



sierra nevada children's services

Provider Guide



Investing in our community,
one family at a time

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ABOUT SNCS

WHAT IS SNCS?

Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) is a private, community-based nonprofit childcare resource and referral agency that has served families, early care and education professionals and the community since 1978. We have 3 offices in Nevada and Sierra Counties – Grass Valley, Truckee, and Loyalton.

SNCS MISSION STATEMENT

Sierra Nevada Children's Services enriches the community by supporting quality child care and empowering families to aspire to life-long success.

SNCS VISION STATEMENT

We provide the bridge between state dependence and self-sufficiency, resulting in families contributing to the community through economic success and growth. This is done by ensuring child care, which reduces barriers to employment and enables more people to work, creating economic expansion.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

SNCS operates on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, color, creed, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ethnicity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

SNCS policy regarding confidentiality states that the use or disclosure of information pertaining to the child or the child's family is restricted to purposes directly related to the administration of the program. The use or disclosure of information will be limited to SNCS staff and authorized representatives of the funding sources or, in the event of a licensing investigation, Community Care Licensing. Information may also be shared with the Department of Social Services regarding CalWORKs families.

Except in the aforementioned instances, information shall not be released without prior written acknowledgment of the enrolled parent or childcare provider, unless a court order is issued to SNCS.

SNCS PROGRAMS

SUPPORTIVE CHILD CARE

SNCS administers various programs that are funded by federal, state & local governments to help income eligible families pay for part, or all of their childcare costs. Families may also pay a share of cost on a sliding scale that is based on income and family size.

CHILDCARE REFERRALS

SNCS is funded by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide Resource & Referral services to Nevada and Sierra counties. SNCS provides free childcare referrals to anyone in the community, regardless of income. SNCS maintains a database of licensed family child care providers and licensed/license-exempt childcare centers that is used to provide child care referrals.

SNCS believes the parent is the best person to choose the care for the child. Referrals are intended to provide parents with a variety of choices, and should not be considered as recommendations to a particular program or facility. It is SNCS' goal to help parents make informed choices from a broad range of childcare options that meet the family's needs.

When a parent contacts SNCS for Child Care Referrals information is requested in order to make appropriate referrals. This information is considered confidential and is only available to SNCS staff and will not be released without prior written consent. Families can use mychildcareplan.org to search for childcare at any time or may call toll-free 888-306-7627(SNCS).

The information requested includes, but may not be limited to:

- a) Caller's name and phone number
- b) Home address and e-mail address
- c) Name of closest elementary school
- d) Days and hours child care is needed
- e) Number of children needing care, their gender and date of birth
- f) Type of care parent is considering (e.g. child care center, family child care home, preschool, before/after school care, etc.)
- g) Types of services parent is considering (such as hot meals, toilet training, transportation need, etc.)
- h) An assessment of child(ren)'s special needs or preferences
- i) Interest in the educational background of providers

After discussing their options, parents are given a list of all programs that meet their requested criteria, with a minimum of 4 facilities to be included in the referral. This list will include the names, phone numbers and relevant program information for the child care providers who appear to best meet the family's needs. For reasons of confidentiality, family child care providers' addresses are not released. Parents are encouraged to view the providers' profiles on MyChildCarePlan.org to learn more about the programs.

SNCS encourages childcare providers to report changes that affect the information provided to families requesting childcare referrals. Accurate information, such as accepted age range and days and hours of operation, is vital for providing accurate referrals to families. SNCS requests quarterly information updates from providers and monthly vacancy updates are requested monthly through the referral database in order to keep the data as up to date as possible. Updates are sent directly from the referral database, providers can opt in to receive text, or email alerts. Full provider updates are requested every quarter. Providers that are no longer licensed are removed from the referral database by changing the status to inactive and turning referrals "OFF". Parents are encouraged to ask the provider directly about availability, as this information changes rapidly.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENT RIGHTS

Parents are informed that prior to choosing a child care program, they have the right to review Community Care Licensing (CCL) reports on facility site visits and substantiated complaint investigations. Information about a licensed childcare provider (Family Child Care Home or Child Care Center) may be viewed at either at the childcare provider's location or by contacting Community Care Licensing (CCL) (Oliver's Law, January 2000). The purpose of this law is to empower and inform parents and guardians who need childcare services; to encourage parents to review the safety of the childcare program or facility; and to encourage parents to evaluate the program's ability to meet the needs of their child. Information regarding childcare providers CCL reports is public, and may be obtained by calling CCL at (916) 263-5744 (Nevada County) or (530) 895-5033 (Sierra County) or online at <https://secure.dss.ca.gov/CareFacilitySearch/Search/ChildCare>.

SNCS does not inspect or guarantee the conditions of a childcare provider's facility or the quality of care children receive. SNCS does not assume any responsibility for injury or damages arising from the performance of our agreement of services. Providers and parents agree to indemnify and hold harmless SNCS, its officers and its employees from costs, suit or liability allegedly arising from the provision of childcare services.

