

Alternative Payment Parent Handbook



**Administrative Office
885 Moro Drive
Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 843-9000**



Welcome To Our Program!

We are so pleased that you selected Go Kids, Inc. to assist your child in accessing a high quality educational experience. We have spent many years building relationships in the communities we serve and can't wait to include you in our journey. While Go Kids, Inc. continues to operate center-based programs, our Alternative Payment Contracts have allowed us to offer more child care choices to the families we serve.

Parents are encouraged to select a Provider who can best meet the needs of their family. We want to encourage you to ask questions, share ideas, or raise concerns about any program components. Ongoing communication between parents and caregivers is essential.

Please read the extensive information contained in this Alternative Payment Parent Handbook carefully and keep it on hand for your future reference. We believe this document is very informative and will assist you with navigating our program requirements.

Thank you for choosing our program. We look forward to a fruitful partnership with you and your family.

Sincerely,

**Larry Drury
Chief Executive Officer
Go Kids, Inc.**

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HISTORY

Since its incorporation in 1978, Go Kids, Inc. has grown from a single child development center and vocational teacher aid training program to a multi-service agency with a quad-county service area, Santa Clara, San Benito, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. Go Kids, Inc. operates with all applicable state and federal laws governing non-profit organizations. The agency is governed by a Board of Directors, which establishes policy and provides input from the community.

VISION

We envision communities where every child has the support they need to reach their greatest potential.

MISSION

We enhance the lives of children and families through the delivery of comprehensive child development services and community involvement.

VALUES

PASSION

People get involved and contribute because of their passion

RESPECT

All people deserve to be treated with respect

INTEGRITY

A strategic, inquiring and informed perspective promotes a high standard of quality and objectivity

QUALITY

Best practices define the quality of service delivery to families with young children

SENSE OF HUMOR

Joyful interactions help families with young children flourish

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The agency is committed to creating and maintaining quality comprehensive programs for children that foster social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while recognizing the importance of the family, culture and the community.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This handbook was designed to assist participants with understanding the requirements to participate in this program. We look forward to serving you!

We are a private, non-profit organization funded by federal, state & local governments.

Parental Choice

Go Kids, Inc. has authorized you as an eligible family for alternative payment childcare services. The alternative payment program allows for parental choice for purposes of meeting the individual needs of every child and therefore offers center based and family childcare options in most areas. It is the parent's right and responsibility to choose an eligible facility/home that meets their child's needs. For assistance in choosing a facility/home at any time, contact your county's Child Care Resource and Referral program.

Equal Access

We operate on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal access to services without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, and/or sexual orientation.

Confidentiality

The use or disclosure of any information maintained in the basic data file concerning children and their families is limited to purposes directly connected with administration. No other use of the information will be made without prior written consent or through a subpoena. Participants shall have access to information in their basic data file within 5 business days after receiving a written request.

ENROLLMENT

It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to accurately complete and sign all enrollment documents prior to the child being admitted into a program. By signing the enrollment documents, the enrolling parent is also certifying that they have legal authority for the child.

Families are selected for subsidized child care from the Go Kids, Inc. Waiting List or through CalWORKs eligibility. All families must demonstrate eligibility and need for these services. Once families have completed the eligibility process and have been authorized for child care services by a Go Kids Family Service Worker, they are authorized to select a provider.

If you have selected a provider for your child, notify the Go Kids Family Service Worker. The child development resource center in your county can provide you with a list of providers in your area. Parents are encouraged to visit and interview a variety of providers before selecting an appropriate home for their needs.

We ask that parents notify your Go Kids, Inc. Family Service Worker if your home address or telephone number has changed. In the case of an emergency, it is imperative that the most current information is on file.

Choosing Child Care: What Are Your Options?

Raising your child is the most important job you as a parent will ever have. Selecting a qualified child care provider is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Quality child care can be found in a variety of settings. The type of setting you choose should take into consideration your child's needs and your family's preferences. The following care options are available:

Licensed Family Child Care Home

Family child care is provided in the private home of a licensed caregiver for up to 8 children with one adult or up to 14 children with one adult and one assistant provider. This arrangement tends to be less formal and usually models a family-oriented atmosphere.

Child Care Center

Child care centers are licensed by the state of California to care for 12 or more children in a group setting. Centers are usually located in public and private schools, religious facilities, or buildings owned or leased by the provider.

