider is not entitled to bill for certified hours, unless the child attends. There are specific policy exceptions, such as CE days, holidays, or a pre-approved hold-the-slot payment. New certification plans are sent if there are any changes. Read the certification plan carefully and contact the case manager at Family Connections with any questions.