

CLIENT FEES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN TURKU STARTING FROM 1 MARCH 2017

Early childhood education provided by a municipality is subject to a monthly fee. The fee is determined in accordance with the Act on Client Fees in Early Childhood Education (1503/2016) and Section 3 of the decision made by the City of Turku Education Committee on 18 January 2017.

The size of the client fee is determined based on the family's size and income and the hours reserved for early childhood education.

Family size

The calculation of family size takes into account married/unmarried partners living in a joint household and the underage children of both partners living with them in the same household. A registered partnership is equated to a marriage.

Family's income

The calculation of the family's income takes into account the taxable earned and capital income and tax-free income of the adults in the family and the child in early childhood education. If the income varies on a monthly basis, the fee is calculated based on the average monthly income from the last year. The taxable income taken into account in the fee may also be based on the income confirmed in the last tax year, which is increased according to the percentages decided upon annually by the Finnish Tax Administration.

The following are not taken into account as income: child benefits, benefits under the Disability Benefits Act, child increase under the National Pensions Act, housing benefits, any costs of medical care and examinations performed based on accident insurance, conscript's allowance, front-veteran's supplement, study grant, adult education allowance (granted by the Education Fund), housing supplement for students, premium grant and travelling expenses allowance paid as social assistance, maintenance allowance referred to in the Act on the Rehabilitation Benefits and Rehabilitation Allowance Granted by the Social Insurance Institution, maintenance allowance under the Act on Public Employment and Business Service, grants and other similar allowances paid for studies, compensation for family care expenses, or child home care allowance.

The following are taken into account as income deductions: paid child support and other similar expenses resulting from actual family relationships as well as traditional life annuity paid in cash.

Income statements are submitted via the Early Childhood Education E-services at www.turku.fi/en/daycare-and-education; Early Childhood Education E-services. If you are unable to use the E-services, you can submit the income statement form *and its attachments* by post to the address: Education Division / Early Childhood Education, Client fees, PO Box 362, 20101 Turku.

If the family does not submit their income information, they are charged the maximum fee. Families do not have to submit their income information if they consent to pay the maximum fee. Families can give their consent in writing on an income statement form or via the Early Childhood Education E-services (use of the services requires user identification). The consent provided remains valid until the client personally gives notification of a change.

The early childhood education fee decision is family-specific and shows the fees for each of

the family's children separately. If the child's parents live separately but in the same municipality, only one early childhood education fee decision is made. In this type of situation, the fee will be determined based on the income of the parent with whom the child legally resides in accordance with the Act on the Population Information System and the Population Register Centre's certificates services (661/2009). In this case, the parents must agree between themselves about sharing the fees charged for early childhood education or how these fees are taken into account in child support, for example. If early childhood education is provided for the child in two municipalities, the fee must be determined separately for each municipality.

Verifying the client fee

Families are sent a text message once a year, in which they are asked to provide a new income statement so that the fee can be verified. Reminders concerning out-of-date income information are sent as text messages to the phone of the family's first guardian and as e-mail messages to the e-mail addresses of both of the family's parents. Because of this, the aforementioned contact information should be kept up to date to ensure the successful delivery of the messages. You can update your contact information through the Early Childhood Education E-services at www.turku.fi/en; Daycare and Education; Early Childhood Education E-services.

If the family's income changes substantially or if the size of the family changes at some point between the annual fee adjustments, the family must submit the new information at its own initiative in the manner mentioned in the section concerning income statements. The income information affecting the fee is taken into account starting from the month during which the new information was submitted. The amount of the fee is rounded to the nearest full euro. The client fee can be adjusted if the grounds for it (such as family size) turn out to be incorrect.

Hours in early childhood education

Fee for full-time early childhood education

Full-time early childhood education refers to early childhood education that is provided for more than 35 hours per week on average. When calculating the average weekly hours the child spends in early childhood education, the hours reserved for early childhood education per calendar month are taken into account. For the youngest child in full-time early childhood education, the monthly fee is no more than €290. The fee for the second child is 90 per cent of the full-time fee for the youngest child. The fee for each subsequent child is 20 per cent of the fee for the youngest child. A monthly fee of less than €27 will not be charged.

The fee is determined by calculating a percentage of the monthly income that exceeds the income limit in accordance with the table below. If there are more than six people in the family, the income limit is raised by €138 for each subsequent underage child.

Family size number of people	Income limit €/month	Maximum fee %
2	1,915	11.5
3	1,915	9.4
4	2,053	7.9
5	2,191	7.9
6	2,328	7.9

Example: A family consists of two adults and three children. The children spend more than 35 hours/week on average in full-time early childhood education provided by the municipality. The family's total income is €3,500/month.

A deduction is made from the family's income in accordance with the table: €3,500 – €2,191 = €1,309.

- The fee for the youngest and second child is $7.9\% \times €1309 = €103/\text{month}$, rounded to the nearest full euro.
- The fee for the second child is 90% of the fee for the youngest child: $90\% \times €103 = €93/\text{month}$, rounded to the nearest full euro.
- The fee for the third child is 20% of the fee for the youngest child: $20\% \times €103 = €21/\text{month}$, so the fee is not charged.