License-Exempt Care

License-exempt child care (also referred to as informal child care or family friend and neighbor care) refers to child care providers who can operate legally without a license. These license-exempt providers must have at least 5 children enrolled in their care in order to be qualified as a licensed-exempt provider. In addition, they must be able to be fingerprinted as needed.

Other

Some after-school care, park and recreation programs, and teen parent programs are also license-exempt.

Parents choosing any of the options described above should consider contacting the Trustline Registry at 1-800-822-8490 to obtain information or a background check on a potential provider.

Choosing Quality Childcare:

When you visit child care providers to select the best option for you and your child, it is important to ask the provider about their policies.

Examples of questions you should ask are:

- Ask about the holiday schedule
- What are the hours of care?
- Is there a late pick up fee?
- Do you provide transportation?
- Do you care for children that have special needs?
- Do you provide meals and if so, what type of foods do you serve?

If you are considering a licensed childcare facility/home then Community Care Licensing is the agency that provides the license for family child care homes. Go Kids encourages you to contact them to review the file of your selected provider:

2580 North First St. Suite 300
San Jose 95131
408-324-2148

If you are considering a licensed facility, those licensed facilities are limited to serving 50% of their capacity with Go Kids Children. Parents, who wish to place their child with a provider at Go Kids capacity, will be asked to select an alternate provider. Further, Go Kids, Inc. prohibits the placement of clients who reside in the same home of a selected licensed family childcare provider or license except provider.

PAYMENTS

The agency accepts checks, money orders, cashier checks, Visa and Master Card. All checks and money orders shall be made payable to Go Kids, Inc. and may be submitted via US mail to the Executive Office in sufficient time to be received by the 7th calendar day of each month or delivered in person at the Executive Office by 6:00 pm on the 7th calendar day of the month. Family fees are due on the first day of the month and are considered delinquent after 7 calendar days. If the 7th calendar day falls on a weekend or agency observed holiday, family fees are due by 6:00 pm on the preceding Friday. Please be sure to list your Go Kids, Inc. account number on all checks. There will be a fee of \$25.00 for returned checks. If more than one check is returned, money orders will be required for payment.

The Executive Office address is 885 Moro Dr. Gilroy, CA. 95020.

TERMINATION FOR NON-PAYMENT/LATE PAYMENT OF FEES

Tuition/Family Fees paid late 3 times within a six month period will result in the termination of childcare services. In addition, the family will be ineligible for services with the agency for a period of six months and any outstanding balance must be paid in full prior to readmission. Readmission for services will be determined by placement on the agency Waiting List.

FEES

REFUND OF TUITION/FAMILY FEES

All overpaid tuition/or change in family fee will be refunded within 90 days of the child's last day of enrollment.

ELIGIBILITY AND NEED

INCOME ELIGIBILITY

A family's total countable income must meet the income guidelines as established by the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division. This is a sliding scale that takes into account family size and income.

NEED AND ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is based on either child or family eligibility. Participants must provide documentation of eligibility in at least one of these categories:

Child Eligibility

- Child protective services (Referral letter from CPS unit)
- At-risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation (Referral letter from legally qualified professional)

Family Eligibility

- Homeless (Referral Letter or Self-Declaration)
- Current aid recipient (Proof of current aid)
- Income eligible (Documentation of all income)

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, all Parent's must meet at least one need criteria:

- Employment Verification
- Declaration of Self-Employment
- Request & Plan to Seek Employment (Max 5 days per week, for less than 30 hours per week). Santa Clara County exception: 32.5 hours
- Training Verification (Training leading to a vocational goal & must make adequate progress. In addition, services are limited for up to 6 years from the date participant starts classes or until participant reaches 24 units after the attainment of a bachelor's degree)
- Educational Program Verification (English Language Learner, High School Diploma or High School Equivalency Certificate)
- Request & Plan to Seek Permanent Housing (Max 5 days per week, for less than 30 hours per week). Santa Clara County exception: 32.5 hours Homelessness Referral Letter
- Statement of Parental Incapacity (Max of 50 hours per week)
- Welfare to Work Plan Activity Assignment (CalWORKs programs)

Note: Families whose eligibility criteria is CPS or At Risk are not required to meet a need criteria

RECERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND NEED

After initial Certification and Enrollment, the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division requires your declared need and eligibility must be recertified no less than every 12 or 24 months depending on the county in which the

enrolling parent resides. At the time of recertification, you will be required to update your file with current income and other supporting documentation as requested.