RESOURCES

SNCS provides a family-friendly environment where parents and providers can utilize a variety of resources. SNCS is connected to other agencies in the community that provide services and support for families and childcare providers. SNCS staff can provide referrals to agencies who can assist with services such as housing, food, education, legal services, and employment.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT LENDING LIBRARY

SNCS has child development resources available for both parents and childcare providers. All 3 of our offices have a Child Development Lending Library that include developmentally appropriate toys, books, and games for children of different ages. The Lending Library also contains educational books and videos to assist both parents and childcare providers in caring for and raising children. The resources range from parenting guidance to information on how to operate a successful family child care home or child care center.

WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS

SNCS offers training workshops throughout the year for childcare providers, as well as other various learning opportunities for childcare providers and parents. The monthly schedule is posted in the main lobby of our Grass Valley office as well as on the SNCS website, www.sncs.org.



QUALITY COUNTS CALIFORNIA (QCC)

QCC is the statewide quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) that supports local and regional agencies in raising the quality of early learning and care. QCC supports all licensed family child care homes, child care centers, and alternative sites serving children birth to age five, to enhance the quality of early learning and care programs they provide and inform parents and families on what different quality levels mean for the child. QCC is designed to support and recognize child care programs for implementing research-based practices to provide high-quality environments and experiences for all children. Not all childcare providers participate in QCC. Providers participating in QCC are dedicated to improving quality program environments, teacher-child interactions, and child learning outcomes. Childcare providers who participate in QCC commit to ongoing professional development, specialized training, program assessments, and accountability, and have the opportunity to receive on-site coaching, professional consultation, quality award stipends, and a state recognized quality rating.



Early Quality Matters in Nevada County

Please visit nevcolpc.org for details on how to join the local/regional QCC program.



More information on the statewide QCC program is located at qualitycountscalifornia.net.



Requirements For Participation

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All childcare providers that wish to provide services for families receiving supportive childcare services must meet certain requirements. Providers must meet the following general qualifications in order to receive reimbursement for families served by SNCS programs.

- All providers must be licensed or exempt from licensure.
- All childcare providers must complete all necessary paperwork prior to the approval of childcare services. All childcare providers must sign an agreement with SNCS, and submit a completed W-9. Additional paperwork is required depending on the type of childcare provided (licensed and license-exempt).
- All childcare providers must welcome the enrollment of children with disabilities, making reasonable accommodations for them and implementing those accommodations. Providers must agree to operate on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to economic status, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, or national origin.
- All childcare providers must maintain an open door policy, allowing parents unlimited access to their child when the child is in care.
- All childcare providers must provide a signed statement as to whether or not the child care and development services being provided include religious instruction or worship.
- All childcare providers are independent contractors and are not employees of SNCS. Childcare providers are responsible for keeping records of reimbursement for their own tax purposes. SNCS does not withhold taxes from childcare provider reimbursement.
- All childcare providers must charge rates for subsidized families that are less than or equal to the rates charged for unsubsidized families.

LICENSED CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

All licensed childcare providers are regulated by Community Care Licensing (CCL), a division of California Department of Social Services. Legislation requires at least one unannounced site visit every 3 years; however annual comprehensive visits are made to those sites with previous violations or serious complaints. Licensed childcare providers, upon request, must provide a copy of a valid license issued by CCL. Copies of all visits by CCL are required to be available for review at the site by potential or currently enrolled families.

- Licensed childcare providers are required to charge rates for subsidized children that are less than or equal to the rates charged for unsubsidized children.
- All licensed childcare providers are required to submit a copy of their facility license to SNCS.
- All licensed childcare providers must provide documentation of rates, contractual agreements, days of non-operation, and hours of operation. If unable to provide such documentation, the provider must complete a signed statement declaring that they do not provide these to unsubsidized families.

- **Liability Insurance**

California law gives family childcare providers several ways to protect from liability claims for accidents or injuries. Family childcare providers should comply with one of the following:

- Carry liability insurance covering bodily injury to children and guests caused by negligence of the provider or an assistant (\$100,00 per occurrence, \$300,000 annual total for all occurrences), or such other limits as may be fixed by law; or
- Purchase a bond in the amount of \$300,000 to cover liability for child injuries; or
- Require a signed affidavit in proper legal form from parents of enrolled children stating that they are aware that the provider carries no liability insurance or bond, and, if the provider is not the owner of the family childcare home, containing a statement saying that the property owner is not liable. The form for these affidavits can be obtained from the local licensing agency.

SNCS shall have no liability or responsibility to verify, advise or assist provider in compliance with such requirements.

- **Auto Insurance**

In the event a childcare provider transports any children by automobile, any vehicle used must have adequate liability insurance coverage. A commercial use policy with adequate limits may be necessary depending on the frequency and/or regularity of automobile use.

LICENSE EXEMPT CARE

License-exempt care occurs when an individual provides care for the children of one family other than their own. License-exempt providers must be at least 18 years of age and will be required to complete an EMSA approved Pediatric CPR/First Aid class within 90 days of the license-exempt provider's service start date. Parents, legal guardians, or members of the child's assistance unit are not eligible for reimbursement, nor are individuals currently on probationary status with CCL. Additionally, license-exempt providers must meet with SNCS staff to review participation requirements and complete enrollment paperwork prior to authorization of services. There are 2 types of license-exempt childcare providers.

- **Relative Care**

An individual that qualifies as a relative care provider is an aunt, uncle, grandmother, or grandfather of the child, by blood, marriage, or court decree.