In total, the family's fees for three children are $€103 + €93 + €0 = €196/\text{month}$.

Needs for early childhood education services and the client fees

- 50% when the child's need for services is no more than 20 hours per week on average
- 65% when the child's need for services is no more than 27.5 hours per week on average
- 85% when the child's need for services is no more than 35 hours per week on average
- 100% when the child's need for services is more than 35 hours per week

When calculating the average weekly hours the child spends in early childhood education, the hours reserved for early childhood education per calendar month are taken into account. As the number of days on which early childhood education is available varies on a monthly basis, the hours reserved and their use must be adjusted to suit the number of such days available in each calendar month.

Fee for early childhood education that supplements preschool education

Preschool education is provided free of charge for 4 hours every day. If a child who attends preschool is also in early childhood education, a monthly fee will be charged for the child's early childhood education according to the hours reserved.

- 50% when the child's need for services is no more than 20 hours per week on average and when the child spends no more than 80 hours per calendar month in 24-hour early childhood education
- 65% when the child's need for services is no more than 27.5 hours per week on average and when the child spends no more than 110 hours per calendar month on average in 24-hour early childhood education
- 85% when the child's need for services is no more than 35 hours per week on average and when the child spends no more than 140 hours per calendar month on average in 24-hour early childhood education

Fee for 24-hour early childhood education

In 24-hour early childhood education, the fee is calculated from the monthly fee for full-time day care as follows:

- 50% when the child's need for services is no more than 80 hours per calendar month in 24-hour early childhood education
- 65% when the child's need for services is no more than 110 hours per calendar month in 24-hour early childhood education
- 85% when the child's need for services is no more than 140 hours per calendar month in 24-hour early childhood education

- 100% when the child's need for services is more than 140 hours per calendar month in 24-hour early childhood education

Charging of fees

The client fee payable every month is based on the number of hours reserved in early childhood education. The number of hours reserved in early childhood education is monitored on a calendar month basis. If the actual hours of early childhood education used exceed the hours reserved in any calendar month, the fee will be increased to correspond to the price of the service product in accordance with the actual hours of early childhood education provided in the calendar month in question. If the hours are exceeded repeatedly, a new agreement will be made regarding the hours reserved for the child in early childhood education. If the actual hours of early childhood education used fall short of the hours reserved in the month in question, the fee will be charged according to the hours reserved.

Before the fee is determined, the parents will agree with the day care centre manager or family day care worker on the hours reserved in early childhood education, as they affect the fee. For this purpose, they make a written agreement concerning the child's early childhood education for a period of at least four months.

Client fees are invoiced in accordance with the fee decision and the record of attendance

Fee decision

The family receives a fee decision that states the fee and the start date of the fee for each child in early childhood education. The decision is based on *the family's size and income and the hours reserved in early childhood education*. If the fee decision contains incorrect information, the family must immediately inform the Early Childhood Education's client fee services of this.

If the family's size or income or the hours reserved in early childhood education change, a new fee decision will be sent to the family. The decision will be posted automatically from the customer information system, so the family may receive more than one fee decision in the same calendar month. For example, a family may receive two decisions if the hours reserved for a child in early childhood education are changed from full-time to part-time at the beginning of the calendar month, while later that same month the family's 17-year-old child turns 18 or a sibling starts in early childhood education.

Charging client fees for absences (see also Fees for holiday periods)

All early childhood education facilities keep a record of each child's attendance and absences. The early childhood education facility must be immediately notified of the reason for the child's absence, as this cannot be changed retroactively in invoicing. A child's temporary absence from early childhood education will not decrease the fee. The absences listed below are *exceptions* to this rule:

- *when a child is absent due to illness for the whole calendar month, no fee is charged*
- *when a child is absent due to illness for no less than 11 days in a calendar month, half of the monthly fee is charged*
- *when a child is absent for the whole calendar month for a reason other than his/her own illness, half of the monthly fee is charged*
- *when a child is absent for the duration of a paternity leave, no fee is charged*

Invoicing

Invoicing begins from the start date of early childhood education as agreed upon. If the provision of early childhood education begins or ends in the middle of a calendar month, the incomplete month is taken into account as a factor that decreases the client fee. If the family does not accept a placement in early childhood education and fails to cancel it in writing before the start date agreed upon, they will be charged half of the monthly fee.

The invoice for a calendar month will be sent in the middle of the following month. The invoice is payable at the turn of the following calendar month; for example, the due date for the client fee for August is at the turn of September and October.

Kuntaperintä Oy is in charge of collecting any **unpaid invoices** after the due date. Any unpaid invoices will be subject to interest on late payment in accordance with the Interest Act.

Invoicing ends on the date the agreement is terminated. The family must terminate the placement in early childhood education in writing before the need for the services ends (www.turku.fi/en/daycare-and-education; Early Childhood Education E-services). If the provision of early childhood education ends in the middle of a calendar month, a fee smaller than the full amount of the monthly fee will be charged.

