

Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS): An Overview

The Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program offers low-income families subsidies to pay for quality child care, afterschool and summer programs for children up to age 12 and for children up to age 17 with special needs. CAPS is federally funded through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and is administered by the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). In 2018, Georgia received more than \$223 million in federal child care subsidy funds.

The purpose of CAPS is to:

1. Provide access to high quality and affordable early learning, afterschool and summer environments for low-income families.
2. Increase positive school readiness outcomes.
3. Assist families in achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency by providing financial supports for child care costs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CAPS?

To qualify for entry into the CAPS program, family income must not exceed 50% of the state median income.



For example, a **family of four** cannot initially make more than **\$36,601** a year, and can continue to receive a CAPS scholarship until their income reaches \$62,221.

To qualify for the very low income priority group:

A **family of four** cannot make more than **\$25,750** a year.

PRIORITY GROUP ELIGIBILITY

Because CAPS scholarships are limited, children in the following situations are given priority:

- Child Protective Services
- Custody of the Division of Family and Children Services
- Domestic violence situations
- Disabled
- Enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K Program
- Participating in or transitioning from TANF
- Experienced a natural disaster
- Lack fixed, regular and adequate housing
- Very low income as defined by CAPS
- Grandparents raising grandchildren
- Minor parents
- Need to protect

PARENT APPROVED ACTIVITIES

Parents who receive CAPS must complete 24 hours a week of approved activities to stay eligible for the CAPS scholarship.

Approved activities can include:



Employment

Paid employment or volunteering at Head Start/ Early Head Start facilities



Education

Participation in middle or high school, GED programs, vocational training programs, and associate degree programs*



Job Search

Parents who lose their job or stop attending state-approved training or education programs may be authorized for up to 13 weeks of job search.**

*For parents enrolled with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG): every credit hour equals two hours towards the required 24 hours a week of approved activities. For example, if a parent is enrolled in a class that counts as 3 credit hours with TCSG, they earn 6 credit hours a week towards the required 24.

**Parents who meet eligibility requirements for certain priority groups may be authorized with job search as their state-approved activity for the entire 12-month eligibility period.

CHANGES TO THE CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR 2019-2021



Georgia received an extra **\$93 million** in CCDF funds for FY 2019-2021.



As of September 17, 2018, parent fees were significantly reduced, not to exceed **7%** of family income.



By 2020, all CAPS sites must be Quality Rated.