- **TrustLine Care**

An individual who does not qualify for Relative Care must be TrustLine registered to receive reimbursement. TrustLine is the California registry of childcare providers who have passed a background screening. A TrustLine provider is cleared through a fingerprint check of records at the California Department of Justice. SNCS will not enroll or pay any provider until they have been registered on TrustLine. For families enrolled on CalWORKs Stage 1, the provider must first complete and submit all SNCS provider enrollment paperwork, a TrustLine application, and fingerprints. Once cleared, the provider may be eligible for retroactive payment up to 120 days between the date the provider submitted SNCS paperwork through the date the provider was TrustLine registered.



IN-HOME CHILD CARE

Child care that takes place in the child's home with a license-exempt provider is referred to as in-home child care. If child care occurs in the child's home the parent is the provider's employer and is responsible for complying with state and federal laws, which includes meeting minimum wage requirements and providing Worker's Compensation Insurance. More information on in-home care is available from SNCS staff.

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME EDUCATION NETWORK (CFCC/FCCHEN)

CFCC serves families eligible for subsidized care. CFCC are a consortium of licensed family child care homes in a community that provide child care and development services, parenting education, social and health services referrals. Family Child Care Home Education Networks also provide training for child care providers and their staff as well as quality assessments of participating licensed family child care homes, development profiles for the children enrolled in the program and support parent involvement.

The program is open to any licensed family childcare provider who is interested in participating in program quality recognition and improvements. *FCCH providers who are interested in joining the Network may contact the Provider Services Manager for more information.

EMERGENCY CHILD CARE BRIDGE PROGRAM FOR FOSTER CHILDREN (BRIDGE PROGRAM)

Bridge Program services are available for eligible children experiencing a foster placement or for a child(ren) whose parent is in foster care. The program aims to increase the number of children placed in foster family homes, increase the capacity of child care programs to meet the needs of foster children in their care, and maximize funding to support the child care needs of eligible families. Eligibility is determined by the county, and eligible families will be referred to SNCS. The Bridge Program includes 3 components:

- Child Care Voucher – to help resource families pay for child care for 6 -12 months following a child’s placement in the home
- Child Care Navigator – to help resource families navigate the child care process, assist families to immediately access child care, and to transition to long term care settings through the state subsidized system
- Trauma-Informed Care Training & Coaching – to teach the child care workforce trauma-informed practices to better meet the unique needs of children who have experienced abuse, neglect, removal from the home or family

The Bridge Program is intended to act as a link to help resource families successfully transition the foster child into high-quality subsidized child care.

FAMILY FEES

Families may be required to pay a portion of their childcare costs, known as a Family Fee. Family fee amounts are established by the California Department of Social Services, and are determined by the family’s adjusted gross monthly income, family size, and whether or not the child is enrolled for full time care (130 hours or more per month) or part time care (less than 130 hours per month). Family fees are billed according to the child who is authorized for the most care, regardless of the number of children enrolled in the program.

(cont'd) Family fees are not adjusted for absences, provider non-operation days, or actual use of child care. California law does not state definitively who must collect the family fee; therefore, SNCS collects the family fee from the family and gives a receipt to the family.

Family fees are separate from provider co-payments.

CO-PAYMENTS

Family fees are paid to SNCS, whereas the family pays co-pays directly to the provider. A benefit amount, which is the maximum amount reimbursed for childcare services, is determined for each child receiving services. The benefit amount is determined in accordance with state regulation. Families who choose childcare providers whose usual and customary fee exceeds their benefit amount are responsible to pay the difference between the maximum reimbursement and the childcare provider's fee. This co-payment is paid directly to the childcare provider by the family and shall not be accounted for by SNCS. The provider decides whether or not to hold the family responsible for co-pays.

SUBSIDIZED PROVIDER REPORTING

SNCS is required by law to provide specific business and/or personal information about all license-exempt and family child care providers receiving state funds for early learning and care.

SNCS submits this information to CDE/CDSS on a recurring monthly basis through the Child Development Management Information System (CDMIS). The CDSS will then submit the list to specified provider organizations as defined by law. The CDSS can also use this information to meet federal Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements, including emergency response preparedness.

APPROVED CHILD CARE SCHEDULES

An approved childcare schedule includes the days and hours of the parent's documented need for child care. Travel, sleep, and/or study time, is included when requested by the parent and when certain criteria are met.

Child care is authorized according to the parent's certified need for services, as determined by SNCS. Reimbursement to the childcare provider is based on the parent's certified need for care.

The certified schedule will be established at enrollment or recertification, based upon the documentation provided by the parent, and the certified need shall remain in effect until the family voluntarily requests a change, the family is disenrolled, or the family is recertified.

SNCS is unable to reimburse hours of care that include the scheduled instructional minutes of a public or private educational program available to a child in which the child is enrolled and attending, including but not limited to California State Preschool Program (CSPP), Head Start programs, Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten. Schedules may be updated during the certification period to reflect a child's current or new enrollment in a public or private education program.

PART TIME AND FULL TIME HOURS OF CERTIFIED NEED

*Effective February 1, 2024, part time is defined as less than 25 hours per week, and full time is defined as 25 or more hours per week.

SCHEDULE TYPES

There are three different types of childcare schedules. The childcare schedule type is determined based upon the family's certified need for care.

