

YMCA’s of Australia Policy

Payment of Fees and Provision of a Statement of Fees

Procedure Number	Date Approved	Date Last Amended	Status
32	29/03/2019	06/01/2021	Final

1. PURPOSE

The YMCA is a not for profit organisation. The operation of our Education and Care services are financed through the collection of fees from account holders, primarily the participants’ parent or guardian. As the financial operation of these services operate under a number of Federal Laws that pose significant penalties for non-compliance, this Policy and Standard Operating Procedure guides YMCA services in the accurate, timely and legally compliant financial administration to ensure each services’ financial viability, meet legal obligations and permit future growth of Children’s Services programs.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this Policy applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, educators and volunteers.

This Policy applies to all YMCA Member Associations.

For the purposes of this document we refer to these as the YMCA.

All Policies and Procedures must conform to this Policy.

3. POLICY

For the payment of fees by parents/guardians as required.

For services eligible for Child Care Subsidy to remain compliant with Family Assistance Law.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Role	Responsibility
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Management	<p>Ensure the YMCA Payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees policy is implemented in their workplace. Management will ensure that upon enrolment families understand their financial responsibilities and all processes and expectations are communicated effectively.</p> <p>Management will ensure that families do not build a debt that is a financial burden on their family unit by monitoring debts and adhering to this policy.</p>
Families	<p>Families must ensure that they fulfil their fee payment obligations and provide their banking details prior to their child starting care as required.</p>

5. DEFINITIONS

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy is a payment from the Australian Government that assists families with their child care fees.

6. LEGISLATIVE AND INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

Family Assistance Legislation Amendments (Jobs for Families Package) Act 2017
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and Regulations 2011
 National Quality Framework and Standard
 Children’s Services Act 1996 (Occasional Care Services Vic only)

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Child Care Provider Handbook 2018-Australian Government Department of Education and Training <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook>

8. PROCEDURES

Please speak to your local Association for Procedures

9. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Approved By: Children and Families Leadership Team

Effective Date: 29/03/2019

Policy Owner: Children and Families Leadership Team

Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
2	29/03/19	Y Australia	Addition of: Families are able to nominate a day that they would prefer their fees to be processed. Families also have the option for opting for weekly, fortnightly or monthly debits to occur. Immediate cancellation of childcare placement will occur if monthly debit has been declined or rejected.
3	06/01/2021	YMCA NT	Added: Bookings, Changes to bookings and Cancellations

PROCEDURES

Accounts and payments are managed by the Xplor software package.

Families are able to nominate a day that they would prefer their fees to be processed.

Families also have the option for opting for weekly, fortnightly or monthly debits to occur.

Immediate cancellation of childcare placement will occur if monthly debit has been declined or rejected.

Child Care fees are direct debited two weeks in advance. A statement is emailed to parents every fortnight. Families with an outstanding debt in YMCA Children & Family Services program will be unable to access another program until existing debt is fully paid. A central register of debtors will be maintained and this will be checked by staff prior to approving care arrangements with new clients.

As part of the YMCA monthly reporting requirements, Coordinators will provide the Executive Manager with information regarding outstanding debt for each service. The Executive Manager will consult with debt collectors for fee collection when required.

Internal Debt Process

Client fee accounts will be considered to be in 'debt' when a payment has been rejected.

Families will be issued a 1st letter of Demand (Attachment 1) under the signature of the Childcare Accounts Administrator. This letter will:

- Outline amount that failed and why
- Notify next date of attempt
- Outline timelines for full payment
- Explain that non-payment of fees will result in cessation of care, explain options to enter into payment arrangements
- Explain that cessation of care may result in loss of permanent bookings
- Explain non-payment or failure to negotiate a payment arrangement will result in debt being referred to debt collectors and the family will be liable for all costs which would be incurred as if the debt is collected in full, including legal demand costs.

If payment has not been received, a 2nd letter of demand (Attachment 2) will be sent to the family and another attempt to process this payment will be made in 2 business days.

If payment is not received a final reminder letter (Attachment 3) will be sent explaining that the child/ren will not be able to return to care until the debt is paid or a payment plan is negotiated and commenced. Reinstatement of care will depend on available places. Service access is competitive and places will not be held for clients who default on fee payments. Parents will also be informed that the matter will be referred to the debt collectors. **Families will incur additional fees once referred to the debt collectors.** Attachment 5 outlines a flow chart of the debt collection process.

On a quarterly basis, Coordinators will develop a list of those clients who have received all above demands for payment, and letters of demand from Debt Collectors, and have not paid fees. The Executive Manager will provide a Departmental report to the Finance Department recommending write off of outstanding debt. This report will include client name, period for which debt has been outstanding, amount of outstanding fees.

Payment Plans

YMCA is committed to assisting residents to participate in education, training and the workforce. At times families experience financial stress which impacts on the ability to make fee payments in a timely manner. Parents are encouraged to discuss their financial circumstances with program staff.

