

NON-TANF CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY

CHILD CARE 2 - 3

Non-TANF Activity Requirements

Supersedes: Child Care 2-3 (4/9/16)

References: 52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

Parents qualifying for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships participate in one of these general activities:

- Employed and meeting a minimum hourly requirement; or
- Employed and attending school or a training program part time and meeting a minimum hourly requirement;
- Attending school or training program full time which meets the school requirement of a degree obtained more than 5 years before the application date; or
- A teen parent attending high school, High School Equivalency Assessment [HiSET], or other equivalency program.

Detailed activity requirements for each category follow below.

Minimum Hourly Work Requirement

To be eligible for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, parents must be employed at paid legal labor or self-employed [See Policy Section 2-2a on self-employment] earning minimum wage, and meet a minimum hourly work requirement each month:

- Two-parent families shall work a minimum of 120 hours per month with either/or both parents working any combination of hours.
- In two-parent families where one or both parents attend(s) school or training, care will be based on the parent with the least amount of hours outside the home. This means there is no work requirement for either parent when both are attending school full time.
- In two-parent families where one parent is a full time student and one parent is a part-time student, the work requirement is 40 hours a month.
- Single-parent families shall work a minimum of 60 hours per month.
- Single-parent families may qualify for child care while the parent attends school or training full time; where full time is based on the school's guidelines. Full time students will not be required to meet a work activity requirement.
- Single parents attending school/training part-time as defined by the institution, shall work a minimum of 40 hours per month.
- When one parent of an intact family is incarcerated or in a pre-release program ordered by the court, the other parent must meet the minimum hourly work requirement of 60 hours until the time the incarcerated parent returns to the

household. Should this parent be a full time student, then the parent would not have to meet a work requirement.

When the parent's employer is a licensed or registered child care facility, the parent must have a completed Best Beginnings Work Verification Form signed by the director of the child care facility. The parent must be on the approved caregiver list for the facility at the time of their annual redetermination to be approved.

Parent with a Disability

The activity requirement for a parent unable to provide care for the child may be waived if the following conditions are met:

- ❑ A parent who meets the definition for an Individual with a Disability may be approved by the Early Childhood Services Bureau to meet the activity requirement. The parent must also be unable to provide care for a child.
- ❑ In a two-parent household, if one parent is disabled and unable to work, the remaining parent must meet the single parent work requirement.

Employed and/or Attending School/Training

If the family meets the eligibility requirements for employment, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be available to parents attending post-secondary education, vocational training, high school, High School Equivalency Assessment [HiSET] or other equivalency programs which will lead to a recognized occupation for which jobs exist within Montana. [Refer to Department of Labor information regarding employment in Montana]. All of the following restrictions apply:

- ❑ Number of credits parent is enrolled in must be verified through class schedule and fee receipts.
- ❑ Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available for training and education activities if a parent has earned a post-secondary education degree or training certificate within the last five years.
 - **NOTE:** A student who enrolls in a continuous four-year program, which happens to issue a two-year certificate or degree at the midpoint of the student's intended educational goal, is not subject to this five-year limitation.
- ❑ If the parent received the last post-secondary education degree or training certificate over five years ago, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be allowed for a second certificate or bachelor's degree.

Distance Learning/Online Coursework

Distance Learning/On-line coursework a student receives from a college or university accredited by the U.S. Department of Education [<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation>] is acceptable if, in addition to fulfilling all other eligibility requirements outlined in this section, the student is formally enrolled in the college or university and has an educational plan and projected graduation date.

All other eligibility requirements as outlined in Policy Section_2-3 must be met in order to have Distance Learning/On-line coursework approved.

Teen Parents

A teen parent who needs child care in order to attend high school, High School Equivalency Assessment [HiSET] or other equivalency program may be eligible for a child care scholarship. The student's work requirement is waived while attending high school, HiSET, or an equivalency

program. If the teen parent lives with their parents, they may be considered a separate household from their own parents for the purposes of eligibility and co-payment determination.

The teen parent must:

- Be under the age of 20; and
- Be attending high school, HiSET, or an equivalency program; and
- Need child care to attend high school, HiSET, or an equivalency program; and
- Meet financial eligibility requirements; and
- Pay a co-payment.

Teen parents intending to return to high school, HiSET, or an equivalency program may receive a child care scholarship while working during breaks in the school schedule.

Parents in their teens who do not attend high school, HiSET, or an equivalency program are subject to work requirements.