



Cornell University – 2009 Child Care Grant Subsidy Program



Information & Eligibility Guidelines

for Faculty, Academic Staff, & Administrative Staff
(including benefits-eligible Post-doctorates)

History of Cornell University's Child Care Grant Subsidy Program (CCGS) for Faculty, Academic Staff, and Administrative Staff

Cornell University is taking aggressive steps to be an employer of choice with a work environment in which faculty and academic/administrative staff are viewed and respected as whole persons with identities and responsibilities that extend beyond the workplace. To assist in achieving this goal, in 2001, the University established the Cornell University Child Care Grant Subsidy Program to help faculty and staff meet the cost of quality child care. As background, in 1991, Cornell University's Task Force for Working Families recommended providing financial assistance to Cornell employees with child care expenses. Based on this recommendation, the Division of Human Resources and the President's Council of Cornell Women, in conjunction with the Day Care and Child Development Council of Tompkins County, began researching options for providing this assistance. The program was introduced in the fall of 2001 and the first full-year program went into effect in January 2002, with more than 230 families receiving a grant subsidy award. In 2004, the program was expanded to include Cornell University post doctoral staff as well as employees at the National Astronomy and Ionosphere Center at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. In the most recent funding year, 2008, over 700 families received a grant.

How Does the Program Work?

Cornell University's CCGS program is designed to assist Cornell University faculty, academic staff, and administrative staff with covering the costs of eligible child care, including infant and toddler day care, pre-school/pre-k programs, school holidays, school age summer day camps/programs, and school age before/after school care. These individuals can receive a pre-tax grant subsidy of up to \$5000 a year, based on annual household income, the age of child(ren) in care, and the individual's actual annual cost of child care. If you receive a grant subsidy, you will be required to open a Select Benefits account (if an account has not already been established) during Open Enrollment and the funds will be deposited into that account in January 2009. The grant recipient is responsible for paying the provider(s) and then requesting reimbursement for payment from the Select Benefits account for the amount of childcare expenses incurred.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for the CCGS, you must (at the time of *receipt of the grant*);

1. Be a select benefits-eligible Cornell faculty, academic staff (including select-benefits eligible associate post-doctoral staff) or administrative staff
2. Be unmarried or, based on IRS rules for Dependent Care Reimbursement Accounts, have a spouse/partner who is:
 - a. Employed at least part time or

- b. A full-time student or
- c. Considered legally disabled or
- d. Unemployed but actively seeking employment;
- 3. Have a total household income of less than \$150,000 per year;
- 4. Have a child who is your legal dependent (as defined by IRS regulations), and for whom you are financially responsible or be pregnant/in the adoption process and anticipating childcare expenses for 2009; and
- 5. Have a child that is an infant through 12 years old, or have an older child that has special needs which can be documented.

Due to Internal Revenue Service rules, faculty, academic staff, and administrative staff who work part time or whose spouse/partner is a full-time student, legally disabled, or unemployed but actively seeking employment, could receive a smaller grant than shown in the 2009 Estimated Grant Subsidy Chart.

2009 Estimate Grant Subsidy Chart

The chart below is based on the financial impact that child care costs place on different income groups.

To determine your estimated grant subsidy award:

- 1) Determine your total gross (before taxes) annual household income.
- 2) Find the income range for your gross annual household income on the chart.
- 3) Locate the type of child care/age group for your child currently or expected to be in legal child care in 2009.

Please note that due to IRS regulations, the maximum award is \$5,000.

If your child will be moving from one age group to another during the 2009 fiscal year, your award will be determined based on the number of months in each type of care. Please note that the estimated grant amounts in the chart are based on full-time employment (39 hours) with full-time child care.

Household Income	Infant/Toddler	Preschool	School Age (Academic Year)	School Age (Summer Months)
\$9,000-34,999	35%	30%	30%	30%
\$35,000-59,999	35%	25%	25%	30%
\$60,000-84,999	35%	20%	20%	25%
\$85,000-99,999	25%	9%	7%	25%
\$100,000-150,000	10%	7%	4%	25%

What is the Select Benefits Dependent Care Reimbursement Account & How Does It Work?

Select Benefits is a program, designed based on federal government rules, that allows employees to use money drawn from their paychecks **before tax** to pay child care expenses, rather than using after-tax pay. The federal regulations will only allow you to use up to \$5,000 per year per household in this

program. Child care grant awards will be deposited into a Select Benefits account for you. You will need to open a select benefits account during the Benefits Open Enrollment (which will be provided at a later time) to take advantage of the child care grant subsidy program. A total of \$5,000 can be deposited into the Select Benefits account, from a combination of both the grant subsidy and from your own contributions. Therefore, if the grant subsidy amount you receive does not total \$5,000, but your child care expenses exceed \$5,000, you can make your own contributions to the Select Benefits account up to the \$5,000 maximum. If you are not familiar with the Select Benefits program, contact the Benefit Services office (255-3936 or benefits@cornell.edu) or visit <http://www.ohr.cornell.edu/benefits/programs/select.html> for more information.