- **Set Schedules**

Child care is authorized on a set schedule when the need for child care has predictable days and hours. Set schedules are reimbursed based upon the certified need for care and are eligible for reimbursement of limited absences, holidays, and provider non-operation days

- **Patterned Schedules**

Child care is authorized on a patterned schedule when the need for child care rotates on an identifiable pattern of days or hours. Examples include but are not limited to; rotating between day and night shift, rotates the on/off days, rotates over a 6-week cycle. Patterned schedules are reimbursed based upon the certified need for care and are eligible for reimbursement of limited absences, holidays, and provider non-operation days.

- **Variable Schedules**

Child care is authorized on a variable schedule when the need for child care varies, with inconsistent or unstable days and hours.

*Variable schedules are reimbursed based upon the maximum certified schedule, through June 30, 2025.

UNSCHEDULED CARE/DROP IN DAYS

Unscheduled days of care may be approved when the family has an unscheduled but documented need for service, such as the parent's need to work on a regularly scheduled off, that exceeds the parent's certified need for child care. The parent must notify SNCS in advance and must submit supporting documentation.

CERTIFICATES OF ENROLLMENT

The Certificates of Enrollment (COE) documents and notifies the provider of the authorized childcare schedule; copies are provided to both the parent and childcare provider. Providers may also access COEs for all enrolled children in CareConnect. The COE contains the approved childcare schedule, the beginning and ending dates of service, and the maximum reimbursement amount. COEs are issued upon the family's initial enrollment, annual recertification, and when changes to the schedule or rates occur.

INFORMING PROVIDERS OF CHANGES/PROVIDER NOTICING

SNCS shall provide notice to a child care provider of any of the following changes:

- A change in reimbursement amounts of child care services
- A change in the hours of care, rates, or schedules
- A termination of services, including but not limited to a family's termination from the program, or family's change in provider
- Any change to the family's eligibility status that may impact payment

The notice shall occur either electronically, if requested by the provider, or via United States Postal Service. SNCS shall provide notice, as well as the effective date of any changes described above, no later than the day SNCS becomes aware that such a change will occur, meaning SNCS has received the request for change and verifies that it is approvable under applicable statutes, regulations, and/or policies, or that SNCS was made aware of a change required by existing or new statutes, regulation, or policy including the same day the new law is announced through formal policy guidance from the California Department of Social Services.

The notification will not be deemed a violation of the parent's confidentiality, but as a method to ensure proper administration of subsidy funds.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Attendance records (ARs) are mailed to childcare providers who do not utilize digital attendance for each child enrolled for services. It is important for parents and childcare providers to follow these guidelines in order to receive reimbursement for childcare services. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in termination of your business relationship with SNCS.

- Attendance must be recorded on a daily basis. Pre or post completion of ARs is a violation of state regulations.
- Parent, provider, or other authorized person is responsible for entering the exact time of arrival and departure every day services are utilized (no rounding off times).
- Family Child Care Home Education Network (CFCC) requires a daily, full legal signature for each time in/ out.
- For children attending school: provider is responsible to enter the exact time of leaving to and returning from school every day services are utilized. Indicate the reason for any care provided during school hours.
- All changes/corrections need to be initialed by the person making the change/correction.* Does not apply to electronic attendance.
- The reason for absence must be given whenever a child does not attend a regularly scheduled day (for example: provider closed, vacation, sick, etc.) *CFCC enter absence reason in parents signature line.
- **IMPORTANT:** Provider and Enrolled Parent must sign and date the Attendance Certification section under the penalty of perjury on or after the last day of care in the service month.

- Childcare providers are responsible for ensuring that AR's are available and easily accessible to parents at all times. Parent will notify SNCS if the provider does not make the child's ARs easily accessible and readily available to them at all times.* Does not apply to electronic attendance.
- Incomplete entries on ARs that are submitted to SNCS for reimbursement may not be fixed at a later time.
- When the provider uses *electronic attendance*, the parent shall review accuracy of *electronic attendance* prior to submission and sign under penalty of perjury that care was provided as documented using an electronic signature. The provider shall also sign under penalty of perjury using an electronic signature.
- If the parent and/or provider knowingly and intentionally provides or approves false, inaccurate, or misleading information on the AR, the family and/or the provider will be disenrolled from services and reimbursements will cease immediately.

If there is a reason that indicates the above requirements are not being adhered to, the parent and/or provider will be informed of the non-compliance and technical assistance will be provided. Repeated non-compliance may result in termination of the business relationship with SNCS. If there is evidence of intentional misrepresentation of attendance by the provider, SNCS will terminate the business relationship and reimbursement will cease immediately. On a case by case basis, the business relationship may be re-evaluated in 6 months upon the provider's written request.

CARECONNECT PROVIDER PORTAL

Providers may submit digital attendance using the CareConnect Provider Portal.



Providers may login using the credentials emailed to the provider from SNCS . There are two login options:

1. Logging in using a web browser:

<https://careconnect.carecloud.io/home/login>

*Scan the QR code for direct
access to CareConnect.*



2. Logging in using a mobile app (recommended): Download from the [Apple Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

Providers may choose one of several ways to submit attendance records (AR) digitally:

- Enter times daily, weekly, or monthly *You can enter times daily, weekly or monthly but AR's should only be submitted at the end of each service month.
- Complete the paper AR and upload it to the portal at the end of the month
- Use contactless sign in: Parents scan QR code to sign in and out in real time, all you do is review & sign at the end of the month
- Batch sign-in/out & batch submission: Sign in & out and submit for multiple children at once.

