



Administrative & Professional Staff and non-Union support staff, Postdoctoral Fellows, Other academic teaching and research faculty, and Ladder faculty with children aged over 6 years
Child Care Scholarship Program

FAQ

Part 1: Eligibility and Background

1. How do I know if I am eligible to apply?

To be eligible for the University-wide program you and your household must meet each of these five criteria:

To be eligible to apply, YOU must:

1) Work in a benefits-eligible position. This means you must be:

- working at least half-time (<17.5 hours per week) at Harvard *and*
- paid by the President and Fellows of Harvard College on a regular Harvard payroll

AND

2) Have a spouse/domestic partner who is:

- formally employed at least 15 hours/wk (paid or unpaid), *or*
- a full-time or part-time student (at least 15 hours/wk), *or*
- disabled, or providing care for a disabled person (at least 15 hours/wk), *or*

OR

- be in a single-parent household

AND

3) Be employed in one of the following capacities

Job Title	Pay Group	Employee Code
Administrative & Professional Staff	PFX	A
Non-Union Support Staff	PON	A/S
Employee Postdoctoral Fellow	MIP	Y
Stipendee Postdoctoral Fellow	MEP	Z
Other Academic	MFC	O
Ladder Faculty (with children >=6)	MFC	J/F

AND

4) Have at least one child under the age of 13 years

For this cycle, families with at least one child born on or after September 1, 2004 are eligible to apply. Those families with children who have documented special healthcare needs can still apply for their teenage children.

AND

5) Have a total adjusted gross family income of \$130,000 per year or less for a single-child family

Income is adjusted by the Office of Work/Life in the following way:

- Single parent household: \$10K is added to the income cap
- Households with more than one child aged under 13 years: \$10K is added to the income cap for each additional child aged under 13 years beyond the first and up to three additional children.

1-child	< \$130,000
2-child	< \$140,000
3-child	< \$150,000
4 or more children	< \$160,000

Your child(ren) must:

- 1) Be your legal dependent(s) verified by your tax return and you must be responsible for their child care costs (unborn and newborn or newly-adopted children are exempted from the tax dependency verification requirement in the first year),

AND

- 2) Be cared for in one of the following child care settings:
 - a licensed child care center
 - a licensed family child care provider
 - a licensed after school program
 - a daytime summer camp program
 - an in-home provider with a Social Security or Tax I.D. number.

2. What if I still do not know if I am eligible?

Please ask your administrator what your specific “Paygroup Code” is. Compare it to the codes listed above.

3. Can I apply if my baby is not born yet?

Yes! As long as you will use and pay for child care before June 30th, 2018, you can apply for the scholarship. You will be reimbursed for child care expenses, up to your award amount, after you demonstrate that you have paid them.

4. Can I apply if my child is not yet formally enrolled in a program?

Yes! The application asks for enrollment information and costs or your best estimate of what your costs will be from July 1st, 2017 through June 30th, 2018.

5. Can I use the scholarship to pay my mother, father, or other family member?

Yes! You can use scholarship money to pay any relative who cares for your children, as long as this person:

- 1) Does not live with you, and
- 2) Has a valid SSN or Tax ID number, *and*
- 3) Provides care while you or your spouse are at work.

6. Can I use the scholarship to pay my babysitter or nanny?

Yes! This is an eligible expense if the babysitter or nanny provides care while you or your spouse are at work. As mentioned above, your babysitter **MUST** have a Social Security or Tax I.D. number. The only exception to the “live-in” rules applies to formally-employed nannies, who may reside in your home.

7. Can I use the scholarship to pay for my children’s care even if my spouse is not working?

While there may be compelling reasons to place a child into care even though there is an adult at home capable of providing care, such families will generally not be eligible for assistance. Our limited funds are prioritized for those families where child care is a necessity because no-one is at home to provide the care.