Any changes in the contracted hours of care must be supported by the necessary documentation requested prior to the changes in service becoming effective. Recertification and changes will not be approved without the appropriate documentation on file. Failure to comply with the recertification requirements may result in termination.

ADMISSION PRIORITY

The agency policy for enrolling families adheres to the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division-Admission Priorities. Priorities for enrollment may vary depending on the funding source and eligibility requirements. Children receiving Child Protective Services have first priority to be enrolled in the program

HOURS OF SERVICE

The childcare hours of service are determined upon certification. If hours of care are modified within the 12 months or 24 months of eligibility the Confidential Application (9600) must be revised to reflect the new approved hours and a Notice of Action will be sent specifying the new approved hours of care.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

Once eligibility and need have been established a participant may keep their current service level, regardless of changes in their family. The only exception is if the family who is certified as income eligible & during their certification period, their income exceeds the maximum income threshold, which is 85% of the state median income threshold for ongoing eligibility.

Participants may voluntarily request to change their child's service level. If a participant needs to change their service level during their certification period the following must be submitted to your Family Service Worker:

- Declaration Statement and
- Documentation to support the request

It is important that the agency maintain current and accurate records on each child. These changes include, but are not limited to: home address, work address, home/work telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, work location, contact information for persons 18 years old or older authorized to pick up your child, and emergency contact information.

FAMILY FEE PROVISIONS

DETERMINING FAMILY FEES

Some families enrolled in the program may have a family fee based on their gross monthly income, family size and certified hours of care. You will be notified by your Family Service Worker if and when you are responsible for paying a family fee. Family fees will always be assessed according to the child's schedule with the greatest number of certified hours in a one month period, regardless of the number of children enrolled in the program. Family fees are determined using the California Department of Education family fee schedule.

The following are exempt from monthly fees:

- Families receiving CalWORKs cash aid
- For At-risk children & CPS children fees may be waived for up to 12 months if the referral determines the fee waiver to be necessary. Santa Clara County exception: 24 months

Family fees are only assessed at:

- Initial Certification
 - Recertification
 - Voluntarily request to have fees re-assessed
- Decrease: Effective on the first day of the month that follows the issue date of the Notice of Action
- Increase: No increase during 12-month certification. Santa Clara County: 24-month.

When a family's child is assigned both a School & Vacation schedule, families will be assessed both a flat monthly part & full time fee. The family's part time-time and full-time fee will be noted in the family fee note section of the Application for Services (Form EESD 9600). The full time fee months will be individually listed.

FAMILY FEE PAYMENT

Family fees are **due in advance** of services. Family fees are due on the first day of the month and are considered delinquent after 7 calendar days. If the 7th calendar day falls on a weekend or agency observed holiday, family fees are due by 6:00 pm on the preceding Friday. A notice of termination will be issued by the end of the 2nd business day after the payment due date each month and mailed via certified mail.

If a payment plan has been submitted and approved by the fiscal department prior to the date of termination, the Notice of Action will be rescinded. Failure to meet the terms of your payment plan will result in termination from the program.

CREDIT FOR FEES PAID TO OTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

If our agency cannot meet all of a family's needs for child care, we can grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to your other provider for child care services:

- Copies of receipts or cancelled checks must be submitted in order to receive a credit for fees paid to another provider
- We will apply the fee credit to the family's subsequent billing period (Example: Submit receipt for May & a credit for June will be applied)
- We do not allow carry over of any fee credits beyond the subsequent billing period

CO-PAYMENT

Under state regulation, Go Kids, Inc. can only reimburse childcare providers up the lesser of their monthly invoiced amount (provider's true and customary rate) or the Reginal Market Rate. While parents may choose a provider whose true and customary rate exceeds the appropriate Regional Market Rate, the parent is responsible to pay the difference directly to the provider. These arrangements are made between parents and providers and are not enforced by the agency.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

Children are required to have a physical examination, which may include a TB test prior to the 1st day of attendance. Go Kids will accept documents that are less than 1 year old to fulfill this requirement. Immunizations must be up to date and stay current during enrollment with Go Kids. These documents must be submitted before the child is allowed to receive services.

SOCIAL SERVICES

We provide parents with a local community resource guide with professional services. Go Kids, Inc. is happy to offer referrals for families in need. This service is a complimentary service and is included in the child development services we provide. Go Kids, Inc. retains health professionals/consultants to provide training and related activities for staff and parents. This may include screening and referrals of children when necessary. This service is dependent upon agency funding and parents are always notified in advance of the event.

