



Department of Human Services • Division of Family Development

New Jersey Child Care Assistance Program Special Care Policy Guide

Prioritizing Children with Special Needs in Child Care

Dear Parent/Applicant:

When you have a child with special needs, it can be challenging to find the right child care services. It is important to do your research and visit the child care provider to make sure the program can meet your child's unique needs. When you find the right provider, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) has priority services available for children with special needs, including a Special Care Rate and priority in services (if there is a waiting list). In order to receive these priority services, you must submit a **CC-216: Special Needs Certification Form** dated within the last 12 months to your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency (CCR&R).

The CC-216 must be signed by either an authorized professional (county board of social services, legal, medical or social service agency, emergency shelter or public school professional) or a licensed health professional (a physician/psychologist).

IEP: If a child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the CC-216 must be signed by the school administrator or another school official.

Teen Parents: The CC-216 is not required for a child with teen parents. These children are automatically afforded special needs priority services, and do not need to provide the CC-216.

Ages 13 – 18: A child with special needs aged 13 – 18 can be eligible for CCAP services (generally limited to children under 13) if the child is physically or mentally incapable of self-care as certified by a licensed health professional (a physician or psychologist).

Additional Information for Child Care Providers

The parent/guardian is responsible for submitting the CC-216 to the CCR&R. The CCR&R will determine if the child(ren) meets the criteria of a child with special needs and will authorize approval for the Special Care Rate and, if applicable, priority of services. In many instances, an agreement may need to be reissued to the child care provider reflecting the Special Care Rate.

A child with special needs is a child who either:

- is under the age of 19 and is physically or mentally incapable of self-care as determined by a licensed health professional;
- is under the age of 13 and has been identified through a written referral from an authorized professional which indicates that the child has a serious physical, emotional or mental, or cognitive condition and child care services are required as part of a treatment plan designed to stabilize or ameliorate the situation (including a child identified as having an IEP); or
- has teen parents (no CC-216 is required).

It is important that all staff members participate in child development training and any other specialized professional development training to appropriately meet the unique needs of each child. Trainings are available for free, or for a minimal fee, through the New Jersey Workforce Registry at www.NJCCIS.com.

The NJ Child Care Assistance Program is managed by the CCR&R in your county: