



# BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

### POLICY NAME: EMPLOYEE PRIORITY FOR BDCS SERVICES

#### POLICY STATEMENT

This policy aims to improve workforce stability by supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities to enter the early childhood workforce, by providing priority access to BDCS services. In addition, BDCS have opted to offer discounted Childcare fees to cooks and educators who work at the Childcare service, in order to attract and retain early childhood workers and become an employer of choice.

#### BACKGROUND

BDCS recognises the importance of supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities. Through this policy, we aim to offer all permanent full and part time employees who have an eligible dependent/s, employee priority for BDCS services. BDCS have also adopted the Federal Government initiative of providing discounted childcare to their early childhood workforce. By adopting this initiative, BDCS can attract and retain an adequate workforce to provide quality early education and care services to the Bourke community.

#### EMPLOYEE PRIORITY FOR BDCS SERVICES

##### Eligibility for Employee Priority for BDCS services

- You must be a permanent full or part time employee of BDCS and have commenced employment. (Casual employees are not eligible for employee priority for BDCS services however, are encouraged to consider a permanent full or part time position to become eligible).
- You must have an eligible dependent/s who require BDCS services. For the purpose of this policy, eligible dependents are any children who you are the parent/legal guardian of.
- You will need to provide evidence that you have an eligible dependent/s. This evidence can be:
  - Their Birth Certificate with you listed as a parent
  - Your Medicare card with their name listed
  - Your Health Care card with their name listed
  - A Court Order or a letter from DCJ, confirming that you are their caregiver
- If you believe that you have an eligible dependent/s but are unable to meet the evidence requirements above, you will need to discuss your case with your Direct Supervisor who will determine if they can be considered an eligible dependent/s for the purpose of this policy.
- Your eligible dependent/s must meet enrolment requirements as listed in the Enrolment and Orientation policy. There is no special exception for enrolment requirements because you are a BDCS staff member.

##### Applying for Employee Priority for BDCS services

- During the recruitment and induction process, the need for your child/ren to utilise BDCS services will be discussed.
- If you are a current employee, as soon as you are interested in utilising BDCS services you should discuss this with your Direct Supervisor.
- In line with our Enrolment and Orientation policy, you must ensure that the BDCS enrolment form for each child is completed in full, and all required documentation is attached.
- A completed enrolment application doesn't guarantee a place at a BDCS service and instead, all enrolments will be assessed as per the Enrolment and Orientation policy.

**Please note:** Should you and your eligible dependent/s meet the criteria listed above, every reasonable effort will be made to secure them a place in the required BDCS service however, there is no guarantee that a place will be available. If there is no BDCS place available for the child/ren, this employment benefit is not transferable to any other benefit or cash equivalent.

##### Termination of Employee Priority for BDCS services

- Employee priority access to BDCS services will automatically be terminated on the resignation or termination of your employment.
- Should you wish for your child/ren to continue attending BDCS services, your child/ren's eligibility for a place will be reassessed as per the Enrolment and Orientation policy.
- If there is an active waitlist at the time of resignation/termination, your child/ren's permanent place in the service may be revoked and they will assume their place back on the waitlist, on the date on which they would have been originally placed on the waitlist if they were not seeking employee priority (usually the date of commencement of employment, however if the child was on the waitlist prior to the child being granted employee priority, the earlier date will be taken).



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- If you take unauthorised leave, you may lose your employee priority for BDCS services benefit, and your child/ren may be unable to attend until you return to work.
- If you plan to take an extended absence from work, you must inform your Direct Supervisor of your intentions including an expected return to work date. Your Childcare arrangement will then be managed on a case-by-case basis by your Direct Supervisor. It is your responsibility to promptly inform your Direct Supervisor of any changes to your original intentions.

#### 95% SUBSIDISED RATE - [Child care discount for early childhood workforce - DoE](#)

##### Eligibility for 95% subsidised rate

- Whereas all employees are eligible for employee priority for BDCS services, only those who are employed as a cook at the Childcare service or, those who hold or are working towards a qualification which allows them to be counted in educator to child ratios and work at the Childcare service on a regular basis, are eligible for the 95% subsidised rate.
- All employees must make every attempt to obtain CCS through Centrelink and if this is approved, BDCS will subsidise 95% of the gap fee.

##### Applying for 95% subsidised rate

- You must first submit an application for CCS. If for any reason you are unable to complete the application, you must discuss these circumstances with your Direct Supervisor.
- You will be notified that the 95% discount will automatically be applied to your bill, providing all criteria outlined in this policy is met.

##### Termination of 95% subsidised rate

- The 95% discount will automatically be stopped on the resignation or termination of your employment.
- The 95% discount will also automatically be stopped if you withdraw from your course, and you do not hold a qualification which allows you to be counted in the educator to child ratios.
- Once the discount has stopped, fees will be charged at the applicable CCS rebate or full fees if ineligible for CCS.
- If you are to take unauthorised leave, you may lose your 95% discount benefit and you may be charged at the applicable CCS rebate or, full fees if ineligible for CCS, until you return to work.
- If you plan to take an extended absence from work of more than 6 weeks, you must inform your Direct Supervisor of your intentions including an expected return to work date. Your eligibility for the 95% subsidised rate will then be managed on a case-by-case basis by your Direct Supervisor. It is your responsibility to promptly inform your Direct Supervisor of any changes to your original intentions.

#### DISCLAIMER

The employee benefits mentioned in this policy are not a workplace right or entitlement. Management reserves the right to dissolve part, or all of the employee benefits mentioned in this policy at any time, providing 4 weeks' notice is given to all affected employees. BDCS recognises that individual employees may have complex circumstances which require management to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Employees' eligibility and ongoing eligibility of the mentioned benefits can be revoked at any time at the sole discretion of management.

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL:

- Regularly evaluate the financial viability of the employee priority for BDCS services benefit and the 95% subsidised rate benefit to ensure they are sustainable and in the best interest of all key stakeholders.

##### THE BDCS SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM WILL:

- Manage and regularly review the terms and conditions of this policy to ensure operational requirements of the organisation are met and the proactive and positive intent of the policy remains an attractive employment benefit.
- Maintain appropriate records of employees who are approved for the Employee Priority for BDCS Services and the 95% discount and keep records of any variations that are made.
- Ensure the provisions of this policy are applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with Equal Employment Opportunity principles.

##### EMPLOYEES WILL:

- Discuss the need for their child/ren to utilise BDCS services as part of the recruitment and induction process or as soon as possible afterwards.



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- Ensure that if there is any part of this policy that is unclear, they discuss it with their Direct Supervisor for clarification.
- Understand that the employee benefits listed in this policy are not a workplace right or entitlement and can be revoked at any time.

#### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Employee Priority for BDCS Services Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families and staff. BDCS reserves the right to make necessary amendments and adjustments to this policy to better ensure compliance with policy, organisational affordability and recruitment and retention requirements.

#### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

##### QUALITY AREA

4.1	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.
4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
4.1.2	Continuity of staff	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service.

#### RELATED POLICIES

- Enrolment and Orientation
- Fees

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

BDCS Enrolment Form

POLICY REVIEWED	NEXT REVIEW DATE	POLICY AUTHORISED BY
MARCH 2025	MARCH 2026	Prue Ritchie
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy developed</li> </ul>	