8. Can I apply if I don't know what kind of child care I'm going to use?

That's fine! You can still apply. Scholarships are "reserved funds", and are based on your adjusted gross household income. You will receive a letter that confirms your award for which you have been verified. You will be reimbursed for child care expenses, up to your award amount, after you demonstrate that you have paid them. Further, changing the type of care you use later will not affect your award as long as it remains 'qualifying care' (see #9 for the definition).

9. What kinds of child care can I use the scholarship for?

You can use the scholarship to pay for the costs of:

- A licensed child care center,
- A licensed family child care provider,
- A licensed after-school program
- A licensed summer/vacation day camp, or
- An in-home caregiver, such as a nanny or babysitter, with a Social Security number.

10. What if my spouse also works at Harvard?

Scholarship awards are per family so only one person need apply – the award from the program with the highest value will be given to that family. However, if your spouse is in a union position (HUCTW or one of the service and trades unions) they should apply to that program as well. The Office of Work/Life will work closely with the union child care scholarship program administrators to determine the best award for these dual-Harvard families.

11. Where do I apply online?

The application is hosted on PeopleSoft which means that some information will already be pre-populated as you begin an application. You login to PeopleSoft with your HarvardKey. Once in you select the "My Benefits" tile, click on the drop-down menu for the "Child Care Scholarships" on the left-hand side and choose the "Application" link. Only those with eligible pay groups and Harvard working hours will be able to proceed to the application stage.

12. When is the deadline and what if I miss it?

The deadline is **Wednesday August 9, 2017**. This means that the application must be submitted online AND the supporting paperwork postmarked by this date.

- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered and employees must wait until the following summer to apply again.

All funds are awarded at one time so applications can only be accepted once per year.

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Part 2: The Scholarship Application

13. What information will I need to complete my application?

The program uses a sliding scale based on family income to determine awards (see #20 for historical awards). The application therefore asks you for information on your family's anticipated income from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 (Harvard's fiscal year).

Before you begin the application, you may want to assemble the following documents for your reference. You will also be asked to submit copies of these documents after you complete the online application. Paperwork will be accepted by secure mail, secure fax, or drop-off only and must be postmarked by **Wednesday, August 9, 2017**.

A supporting document cover sheet can be found inside the application.

- Copies of spouse/partner paystubs from their two most recent pay periods, if married or partnered
- Paystubs/documentation or estimations of income from any other paid work you and/or your spouse/partner will do from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.
- Completed, signed copies of your 2016 US federal income tax return (form 1040 or 1040A) (front and back - pages 1 and 2); OR, if your financial documents originate in a country other than the US, comparable documentation to demonstrate income.
- If you or your spouse/partner had any non-salary income (e.g., consulting work), or if your spouse is self-employed, a copy of IRS Schedule C from the 2015 1040 form and/or if you have a non-zero entry on line 12 of the 1040 you will need to submit this additional tax form.
- If you or your spouse/partner had any rental or corporation income a copy of IRS Schedule E from the 2015 1040 form and/or if you have a non-zero entry on line 17 of the 1040 you will need to submit this additional tax form.
- If your spouse/partner is working but not paid, an affidavit of unpaid employment (eg. internship) from the employer.
- If your spouse/partner is a student, verification of student status from his/her school's registrar or similar formal enrolment documentation.
- If your spouse is caring for a disabled person (or is disabled themselves), please indicate this in the "Special Circumstances" section of the online application. Only general health information should be given for confidentiality reasons.

14. Why do you need my federal tax forms?

Your federal tax forms verify both that your children are your tax dependents and your usual household income. Of course, incomes change year-to-year and there is a section that asks for you to explain if your anticipated income will be \$5,000 less than what was reported on your 2016 federal tax form.

If your child is not listed on your taxes, you will need to indicate whose taxes they are claimed on.