CHANGING CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Continuity of care relates to the child's continuous relationship and care experience with the same child care provider, and supports the quality of care over a length of time. Families are encouraged to maintain their child's continuity of care, however, families enrolled in childcare payment assistance services have the right to change childcare providers at any time. Example of reasons for changing childcare providers include, but are not limited to: provider's program or hours of operation do not meet the entire needs of the family, convenience of provider location, provider closing their business, family preference of program philosophy, availability of before/after school care, etc. It is critical that the following procedures be followed to prevent a childcare provider or parent from absorbing costs for child care that are not reimbursed by SNCS.

- The provider's termination/notice policy is an agreement between the family and the child care provider. The family is responsible for giving the childcare provider notice when choosing to end childcare services with a childcare provider. The family is responsible for checking with the childcare provider or referring to the provider's contract for the provider's termination and notice policy. SNCS is not responsible for reimbursing services if the family does not adhere to the provider's notice policy.
- The family must notify SNCS before services are authorized with a new childcare provider.
- The new childcare provider must meet requirements for childcare provider participation before services can start.
- Families enrolled in the Family Child Care Homes Network must choose a Network childcare provider. The family may request referrals to current Network providers.

MULTIPLE CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Reimbursement is limited to one childcare provider per child with the following exceptions:

- Child care may be authorized with an eligible secondary provider when the child's first childcare provider is not a licensed center and the parent chooses a licensed center for large group school readiness experiences.
- Child care may be authorized with an eligible secondary provider when the hours of operation of the first provider do not meet the family's certified need for child care.
- Child care may be authorized with an eligible alternate provider when one or both of the following occurs:
 - a. When the child is ill and cannot attend the regular provider and the family has to obtain an alternate provider. Payment to an alternate provider, due to child illness, is limited to 10 days per fiscal year. Care with an alternate provider in excess of ten days per fiscal year based on the illness of the child may be reimbursed if the parent provides a physician verification. Title 5 Section 18076.2 (c)
 - b. When the child's regular provider is closed. Payment to an alternate provider when the regular provider has a paid day of non-operation is limited to 10 days per child per fiscal year.
 - c. Reimbursement to alternate providers is based on actual hours of attendance and is not eligible for reimbursement of absences or closures.

ABANDONMENT OF CARE

The provider shall promptly notify SNCS when the family has not been in communication with the provider for seven (7) consecutive calendar days and has not notified the provider of the reason the family is not using services. The provider must document contact attempts with the family.

SNCS will issue a notice of action to disenroll the family on the basis of abandonment of care when there has been no communication between the family and the provider or SNCS for a total of 30 consecutive calendar days. If a blank Attendance Record is submitted, SNCS may contact the family to determine if the family has abandoned their care.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT

PROCEDURE

Attendance Records (ARs) are mailed directly to childcare providers for providers who do not utilize electronic attendance. It is the responsibility of the childcare provider to submit ARs in a timely manner in order to receive reimbursement for childcare services.

- Childcare providers must contact SNCS immediately if they are missing an AR for an enrolled child. Childcare providers should maintain their own record of attendance to submit for reimbursement until the SNCS AR is received. The provider may also print the SNCS AR directly from CareConnect.
- Childcare providers who do not utilize electronic attendance must submit the original AR for the appropriate month in order to receive reimbursement for childcare services. SNCS will not accept a copy or fax of the completed AR or an AR for the incorrect month (e.g. an August attendance sheet was used for the month of July).
- **ARs that are received after the last day of the month following the month of care will not be reimbursed.**
- Incomplete or inaccurate daily entries cannot be corrected after received by SNCS.
- If the parent's end of the month signature is missing, SNCS will process the reimbursement only if all of the following conditions apply:
 1. The parent has not communicated with the provider for a minimum of seven (7) consecutive calendar days
 2. The provider has notified SNCS of the parent's lack of communication
 3. The provider has documented the provider's unsuccessful attempts to collect a signature and submitted said documentation to SNCS

PROCEDURE (CONT'D)

- If a missing signature is corrected no later than the last day of the month following the service month the attendance sheet will be reimbursed in accordance with the reimbursement schedule below. Exceptions may apply during declared states of emergency.
- If a provider submits attendance records for multiple children and not all individual records within the submission include adequate information to provide a payment, payments will not be withheld for those records that do include adequate information to provide a payment.
- Reimbursement will be made for approved days and hours of child care; use of child care that does not correspond with the childcare schedule or has not been pre-approved by SNCS, will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement is based on the family's certified need for care. Care that is authorized on a variable schedule will be reimbursed based upon the maximum certified need.
- Reimbursement shall be in accordance with California state regulations (WIC Section 10228 (c) and 5 CCR Sections 18413 (a) and 18428. Reimbursements shall be no more than the amount the provider charges for unsubsidized families, not to exceed the maximum reimbursement rate for subsidized families.
- Reimbursements to childcare providers are issued by paper check or direct deposit.
- License-exempt childcare providers providing childcare services for CalWORKs Stage 1 families will not receive reimbursement until SNCS receives confirmation that the childcare provider has been cleared by TrustLine. Once cleared, providers may be eligible for retroactive payment for Stage 1 families up to 120 days between the date the provider is registered with SNCS through the date that the provider is TrustLine approved.
- License-exempt childcare providers providing childcare services for families enrolled on Stage 2, Stage 3, or CAPP are not eligible for reimbursement until they have been registered on TrustLine.