Payment arrangement will be considered for approval based on:

- Nature of the debt
- Issues impacting on family's financial situation
- Anticipated time for support
- Commitment of the family to meet their financial obligations
- Capacity to pay
- Client commitment to meet their financial obligation

Payment Plans will be authorised on the Payment Plan Agreement (Attachment 4). Clients are expected to comply with the arrangements. Any non-compliance with payments will result in further debt collection activities.

Bookings, Changes to Bookings and Cancellations

Bookings, changes to bookings and cancellations must be received with at least 14 days' notice of the day. Fees are payable for the child's booked days regardless of whether the child is sick or absent, and are charged for the booked session not just the hours attended.

Public Holidays

Fees are charged on public holidays even though the service is closed. Predominantly our educators are permanently employed and rent and other costs are fixed costs, therefore the cost of delivering our services remain the same whether the service is open or not.

Christmas holidays

The service will close for a 2 week period over the Christmas holidays. Families will **NOT** be charged during this period.

Decision Guidelines

The Coordinator of each childcare service has the responsibility for ensuring the policies are implemented by the relevant staff and has day to day oversight of the policies and their functioning.

Policy development and review is carried out annually with feedback from staff, parents and children sort.

Attachment 1

1st LETTER OF DEMAND

Outstanding Childcare Fees-FIRST REMINDER

Direct Debit failed on: _____ for the amount of:

Due to:

Another direct debit attempt will take place on:

Our records indicate that your childcare fee is outstanding. Please find attached the relevant invoice.

It is YMCA policy that childcare fees are paid two weeks in advance of the receipt of care. If you are experiencing financial pressure that is affecting your ability to make your childcare payments, please contact staff to negotiate an alternative payment arrangement.

Unfortunately non-payment of fees may result in the withdrawal of care and this may result in the loss of your permanent childcare bookings.

If you wish to discuss this matter further or have difficulties making a payment, please do not hesitate to contact the Coordinator of your service.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Holliday
Childcare Accounts Administrator
0439 991 095
michael.holliday@ymca.org.au

Attachment 2

2nd LETTER OF DEMAND

Re: Outstanding Childcare Fees – SECOND REMINDER

Direct Debit failed on:

Due to:

Another direct debit attempt will take place on:

It is YMCA policy that childcare fees are paid two weeks in advance of the receipt of care. If you are experiencing financial pressure that is affecting your ability to make your childcare payments, please contact staff to negotiate an alternative payment arrangement.

Non-payment of fees may result in the cessation of care and this may result in the loss of your permanent childcare bookings. Failure to make payment or enter into a payment agreement will result in your child/rens childcare placement being withdrawn. Ongoing non-payment may result in the matter being referred to Debt Collectors.

In the event where your overdue account is referred to a collection agency and/or law firm, you will be liable for all costs which would be incurred as if the debt is collected in full, including legal demand costs.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact the Coordinator at your service

Yours sincerely,

Michael Holliday
Childcare Accounts Administrator
0439 991 095
michael.holliday@ymca.org.au

Attachment 3



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FINAL LETTER OF DEMAND

Date

Name

Address

Suburb NT Postcode

Dear

Re: Outstanding Childcare Fees – FINAL
REMINDER

We have contacted you on two occasions regarding your outstanding childcare fees. Our records indicate that your childcare fees are still outstanding in the amount of \$XXXX for the care of your child/ren at XXXXXXX Centre, as of XXXXXXX

It is YMCA policy that childcare fees are paid two weeks in advance of the receipt of care.

This letter is to confirm that your permanent booking at XXXXXXX Centre has been cancelled and your outstanding account has been referred to the Debt Collectors.

As your overdue account has been referred to a collection agency and/or law firm, you are liable for all costs which would be incurred as if the debt is collected in full, including legal demand costs.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Holliday
Childcare Accounts Administrator
0439 991 095
michael.holliday@ymca.org.au

Attachment 4

YMCA PAYMENT PLAN AGREEMENT

Date	
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Centre	
Parent/Guardian Name	
Parent/Guardian Contact Number	
Child/ren	
Total Amount of Outstanding Debt as of the...../...../	\$

I, authorise YMCA of the Northern Territory to direct debit my authorised account the total amount of \$..... as per the attached direct debit form being payment for:

Fortnightly Childcare Payment	\$
Fortnightly Debt Recovery Payment	\$
Last Debt Recovery Payment Date	

I commit to:

Abiding by the terms of YMCA Managing Children & Family Services Debts Policy, this agreement and the terms and conditions of the direct debit. Making payments until the outstanding debt is paid in full. Ensuring my account has funds sufficient to meet the amount being debited. Contacting YMCA immediately if payments cannot be paid and making alternative arrangements for payment. I understand that if I fault on this payment plan, the account will be handed over to debt collectors which incur extra fees.

.....
Name

.....
Signature

.....
Date