15. How will I know if you have received my documentation?

Please submit your supporting documents and cover sheet as early as possible to the Office of Work/Life. Once received, an email will be sent notifying you the packet was received. They will then be reviewed and your online application updated. An email confirmation will be sent to you once all necessary documentation is reviewed and processed. A delay until after the deadline may be necessary because of the high volume of paperwork packets.

16. How do I submit my application on PeopleSoft?

While you are working on your application you can "Save" it. When it is complete you can click the "Submit" button. At this point all required fields will be checked by the system and you will need to make any corrections to the fields indicated.

Only those applications that are "Submitted" (not just saved) will be sent to the office of Work/Life for processing.

Part 3: The Award Process

17. What happens to my award if the actual cost of my childcare ends up being less than what I estimate on the application?

The program only reimburses you for what you spend. If you spend less than what you were awarded, the program will reimburse you up to the total qualified child care costs you claim.

18. When will I hear whether or not I have received an award?

Once applications are received and incomes are verified, you will receive notification via email in mid-October, 2017.

19. What is the program timeline?

July 12, 2017	Application opens in PeopleSoft>Self-Service
August 9, 2017	Completed applications due (paperwork and online submission)
August 10 –early October, 2017	Verification, paperwork review, and processing period (eligibility, income). Award approvals.
mid October, 2017	Award notification emailed with ‘Instructions to Claim Award’
Tuesday, November 14, 2017	<u>First online claim form due</u> for any child care costs already paid for this fiscal year (7/1/1-6/30/18).
Friday, December 8/21, 2017 (biweekly and monthly paycycles)	First payment made, delivered via paycheck, if you’ve submitted claim forms by the deadline. Maximum payment is half of award, less required supplemental tax withholding (see #22 for more details).
Tuesday, May 15, 2018	<u>Second online claim form due</u> for any remaining child care costs paid for this fiscal year (7/1/17-6/30/18). Anticipated costs for the period May 15 through June 30, 2018 can be entered.
End of June, 2018	Second and final payment made, delivered via paycheck, if you’ve submitted claim forms by the deadline. Maximum payment is half of award or any remaining funds up to whole award, less required supplemental tax withholding (see #22 for more details).

If you do not submit an online claim form for your child care expenses by the first deadline (for example, you may have missed the deadline OR you may not have started paying for child care yet) you DO NOT forfeit the funds. You will be able to submit unclaimed expenses by **May 15, 2018**. This is the **FINAL** deadline.

20. How much can I expect to receive as an award?

The following is a guide only as each year the awards differ because of differences in applicant financial needs.

Adjusted Family Gross Income*	Base Award**
< \$55,000	\$5,000 - \$7,500
\$55,000 - < \$75,000	\$3,000 - \$5,000
\$75,000 - < \$100,000	\$1,500 - \$3,000
\$100,000 - < \$130,000	\$1,500
>= \$130K	\$0

*The Adjusted Family Gross Income is found by subtracting from your family’s gross income: (1) \$10,000 if you are a single-parent family (2) \$10,000 for each additional child after the first up to and including the fourth child aged under 13 years.

Part 4: Verifying Your Costs and Claiming Your Award

21. How do I enter my child care expenses online?

Full instructions for claiming your child care expenses are detailed in the award email. To summarize — child care expenses must be documented in two ways:

1. Online claim form submission: Please log in to PeopleSoft>Self-Service with your HarvardKey and select the “My Benefits” tile, click on the drop-down menu for the “Child Care Scholarships” on the left-hand side and choose the “Claim Form” link.
2. Completed and signed Provider Signature Form: (PSF - attached to the award email or downloaded from the online claim form site) Have your child care provider complete their section of the paper form and sign it, you complete your section and sign it. Keep this for your records — it can be requested at any time for verification or clarification purposes. **A supporting completed PSF is a requirement upon online claim form submission.**

Once you have submitted enough child care expenses online to cover your award amount, you do not need to submit any more. Your reimbursement payments will happen automatically.