Compensation for monthly fees in family day care

If the family personally arranges for temporary care for their child for the duration of a family day care worker's annual leave, sick leave, leave for evening out the working hours in a work period, or a training day, the family will receive a day-specific deduction on their client fee for the days in question. However, the family is not entitled to fee compensation for an absence that is due to reasons attributable to the family or the child when this absence takes place at the same time as the caregiver's absence. A temporary day care place reserved due to the caregiver's absence must be cancelled in writing no later than a week before the start of the reservation in order for the client to be entitled to the fee compensation. When calculating the compensation, the hours reserved for early childhood education per calendar month are taken into account. (Education Committee 27 March 2013, Section 53).

Paternity leave

When paternity leave is taken after the child has already started in early childhood education, the family must provide Early Childhood Education's client fee services with a copy of Kela's paternity leave decision. Client fees will not be charged during paternity leave. However, the child may not attend day care whilst the paternity leave is ongoing. The child's early childhood education place will be retained during the paternity leave. The early childhood education facility must be notified of any paternity leave periods no later than two weeks before the leave starts. The other children in the family may attend day care during the paternity leave.

Client fees during holiday periods

If the child's guardians reserve an early childhood education place for the child during a holiday period and fail to cancel this reservation in writing by the due date, the family will be charged a fee equal to half of the monthly fee determined for the family for the unused and uncanceled early childhood education place in accordance with the Act on Client Fees in Early Childhood Education. If a monthly fee is not charged for the child, the family will be charged a fee equal to half of the minimum fee (€27). The fee will also be charged for July

even if the month would otherwise be free of charge to the family.

July

July is free of charge if the child's ongoing early childhood education started prior to the first day of September the previous year.

If July is not free of charge, the family will be charged

- a fee equal to half of the monthly fee if the child is absent for the whole month of July
- the monthly fee in full if the child is present **in early childhood education for even one day** in July.

Two or three summer months free of charge

For the time being, no fee will be charged for early childhood education in the summer if the child is absent from early childhood education **as notified in advance** in June, July and August **for all three calendar months or for two consecutive calendar months** (either June and July or July and August). (Social and Healthcare Committee 25 February 2009, Section 129.)

Families will be asked in writing in the spring about their need for early childhood education during the summer holidays.

Other holidays

If the child is on holiday on some other date, the fee will be charged for any temporary absences. If the child is absent for a whole calendar month, a fee equal to half of the monthly fee will be charged.

During the autumn, Christmas and winter breaks

- The holidays do not decrease the child's fee in early childhood education.
- During the breaks in preschool education (autumn, Christmas and winter breaks), the child may attend day care on a full-time basis when needed without any need to change the need for services (no need to change the agreement). Invoicing takes into account the need for services as agreed upon and as reserved in advance as well as the possible need for full-time services during holiday periods. If the hours used exceed the hours reserved, the fee will be increased.

Fee for temporary early childhood education

Temporary early childhood education refers to an occasional need for early childhood education that does not continue every month. The fee for temporary early childhood education that is provided for no more than five days per month is €18 for early childhood education that lasts more than 5 hours per day and €12 for early childhood education that lasts less than 5 hours per day.

Other fees in early childhood education

Open day care is free of charge.

Playground and club activities are subject to the following monthly fees:

- €27 if the service is used for up to 15 hours per week and
- €23 if the service is used for up to 10 hours per week.

No fee is charged when the child is absent for the whole calendar month.

Starting from 1 August 2017, it will no longer be possible for the same child to participate in playground and club activities at the same time or use the early childhood education services referred to in the Act on Client Fees in Early Childhood Education and participate in playground and/or club activities at the same time.

Discretionary reduction or waiver of fees

Families may apply for a reduction or waiver of client fees on the grounds of a child support obligation, financial difficulties or considerations related to the child's care. Application forms and advice are provided by the manager of the early childhood education facility or the Early Childhood Education Administration. Before submitting an application, the family and the manager of the early childhood education facility must check that the information that serves as the basis for the fee is correct. For example, if the family's income has decreased, the fee will be adjusted and the family will not need to apply for a fee reduction (cf. the section Family income/Verifying the client fee).

Other considerations

The family is not entitled to child home care allowance or private day care allowance if the child is in early childhood education (day care centre or family day care) provided by the municipality. A child for which the family receives child home care allowance may participate in other early childhood education (open day care centres, clubs and playgrounds) and preschool education in the year prior to the start of his/her compulsory education.

If the child's care has been arranged with a service voucher, the child is not simultaneously entitled to child home care allowance or private day care allowance. A service voucher is equated to early childhood education provided by a municipality under Section 11a of the Act on Early Childhood Education and Care even though the client fee is determined differently in early childhood education arranged with a service voucher and early childhood education provided by a municipality.

A family that receives financial support is **obligated** to notify Kela immediately of the start of the child's early childhood education or preschool education. Financial support paid unjustifiably will be recovered from the family.

If you need more information or have any questions related to the fee, please call 02-262 5609 on weekdays Mon–Fri 9:30–11:30am and 2–3pm or send a message to paivahoitomaksut@turku.fi