Reimbursements shall be made within 21 calendar days of the submission of a complete monthly attendance record/invoice, according to the following schedule

Submitted Via	Date Attendance Record is Received	Date reimbursement is Mailed/ Direct Deposited
Digital Claims	1 st through the 5 th of the month	10 th of the month
Physical Claims	1 st through the 9 th of the month	20 th of month
Digital Claims	6 th through 9 th of the month	20 th of month
All Claims	10 th through 19 th of the month	Last day of the month
All Claims	20 th through last day of the month	10 th of following month
All Claims	ARs received after the last day of the month	Will not be reimbursed

Because SNCS is funded by the California Department of Social Services, timing of reimbursement to providers can be affected by a delay in the adoption of a State budget or other legislative delays. If SNCS is unable to make a reimbursement within 21 calendar days due to extenuating circumstances, SNCS will notify the provider within a reasonable timeframe of when SNCS became aware of the circumstance causing a delay of the reimbursement payment. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, an emergency or payment system malfunction.

Reimbursement shall not occur when an attendance record is submitted under, but not limited to, the following conditions:

- The provider was incarcerated during the time care was provided.
- The provider lost their license and was directed to cease providing care.
- The provider claimed a relationship to the child that precluded the necessity for TrustLine but, in fact, the relationship did not exist, or the provider has been denied TrustLine.
- The provider used a false identity

REIMBURSEMENT RATE DETERMINATION

CA Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 18076 requires that contractors use a single rate category to reimburse providers. Pursuant to Title 5 Section 18074.2, contractors must reimburse providers using the appropriate RMR based on the age of the child, certified need for child care, and the facility type.

Contractors are to select the rate category that most closely aligns with providers' customary rates while remaining in compliance with regulation.

For children enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten who are less than 6 years of age, the applicable age category shall be determined as follows:

- **Centers**
 - The 6+ age category when the child is considered school-age for licensing purposes
 - The 2-5 age category when the child is considered preschool age for licensing purposes

- **Licensed Family Child Care and License Exempt**
 - The 6+ age category when the child is six years of age or older
 - The 2-5 age category when the child is less than six years of age

Reimbursements to a provider using a daily rate may only occur under specified circumstances:

- A family has an unscheduled but documented need of six hours or more per occurrence, such as the parent's need to work on a regularly scheduled day off, that exceeds the certified need for care.
- A family has a documented need of six hours or more per day that exceeds no more than 14 days per month.

For license-exempt providers, or licensed providers whose customary rate does not qualify for the corresponding RMR based on current regulations, Sierra Nevada Children's Services determines the appropriate rate category by dividing the total hours of care authorized in a given month by 4.33i (the average number of weeks in a month) to determine a weekly average. Once a weekly average has been determined SNCS uses that number to determine the appropriate reimbursement category.

- If the average weekly care is less than 14 hours per week SNCS will reimburse at either a Daily or Hourly rate.

The Daily rate will only be applied under specified circumstances:

1. Family has an unscheduled but documented need of 6 hours or more per occurrence, such as the parent's need to work on a regularly scheduled day off, that exceeds the certified need for child care.
2. Family has a documented need of 6 hours or more per day that exceeds no more than 14 days per month.

The Hourly rate will apply if the family has a documented need of less than 25 hours per week and less than 6 hours on any day.

- If the average weekly care is 14 or more hours per week but less than 25 hours per week SNCS will reimburse at a Daily, Part Time Weekly, or Part Time Monthly Rate.
 1. The Daily rate will only be applied if the family has a documented need of 6 hours or more per day and less than 14 days per month.
 2. The Part Time Weekly rate will only be applied if care is not authorized every week of the month.
 3. The Part Time Monthly rate will only be applied if care is authorized every week of the month.

If the average weekly care is 25 or more hours per week SNCS will reimburse at a Full Time Weekly or Full Time Monthly rate, whichever results in the higher reimbursement amount.

The Regional Market Rate (RMR)ⁱⁱ for the appropriate reimbursement category is then compared to the provider's rate. SNCS is allowed to reimburse up to the appropriate RMR amount or the provider's requested rate, whichever is less. License exempt individuals will be reimbursed at the appropriate RMR, as determined by SNCS.

All schedules are reimbursed based upon the parent's certified need for care. Child care that is authorized on a variable schedule is reimbursed based upon the maximum authorized care.

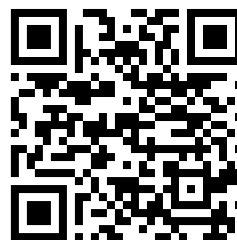
WHEN DOES SNCS PRORATE THE REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT?