How Do I Apply for the Cornell University Child Care Grant Subsidy?

Applications for the 2009 program are available on-line at: <http://www.ohr.cornell.edu/benefits/childcareGrant/index.html> and at the Benefits Office in 130 Day Hall, as well as through your local human resources office.

To apply:

1. Complete the application form.
2. Attach copies of two pay stubs per applicant.
3. Submit the completed application form, along with all required documentation, via U.S. mail, postmarked by September 26, 2008, to:

**The Child Care Grant Subsidy Program
Cornell University
Box 43 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853**

It is recommended that you make a copy of your entire application (including pay stubs) for your records.

Cornell University has contracted with the Day Care and Child Development Council of Tompkins County to review and process all grant subsidy program applications for faculty, academic staff, administrative staff, and benefits-eligible post-docs. They will verify eligibility, income, and child care information. You will then be notified, in writing, regarding your child care grant award amount from Cornell's Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity and Life Quality by November 14. All information from this process will be kept strictly confidential.

Parents with Children Enrolled at the Cornell University Child Care Center

A supplemental child care grant may be available to help faculty, academic staff, administrative staff, and benefits-eligible post-doctoral associates with the cost of care at the Cornell University Child Care Center, in addition to the existing faculty/staff child care grant. Please contact Cassandre Joseph at 254-KIDS (5437) or childcare@cornell.edu for more information.

Expectant Parents

Employees expecting children after the September 26, 2008 application deadline are still required to submit a grant application by September 26, 2008, with anticipated birth date and anticipated childcare

costs included. While you will receive a confirmation letter regarding your grant, funds will not be released to your Dependent Care Spending Account until the birth of the child has been reported (required within 60 days of mother's scheduled return to work/school date) to the Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity, and Life Quality. For more information, please contact Cassandre Joseph at 254-5437 or childcare@cornell.edu.

IMPORTANT:

- **Child Care Grant Subsidy applications must be sent via U.S. Mail, postmarked by September 26, 2008.**
- **Hand delivered, faxed, e-mailed, campus mailed, and late (postmarked after September 26, 2008) applications will not be considered for funding.**
- **Expectant parents must submit a child care grant application by September 26, 2008 to receive 2009 funding.**
- **Decisions regarding grant subsidies are made annually and do not guarantee receipt of an award, or the same amount of an award, in future years.**
- **For more information about eligibility and the grant process, please contact Cassandre Joseph at childcare@cornell.edu or 254-KIDS (5437)**

Cornell University Child Care Grant Subsidy Program

New York State Definitions of Legal Child Care & Health Department Standards for Summer Day Camp

Legal Child Care is Defined As:

Informal Care - Unregulated but legal (no permit required):

- Provider is required to claim income from childcare services provided on taxes
- A person who does child care in his/her home for a maximum of 2 children at a time, in addition to his/her own children **or**
- A person or program providing care for any number of children for less than 3 hours a day **or**
- A person who provides care in the home of the child (in-home care) **or**
- A person who is closely related to the children in care (includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, first cousins)

Regulated Care - All child care is regulated by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services which issues permits (registrations and licenses).

- **Family Day Care** - must be registered. One provider, age 18 or older, receives a permit to care for a maximum of 3-6 children on a regular basis, for more than three hours a day, in a personal residence. Maximum capacity depends on the ages of children in care.
- **Group Family Day Care** - receives a license. The maximum capacity is 7-12 children and depends on the ages of children in care. Care is provided on a regular basis in a personal residence by approved caregivers who are age 18 or older. One caregiver is required for each two children under age 2 years. A minimum of two providers must be present whenever 7 or more children are in care.
- **Day Care Center** - must be licensed. Care is provided to 6 or more children on a regular basis for more than 3 hours a day, usually at a location other than a residence. There are strict building, staffing and program requirements. Children are grouped by age (6 wks. - 18 mo., 18 mo. - 3 years, 3 - 5 years, 6+ years), and may not mix with other groups.
- **Small Day Care Center** - must be registered. Care is provided to 3 - 6 children on a regular basis at a location other than a residence, for more than three hours a day. No more than two children under the age of two may be cared for at any one time.
- **School Age Child Care** - must be registered. Care is provided on a regular basis to 7 or more children who are under 13 years of age and who attend kindergarten or a higher grade. Care is provided at a site other than a personal residence. Care is during the school year before and/or after the time when the child is ordinarily in school. It may also provide care during school holidays, summer vacation and those periods of time when school is not in session. These programs must operate consistent with the school calendar.
- **Camps** – In NYS, summer camps must have a Health Department permit to operate legally. The camp is required to be inspected twice yearly and the inspection reports and required plans are filed at the health department and are available for review.

Contact Information

For questions regarding the definition of child care:

Day Care & Child Development Council: (607) 273-0259

NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Bureau of Early Childhood Services: (315) 423-1202

For questions regarding the definition of summer camp:

Tompkins County Dept of Health, Division of Environmental Health: (607) 274-6688