PARENT INVOLEMENT

Go Kids, Inc. supports an open door policy and strong parent involvement regardless of early care and education setting. Communication and participation is very important and will enhance a feeling of a partnership in the education of your child. Agency staff are dedicated to working with you to provide learning opportunities, both at home and in the Family Child Care environment. It is important that you share any family changes, questions or concerns with us as they arise.

Important:

We require that parents notify their Go Kids, Inc. Alternative Payment Family Service Worker within a 5 day period of any changes in work location, home address or

telephone number. In the case of an emergency, it is imperative that the most current information is on file.

ARRIVING AND LEAVING THE FAMILY CHILD CARE FACILITY

The manner in which a parent arrives and leaves a child in care is very important. Starting the day in a positive manner will assure a good day for the child and their childcare giver. Take the time to bring your child into the family child care facility/home, and then spend a few minutes before you leave. At pick-up time, take a few minutes to talk about the day with the child care giver, and your child. Allowing your child time to finish their activity will provide a smooth transition for you and your child.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Children are expected to attend child care based on their certified schedule determined at certification, recertification & when a participant voluntarily requests to change their service level.

Regular and consistence attendance is important. It allows the family to maximize the benefits of the child's early learning and care experience.

Unnecessary disruptions in services can stunt or delay social-emotional & cognitive development while safe, stable environments allow young children the opportunity to develop the relationships & trust necessary to comfortably explore & learn from their surroundings.

Participants are expected to:

- Know their currently approved/certified days & hours of care
- Notify Family Service Worker in advance if family needs to request a change in their service level or will have a gap in services during their certification period.
- Use care that is broadly consistent with certified days & hours of care
- Broadly consistent attendance is defined as care that reflects a pattern that is consistent with the participants certified level of services.
- Inconsistent attendance that is temporary in nature, such as when a child has an excused absence is not considered broadly inconsistent.

Signing in and Out:

Parents and/or providers are required to record the child's actual arrival and departure times at the child care facility on a daily basis. A **full legal signature** is required by a parent and provider at the end of the month verifying that the child attended as indicated on the attendance sheet under penalty of perjury.

Providers are required to complete the Request for Payment section at the bottom of each child's attendance sheet, and submit monthly for reimbursement. Providers will

be reimbursed according to their rate sheet on file with Go Kids, Inc. Reimbursement will **not** exceed the Regional Market Rate. Reimbursement will **only** be made based on schedule indicated on the Certificate of Authorization.

All children are required to be brought INTO the family child care facility by their parent or parent's adult designee (must be 18 or older).

Caregivers will release a child only to the parent or some other adult authorized by the parent. If pick-up is to be by someone other than the regular person, please notify your provider. Parents are required to keep the Emergency Card current with 3 emergency contacts. **The person picking up MUST be prepared to present a picture I.D.**

If there is a court order that specifies that a parent is not allowed to pick up or contact the child without the consent of the custodial parent, the order must be on file with the provider.

ABSENCE POLICY

For the purpose of verifying that a child's attendance is broadly consistent with certified care, when a child is absent from regularly scheduled care at any time during the month the participant or provider must record the absence type on the attendance record.

Absence types are as follows:

Excused Absence:

- Illness of child or parent/guardian, ailment, communicable disease, injury, hospitalization or quarantine
- Appointment of child or parent/guardian, which includes doctor, dentist, mental health, social service, welfare, education, special education services, counseling or therapy
- Court ordered visitation for time spent with a parent or relative as required by law. (Court order must be on file)
- Family emergency for unplanned situations of a temporary nature including court appearance, death, accident, hospitalization of a family member, no transportation or illness of sibling

Best Interest Days:

Parent/Guardian determines that another activity is better for the child to attend, such as:

- Visiting relative or close friend
- Vacation time with family
- Child attending a party
- Family moving
- Religious observance, holiday or ceremony
- Personal or family business

PARENT'S RIGHT TO APPEAL

Appeal Information: If you do not agree with the agency's action as stated in the Notice of Action, you may appeal the intended action. To protect your appeal rights, you must follow the instructions described in each step listed below. If you do not respond by the required due dates or fail to submit the required appeal information with your appeal request, your appeal may be considered abandoned. Provide the information outlined in steps 1-5 listed below or complete the appeal form on the back of the Notice of Action.