- If care is being reimbursed on a weekly or monthly basis, and the authorized childcare schedule begins or ends in the middle of the week or month.
- If the facility is closed during a child's regularly scheduled day of care and is not otherwise covered as a paid closure.
- If a child turns 2 or 6 in the middle of the month, resulting in a change in the applicable RMR ceiling.

i If care is not authorized every week of the month the weekly average will be determined by dividing the total hours of care in the month by the number of weeks the authorization covers.

ii To look up the RMR in your county visit <https://rcscc.adm.dss.ca.gov/>

Or scan the QR code
to look up the RMR
in your county:



OVERPAYMENTS AND UNDERPAYMENTS

The provider or SNCS staff may initiate a request for a review of a suspected over/under reimbursement payment, and a reimbursement adjustment for over/under payments may be considered and processed on a case by case basis, at the discretion of SNCS. The provider or SNCS staff may submit a written or verbal request.

If it has been determined that a provider has been underpaid, a reimbursement adjustment will be made. The difference in the underpaid reimbursement amount will be added to the provider's next reimbursement payment.

If it has been determined that a provider has been overpaid, a reimbursement adjustment will be made. The difference in the overpaid reimbursement amount will be deducted from the provider's next reimbursement payment, with the provider's written consent for SNCS to recover the overpayment.

NON-REIMBURSABLE COSTS

SNCS does not cover the cost of fees that are not included in the childcare provider's basic cost for childcare services. These fees may include diaper fees, transportation fees, late fees, etc. Additionally, SNCS does not cover time when a child is suspended from the childcare program.

SNCS will reimburse registration fees as long as fees or prorated portion thereof, plus the rate established for the provider, do not exceed the maximum allowable benefit amount. Any non-reimbursable portion of registration fees are the parent's responsibility.

RATE CHANGES

All rate changes must be in writing and will become effective on the 1st of the month following notification of the rate change.

HOLIDAYS CLOSURES/NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS

The number of reimbursable paid days(s) of non-operation shall be limited to a maximum of 10 days per fiscal year per provider. Providers may be reimbursed for days of non-operation that occur during regularly authorized and scheduled hours of service only when the provider submits documentation that the contractual terms used by the provider for services to unsubsidized families require payment for such day(s) of non-operation. The provider's 10 chosen days must be referenced in the provider's written materials to families, documenting the provider's policy to charge for closures.

It is the provider's responsibility to notify SNCS of any changes in closures or non-operational days. If the provider wishes to make a change, the change must be submitted in writing and reported to SNCS in advance, prior to the date of the closure.

LOST CHECK POLICY

In the event that a check is lost SNCS will reissue the check after 15 business days.

REQUEST FOR COPIES OF RECORDS

Providers may request up to 6 months of copies of Attendance Records (AR) and Explanation of Payments (EOP). The provider's request must be in writing and may be submitted via email or hard copy letter. The requested months shall be no more than the previous 6 months from the date of the request, and must be within the same fiscal year. Providers utilizing CareConnect may refer to their provider portal for copies of records, but may request hard copies. Providers shall be responsible for an administrative cost equal to \$1.00 per month per child of requested records, paid in advance of receipt of requested copies of records. Provider will be invoiced and shall send payment via PayPal or check for the administrative cost of the request.

SNCS shall provide copies of requested documents within 60 business days of the date SNCS received the request.

The request for copies of records shall not result in any adjustments to reimbursements.

MISREPRESENTATION AND FRAUD POLICY

If a provider knowingly misrepresents their eligibility by providing SNCS with incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain a benefit or reimbursement that the provider would otherwise not be entitled to receive will result in denial or disenrollment of childcare services. Child care attendance and/or enrollment in a provider's program under misrepresentation may result in a referral to the District Attorney. The provider will be responsible for repayment of funds dispersed under fraudulent circumstances.

SNCS may terminate services, the provider's agreement, and the business relationship with the responsible party for any of the following reasons, including but not limited to:

- The provider was incarcerated during the time he/she claimed to have provided care
- The provider fails to provide current and correct information regarding child care attendance that clearly reflects misleading or deceitful information
- The provider was out-of-state during the time s/he claimed to have provided care and did not meet the requirements of the Manual of Policies and Procedures, Title 22, Section 102417 (a).
- The provider claimed a relationship to the child that would have precluded TrustLining but, in fact, the relationship did not exist, or the provider had been previously TrustLine denied.
- The provider fails to submit required documentation to participate.
- The provider used a false identity
- The provider exhibits threatening behavior, yelling, cussing or acting unethically towards any SNCS staff member
- The licensed provider refuses or is unable to provide SNCS with a copy of his/her current child care license
- The licensed provider's license is suspended or revoked and the provider was directed to cease providing care but did not
- Child care situation is deemed detrimental to the health or welfare of a child.

GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

COMPLAINTS REGARDING CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

As a Childcare Resource and Referral agency, SNCS does not license childcare facilities nor does SNCS investigate alleged violations. The role of SNCS is to:

- Receive complaints.
- Act as a resource to parents, providers and the community in assisting them in contacting the appropriate authorities.
- Provide technical assistance to providers for compliance with licensing regulations.

Confidentiality will be strictly enforced regarding all complaints. However, if SNCS receives a request from an investigative agency to assist in the investigations, SNCS may provide information from the provider file to the investigating agency.

In no instance shall SNCS make an assumption of guilt or innocence based on the documented complaint.

