



Priority of Access Guidelines for Child Care Services

It is a condition of approval and continued approval for Child Care Benefit (CCB) purposes that services must comply with family assistance law.

The Priority of Access Guidelines are set out in the *Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000*.

The Guidelines apply to Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and In-Home Care services. Failure to meet these Guidelines is a breach of the conditions of continued approval and may result in a service being sanctioned under the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*.

Priorities for filling vacant places

The Priority of Access Guidelines must be used by approved services to allocate available child care places where there are more families requiring care than places available.

When filling vacant places, a service must fill them according to the following priorities:

- **Priority 1** – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Priority 2** – a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test
- **Priority 3** – any other child.

Within these main Priority categories, priority should also be given to children in:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- families which include a disabled person
- families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of **\$43,727 for 2015-2016** or who or whose partner is on income support
- families from a non-English speaking background
- socially isolated families

- single parent families.

Note: Where a service is funded by an employer to provide child care solely or primarily for the children of the employer's employees, the service may give priority to those children.

Requiring a child to vacate a place

Under the Priority of Access Guidelines a child care service may require a Priority 3 child only to vacate a place to make room for a higher priority child. The service can only do so if:

- the person liable for the payment of the child care fees was notified when the child first entered care that the service followed this policy, and
- the service gives the person at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to vacate the place.

Outside School Hours Care

Outside School Hours Care is primarily for school children. Where an Outside School Hours Care Service has no vacant places and is providing care for a child who has not yet started school, the service may require that child to leave the service in order to provide a place for a school child.

Employer sponsored places

Where a child care service has places sponsored by an employer, the service may require those places to be vacated for the employee's children