



Harvard University

2019-2020

Service & Trades Union employees with children aged under 13 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 Service & Trades union 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 (16 hours per week) at Harvard *and*
- on a regular Harvard payroll (paid by Harvard University)

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

- be in a single-parent household

AND

3) Be a member of one of the following unions

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ▪ HEREIU , Local 26; | ▪ IUOE , Local 877, AFL-CIO; |
| ▪ HUPA ; | ▪ NERCC , Local 51; |
| ▪ HUSPMGU ; | ▪ Plumbers & Gasfitters , Local 12, AFL-CIO; |
| ▪ IBEW , Local 103, AFL-CIO; | ▪ SEIU , Local 615 |

AND

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

For FY2020, families with at least one child born on or after September 1, 2006 are eligible to apply. Those families with children who have documented special healthcare needs can still apply for their teenage children (aged under 18 years).

AND

- 5) **Your gross household income is less than** the following levels according to the number of children in your household under 13 years of age (base salary only — **not including overtime**)

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

- If you are a single parent household: we reduce your gross HHI by \$10,000
- People close to the income limit should still apply or call

Your child(ren) must:

- 1) Be your legal dependent(s) verified by your tax return or your formal benefits dependents listed on PeopleSoft 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 or call or email the Office of Work/Life to leave a message. Include your Harvard ID number in the message.

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, 2020, 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, 2019 through June 30th, 2020.

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. The exception is for spouses who are disabled or providing care for a disabled person.

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 the award. 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 in HUCTW 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. Click the "My Benefits" tile, select "Child Care Scholarship" from the menu and then click 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 application is only open once each year – April 10 through May 8, 2019.

All funds are awarded at one time so applications can only be accepted once per year. If you miss the deadline then you can [email](#) to have your name added to the waitlist. If funding is leftover at the end of the cycle year (June 2020) then you may be awarded some funds.

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. The application therefore asks you for information on your family's anticipated income from **July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020** (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 only and must be postmarked by **5pm, Friday, May 8, 2019**. 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, 2019 through June 30, 2020. This includes summer work.
- Completed, signed copies of your 2018 federal income tax return (form 1040 or 1040A) (front and back - pages 1 and 2).
- If you or your spouse/partner had any non-salary income (e.g., rent), or if your spouse is self-employed, a copy of IRS Schedule C or E from the 2018 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 your spouse/partner is working but not paid, an affidavit of unpaid employment from the employer.
- If your spouse/partner is a student, verification of student status from his/her school's registrar.

14. Why do you need my federal tax forms?

Your federal tax forms verify both that your children are your tax dependents and your 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 2018 federal tax form.

If your child is not listed on your taxes, or they are not your formal benefits dependent listed in PeopleSoft, you will need to provide information that shows they are in your household and care.

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 using a secure mailing method. Once received, they will be reviewed and your 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. Once your application is in the "Submitted" phase – you can still update it up until the deadline.

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

Part 2: The Award Process

17. 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 by the end of May, 2019.

18. What is the program timeline?

April 10 – May 8, 2019	Application is open in PeopleSoft
May 31, 2019	Award notification emailed with 'Instructions to Claim Award'. Paper letters will also be sent to those who request it.
Tuesday September 17, 2019	<u>First online claim due</u> for any child care costs already paid for this fiscal year (7/1/19-6/30/20). You can enter costs for the whole fiscal year period if you have a contract with your provider and you pay the same fee each week/month.
Friday, October 4, 2019	First payment made, delivered via paycheck, if you've submitted claim forms by the deadline. Maximum payment is one quarter of award, less required federal tax withholding.
Tuesday November 12, 2019	Second online claim due for costs not already entered.
Friday December 7, 2019	Second payment made, delivered by paycheck (less taxes)
Tuesday March 17, 2020	Third online claim due for costs not already entered.
Friday April 10, 2020	Third payment made, delivered by paycheck (less taxes)
Tuesday May 12, 2020	FINAL online deadline. All claims must be entered by this deadline. Unclaimed funds are forfeited.
Friday June 19, 2020	Final payment made, delivered via paycheck, if you've submitted claim forms by the final deadline (less required federal tax withholding).

19. 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 and ages of children.

Adjusted Family Gross Income*	Base Award
< \$55,000	\$3,500 - \$5,500
\$55,000 - < \$75,000	\$2,500 - \$3,500
\$75,000 - < \$100,000	\$1,500 - \$2,500
\$100,000 - < \$130,000	\$1,000
>= \$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. This adjustment MAY put you in a different award tier meaning your award amount may be higher.*

Part 3: Verifying Your Costs and Claiming Your Award

20. How is the scholarship money disbursed?

If you submit your child care expenses online by the deadlines entered above (#18) 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 awards are considered additional compensation and taxes are withheld at approximately 36 percent.

21. How do I enter my child care expenses?

Login to PeopleSoft using your HarvardKey. Click the "My Benefits" tile, select "Child Care Scholarship" from the menu and then click the "Claim Form" link. Complete the fields and add new claim lines as needed. Save your entered claims with your expenses before logging out.

22. 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 (7/1/19-6/30/20), you can submit your first online claim after you begin incurring expenses.

23. 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 submitted.

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 or verification 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 child care expense claim deadline?

As long as you submit all of your claims by **May 12, 2020**, 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 #18.

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. If your position at Harvard changes to a different employee group (ie., you are no longer in the Union but still a Harvard employee) please contact us.

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