

# NCS SUBSIDIES EXPLAINED



## What is the National Childcare Scheme (NCS)?

The National Childcare Scheme (NCS) launched in 2019 and is the first ever statutory entitlement to financial supports for childcare. There are two types of subsidies available: **Universal Subsidies** which are not means tested and **Income Assessed Subsidies** which are means tested.

## What is a universal subsidy?

Universal subsidies are available to **all families with children between 24 weeks and 15 years of age**. It is not means tested and provides €2.14 per hour, per child, for up to 45 hours per week off the cost of childcare. **All families who have children in our services, including our school-age services will benefit from this subsidy.**

## What is an Income Assessed Subsidy?

Income Assessed subsidies are available to families with children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years. They are means tested and will be calculated based on your individual circumstances. The subsidy rate will vary depending on your level of reckonable family income, your child's age and their educational stage. It can be used towards the cost of a childcare place for up to a maximum of 45 hours per week.

To apply for an Income Assessed subsidy, your reckonable family income has to be less than €60,000 per year.

## How do I apply for an NCS Subsidy?

To apply for a subsidy you will need a verified MyGovID account. You cannot apply for a subsidy without this. **Note - not everyone in the family needs a verified account, just the person making the application.**

Once you have a verified MyGovID account, you can apply online via this [link](#).

If you need help with the application process you can read Application Form Guide on the NCS website or you can contact the NCS Parent Support Centre on 01 906 8530 open Monday to Friday from 9am – 5pm.

## Can Tigers Childcare apply for a subsidy on my behalf?

No we cannot apply for a subsidy on behalf of a parent / family.

## What happens when I apply for the subsidy?

There are a number of steps to be completed in order for your subsidy to be approved.

1. You complete the application - one per child.
2. Once your funding has been approved you will be provided with a downloadable pdf 'award sheet'. This award sheet must be given to the service manager so that your child's award details can be added to our systems. **The most important information that needs to be shared is your child's CHICK and the hours you wish to claim.**
3. Once the service has accepted the registration, the parent must log into their NCS account and 'confirm' the registration.

Please note that any delay in submitting the award information to the manager, or confirming the registration will result in a delay in funding being passed onto you. **Funding cannot be backdated.**

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## How is the funding passed onto me?

Funding is passed directly to the childcare provider and not the parent. Your child will be awarded funding for a certain period of time. Once you have 'confirmed' your child's NCS registration with Tigers Childcare via your NCS account, our finance team will have access to see the funding awarded to your child over the period.

Our invoices are issued monthly. Therefore, funding will be passed onto you on a monthly basis. Funding is passed on a month in arrears. We add up all funding awarded for the period and spread it evenly across the term of the funding. A schedule of funding can be provided to parents at any time. You can request this from your service manager.

Please note that in order to receive the funding, we are required to confirm the hours children attend our services. Funding will be reduced if your child consistently doesn't attend a service for the hours being claimed.

## How do I apply for an award for a sibling?

To add a sibling to your award you must update your existing application on the NCS parent portal rather than creating a new application. Creating a new application will end your existing application for your first child.

- Log onto "My Applications" in the portal.
- Scroll down, click on the pencil at the end of the line for the existing child's award.
- On the next screen, beside the child's details, click on "update".
- On the following screen, there is an option to "add child", this is where you add in the sibling.

## Points to remember!

- Claims cannot be backdated. A child's registration must be confirmed on the NSC parent's portal before funding is passed onto the provider and then to the parent.
- Tigers Childcare has no input in the amount of funding a child receives.
- The awarded hours are the **maximum** hours your child can avail of. If your child attends a service for less than 45 hours per week the funding received is adjusted accordingly. For example, a school-age child might attend a service for 20 hours per week during term-time and 45 hours during school holidays. In this case funding for 'term-time' hours would be capped at 20 hours and 'out of term' hours would be 45.
- As a company who is responsible for the management of government expenditure, Tigers Childcare has certain compliance criteria that we must adhere to. This includes submitting NCS 'returns' on a regular basis. We must report the following circumstances:
  1. A child has left the service
  2. A child been continuously absent for a period of 4 or more consecutive weeks
  3. A child's attendance has been less than their subsidised hours every week for 8 consecutive weeks
- Funding will be stopped or reduced if the above circumstances are reported.
- All NCS awards have an end date. You must renew your application before this end date if you want to continue to receive a subsidy for your child. The earlier you submit your renewal application within the renewal window, the more likely you are to avoid a gap between the end date of an existing CHICK and the start date of the new CHICK. Parents must renew applications. Tigers Childcare cannot renew applications on their behalf.

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## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES



- Provide CHICK details and hours you wish to claim to manager without delay.
- Confirm your claim via your NCS account
- Your current NCS award has an end date. You must renew your application before this end date if you want to continue to receive a subsidy for your child. The earlier you submit your renewal application within the renewal window, the more likely you are to avoid a gap between the end date of an existing CHICK and the start date of the new CHICK.
- If you do not renew, your award will expire and the subsidy will simply stop at the end date, i.e., we will no longer receive payments towards the cost of your child's place and you will be liable for the full-cost of their childcare place.