STEP 1: Submit your appeal in writing with the following information:

Name or Parent/Caretaker, Telephone, Address, and a written explanation as to why you disagree with the agency's decision. Please be sure to sign and date your appeal. If you require interpretation, please indicate in your request

STEP 2: Mail or deliver your local hearing request within 14 days of receipt of this notice to:

Go Kids, Inc. Executive Office
885 Moro Drive
Gilroy CA 95020
Attn: Appeals Coordinator

STEP 3: Within ten (10) calendar days following the agency's receipt of your appeal request, the agency will notify you of the time and place of the hearing. You or your authorized representative is required to attend the hearing. If you or your representatives do not attend the hearing, you abandon your rights to an appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

STEP 4: Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or delivery to you a written decision.

STEP 5: If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 14 days from your receipt of the written decision to file an appeal with the California Department of Education (CDE). Your appeal to CDE must include the following documents and information: (1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believe the agency's decision was incorrect, (2) a copy of the agency's decision letter, and (3) a copy of both sides of the Notice of Action. Mail your appeal to the following address:

California Department of Education
Early Learning and Care Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Appeals Coordinator

STEP 6: Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of your appeal, CDD will issue a written decision to you and the agency. If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop

providing child care and development services immediately upon receipt of CDE's decision letter.

THE AGENCY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step 1

The complainant wishing to file a grievance shall contact the appropriate agency representative and discuss their concern verbally.

For program related concerns, please contact Family Service Worker.

For alleged violations of the agency Alternative Payment Parent Handbook, Admission Agreement issues, or concerns related to enrollment and eligibility, contact the Family Service Alternative Payment Manager.

In the event the issue remains unresolved, move to step 2.

Step 2

The complainant shall file their grievance in writing to the Executive Office with attention to The Grievance Committee. **The written complaint shall include the following information:**

- Name
- Date of complaint
- Nature and location of alleged incident
- Names (if applicable) of witnesses to alleged incident
- Written summary of attempts made to resolve the issue from the point of origin.
- Name of the agency representative you contacted from Step 1.
- Signed and dated

The written complaint must be filed within 10 days of the verbal discussion with the agency representative in step 1. The Grievance Committee will review the grievance and attempt to resolve the matter. A response will be provided in writing within 14 days of the date of the signed letter.

If the issue remains unresolved, move to step 3.

Step 3

The complainant shall contact the Chief Executive Officer, in writing within 10 days of the date of the Grievance Committee's written response in order to request a review of the grievance and attempts made to resolve the matter. The Chief Executive Officer will review all documentation related to the grievance from step 1 and 2.

The Chief Executive Officer will issue an opinion (or otherwise resolve) in writing within 14 days of receipt of the documentation.

If the issue remains unresolved, move to step 4.

Step 4

The complainant shall request in writing that the grievance be placed on the agenda of the next agency Board of Directors meeting (which are scheduled on the 4th Monday of

each month). The Board of Directors shall render an opinion (or otherwise resolve) in writing within 14 days of the board meeting. The decision shall be final

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE NOTICE

It is the intent of Go Kids, Inc. to fully comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding Go Kids, Inc. programs alleged violation of a statute or regulation that the California Department of Education is authorized to enforce. This includes allegations or unlawful discrimination (Education Code, Sections 200 and 220 and Government Code, Section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the State or receiving federal or state financial assistance.

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the California Department of Education:

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. In this event, the complainant should seek the advice of an attorney of his/her choosing.

A complainant filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil law remedies, including but not limited to, injunctions; restraining orders; or other remedies or orders.

THE AGENCY OFFICE LOCATIONS

Executive Office

885 Moro Drive
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.843.9000
Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Administration Office

9015 Murray Avenue
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.779.6553
Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Santa Clara County

San Jose Office

24 N 14th Street Suite 700, 7th Floor

San Jose, CA 95113

408.269.7827

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm

Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

****Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Santa Clara County****

Go Kids Child Development Resource Center

1101 San Felipe Rd. Suite D,

Hollister, CA 95023

831.637.9205

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm

Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

****Enrollment and Re-Certifications for San Benito County****

Salinas Elwood Office

415 Elwood Street

Salinas, CA 93906

831.757.5437

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm

Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

****Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Monterey and Santa Cruz County****

Admission Office

9015 Murray Ave.

Gilroy, CA 95020

408.843.9041

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm

Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

****Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Santa Clara County****

ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

My signature below indicates that I have read and agree to comply with all of the policies and procedures contained within the Alternative Payment Parent Handbook.

Parent Name (please print)

Parent Signature

Date