



PURCHASE OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM (POC)

The Child Care Subsidy Program (POC) helps limited income families pay for child care while parents work, attend school or job training. This program is available through each local department of social services.

Formal Voucher

POC offers a subsidy for care provided by:

- ✓ Licensed child care centers
- ✓ Registered family child care homes

Informal Voucher

Informal Care is:

- ✓ Care by a relative in the child's home or the relative's home
- ✓ Care by a non-relative in the child's home
- ✓ Care provided by a non-relative in their own home for less than 20 hours a month

A sliding scale, based on household income and family size, is used to determine the amount of the voucher and the amount of the co-pay, which the parents must pay. The amount of the voucher will also vary based on the amount of care that is needed and the age of the child.

Parents purchase care directly from providers. Their payment to the provider includes:

- ✓ The POC voucher
- ✓ The parent's co-pay

Parents obtain POC vouchers from the local departments of social services (DSS). The voucher will indicate the subsidy (which will be paid to you by the local DSS) and the co-payment amount (which must be paid to you by the parent).

You are not legally required to accept POC vouchers.

If you decide to accept POC vouchers:

- ✓ You can accept the combined amount of the voucher and co-payment
- ✓ If your regular rate is higher than the combined amount of the voucher and co-payment, you can ask the parent to make up the difference. However, providers may not charge



their POC clients more than their non-POC parents. In addition, many providers find it difficult to collect any additional payment from limited income families served by POC.

- ✓ You and the parent will review, complete and sign the voucher.
- ✓ You return the completed voucher to your local DSS office.
- ✓ Invoices will be mailed to providers for each 2 week service period.
- ✓ You must complete and return the invoice to your local DSS office at the end of each 2 week service period.

For more information on the Purchase of Child Care Subsidy Program, please go to http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/purchase_of_care/