22. How is the scholarship money disbursed?

If you submit your child care expenses online by the deadlines entered above (#19) your reimbursement will appear in the paycheck indicated. The Provider Signature Form to use will be emailed along with the award notification. Costs are submitted online on PeopleSoft while the awardee is also required to gather the completed supporting signed form from the care provider. Please note that we can request these completed forms for further clarification at any time so you need to keep them in your records.

Program reimbursement payments are considered additional compensation according to IRS rules and are subject to required supplemental tax withholding (typically around 40%).

These awards are not grossed-up for tax purposes. Please see the following generalized examples:

Your award is \$2,000 and you submit one online claim expense of \$4,000 by the final deadline. It is approved and a payment of \$2,000 is sent to payroll for processing. Your net amount, provided after required supplemental tax withholding of about 40%, will be approximately \$1,200 in your paycheck.

Your award is \$1,500 and you submit one online claim expense of \$1,000 by the final deadline. It is approved and a payment of \$1,000 is sent to payroll for processing. Your net amount, provided after required supplemental tax withholding of about 40%, will be approximately \$600 in your paycheck. No more funds are reimbursed to you – you forfeit the unclaimed funds.

Your award is \$3,000 and you submit one online claim expense of \$1,500 by the first deadline. It is approved and a payment of \$1,500 is sent to payroll for processing. Your net amount, provided after required supplemental tax withholding of about 40% in the first paycheck is approximately \$900. You do not submit any more child care expense claims. No more funds are reimbursed to you – you forfeit the unclaimed funds.

23. What if I have not yet spent any money on child care?

If you will not begin to incur child care expenses until a time later in the fiscal year (7/1/17-6/30/18), you can submit your first online claim after you begin incurring expenses. **May 15, 2018** is the **FINAL** deadline to submit child care expenses online. If you miss the first deadline you do NOT forfeit any funds.

24. What if I only have receipts or it is difficult for me to obtain signatures for the Provider Signature Form?

We require a signed, completed Provider Signature Form to be kept in your records. However, if you cannot obtain a signature we may accept a detailed receipt in lieu of a signed Provider Signature Form. Just keep them for your records and note that we can request this information for clarification at any time.

25. What if I use different Providers for my individual children?

Just print out as many Provider Signature Forms as you have caregivers and enter these costs on separate lines in the online claim form on PeopleSoft.

26. What if I miss a deadline?

As long as you submit all of your claims by **May 15, 2018**, you will not lose any scholarship funds that have been awarded to you; you will simply delay the receipt of your funds. Payments cannot be made beyond the end of the fiscal year. You will forfeit any remaining unclaimed funds.

27. Can I submit forms in advance of making payments?

Generally you must submit claims after making payments. If you have an annual contract with your provider, however, you are welcome to claim for the whole academic/fiscal year in advance to ensure that you do not miss payment deadlines. You will need to have them complete the Provider Signature Form for the whole year. You will still receive your payments based on the schedule outlined above in #19.

28. What happens if I leave the University or my eligibility changes? Will I still be eligible to receive the award?

If during the scholarship period, there is a change in your situation such that you no longer meet the eligibility criteria, the scholarship will be discontinued (see #1 above). Examples of a change in status include the termination of Harvard employment, or the change to an unpaid position. Pro-rated payments will be made in both cases.

29. Can I use the funds set aside in my Dependent Care FSA and the award from the child care scholarships together to pay for my child care?

Yes, the two programs complement one another and can be used together. The Childcare Scholarship provides you with additional income, and the FSA provides you with a way to protect part of your overall salary from taxes with a self-funded reserve that can be set aside for dependent care expenses. In both cases, you are submitting receipts to demonstrate that you have child care expenses, but in one case you are claiming extra income (and paying taxes on it at around 40%) and in the other you are claiming the tax protection that is available to you. The same receipts can be submitted to each program.

Questions? Please contact the Office of Work/Life: childcare_scholarships@harvard.edu.