Gap fees waived for families in COVID-19 hotspots

Child care services in Commonwealth-declared COVID-19 hotspots that run for more than seven days can now waive gap fees for families who keep their children at home.

Education Minister Alan Tudge announced today that child care services can waive gap fees from the first day of any hotspot declaration exceeding a week.

The measure will also allow child care services to waive gap fees if a state or territory government order only allows access to child care services in particular circumstances. Such circumstances could include:

- children who are vulnerable or disadvantaged
- children whose parents can't work from home
- children of essential workers.

These circumstances differ across jurisdictions. You should check your state or territory government website to see what applies to your region.

Gap fee waiving helps parents keep their children enrolled without having to pay for a service they are not using. Where services choose to waive gap fees, they will continue to receive the Child Care Subsidy.

Check our website to see key dates for gap fee waivers and additional allowable absences **for your region.**

Families can also access additional allowable absences once a hotspot declaration period exceeds seven days. Allowable absences are backdated to the first day of the current lockdown.

Families experiencing a loss of income, such as casual workers or those in self-isolation, may also be eligible for support through the Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship).

Visit our COVID-19 information for the early childhood education and care sector webpage for advice and updates.
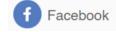
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