The following complaint procedures apply when a complaint is received by SNCS regarding any childcare provider within its referral database:

- Ask the complainant if they have spoken with their provider. The provider may be unaware that the complainant is unhappy and may be able to resolve the issue immediately.
- Inform the complainant that SNCS does not investigate complaints.
- Direct the complainant to file a formal complaint with Community Care Licensing (CCL). Parents may telephone (916) 263-5744 and request the consultant for Eastern or Western Nevada County, or call (530) 895-5033 and request the consultant for Sierra County.

All of the following are to be considered serious complaints and may be grounds for immediately placing a facility on temporary hold from referrals:

- A Type A violation that has been reported to and confirmed by Community Care Licensing
- Violation of children's rights.
- Child abuse (physical or sexual).
- Use of corporal punishment.
- Unacceptable disciplinary techniques, such as shaming, humiliation, withholding food or toileting privileges, locking child in closet/bathroom, etc.
- Gross unsanitary practices/conditions, such as presences of feces/urine, improper food handling, lack of hand washing before and after food handling/diapering, etc.
- Broken/shattered glass or other sharp objects.
- Poisonous plants/household chemicals (unless properly secured pursuant to CCL regulations).
- Complaints alleging that children have been left alone or in the care of person(s) not cleared through CCL.
- Presence of unsecured firearms.
- Over licensed capacity.
- Insufficient CCL mandated child/staff ratios.
- Presence of unsecured and/or non-childproofed medications and vitamins.
- Presence of seriously damaged/broken toys or equipment.
- Presence of illegal drugs/provider intoxication.
- Any action (written or verbal) alleging discrimination of child and/or family based on sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

All licensed childcare providers are required to maintain, at their site, copies of CCL visit reports. Parents may access these records or may review the facility's profile on the CCL website; <https://www.ccl.dss.ca.gov/carefacilitysearch/>. A childcare provider may be permanently removed from the SNCS referral database upon a decision made by CCL.



<https://www.ccl.dss.ca.gov/carefacilitysearch/>

SNCS shall maintain a record of any written parent complaints regarding any TrustLine registered or relative childcare provider. Parents that choose a TrustLine registered or relative childcare provider may review the record of complaints maintained by SNCS on that childcare provider. All written complaints must include the nature of the complaint, the date and approximate time of occurrence and the name and address of the childcare provider.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS REGARDING SNCS

Grievances:

Parents and providers are encouraged to share their suggestions and concerns, as this offers a way for our program to better serve their needs. Should a grievance concerning agency policy or practice be brought to SNCS attention, the matter will be forwarded to the Program Director in an effort to resolve the issue. If the matter is not resolved at this level, the complaint will be forwarded to the Executive Director.

Additionally, if satisfaction is not reached through the grievance process, a formal complaint may be filed with the California Department of Social Services. Uniform Complaint Policy information may be found in the lobby of Sierra Nevada Children's Services, as well as in both the Parent and Provider Guides.

Complaints:

Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) must comply with State and Federal laws and regulations when administering its programs. A complaint is an accusation that in some fashion SNCS has not acted in compliance with State and/or Federal laws and regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and non-compliance.

Information regarding how to file a complaint is available at the SNCS office, free of charge, and may be requested at any time. A complaint should be submitted as soon as possible.

Complaints of possible discrimination must be filed within six months of the incident, or when first discovered. The Executive Director may extend this deadline for up to 90 calendar days for good cause.

Any individual, duly authorized representative or interested third party, public agency or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance. Confidentiality and protection against retaliation are assured.

The complaint should describe the non-compliance problem and include all the information needed to support the allegation or complaint. Complaint forms and assistance are available at the SNCS Grass Valley Office. The Executive Director shall assure that there is an investigation of the complaint and seek to resolve complaints at the local level. If all parties agree, a neutral mediator may be assigned. All parties shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when meetings are scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

You may send a written complaint to:

Executive Director
420 Sierra College Drive, Ste. 100
Grass Valley, California, 95945

An investigative meeting will be held within five working days of receiving the complaint to give all parties an opportunity to present information and question witnesses. Within 60 days of receiving the complaint (unless the complainant agrees to an extension of time), the Executive Director shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation including findings, conclusion of law, disposition of the complaint, rationale, and any corrective actions. Civil law remedies may be pursued through local, state or federal aid agencies, offices, or private/public interest attorneys.

You may appeal by submitting an email within 15 days to:

California Department of Social Services
Child Care and Development Division
ccdstakeholders@dss.ca.gov

You must specify reason(s) for appealing the decision, stating how the facts of the agency's decision are incorrect and/or the law was misapplied, and include a copy of the locally filed complaint and the decision.

SERVING YOU AT THREE LOCATIONS:



sierra nevada children's services

GRASS VALLEY OFFICE:

420 Sierra College Drive, Suite 100
Grass Valley, CA 95945
530.272.8866
Fax 530.272.1354

TRUCKEE OFFICE:

10075 Levon Street, Suite 201A
PO Box 3239
Truckee, CA 96160
530.587.5960
Fax 530.587.0899

LOYALTON OFFICE:

701 Main Street, Suite 1
PO Box 1139
Loyalton, CA 96118
530.993.1288
Fax 530.993.1512

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Sierra Nevada Children's Services Toll Free Number:

888-306-7627(SNCS)

Stay Connected:
info@sncs.org
www.sncs.org

