

## **2. FEES**

(Reviewed and Revised July 2004)

### **AIM**

**To provide affordable child care for all families.**

**To adhere to guidelines set down by funding bodies at all times.**

**To ensure that University centres run within their yearly budgets.**

### **2.1 Payment of Fees**

The centre fee policy must be given, and explained, to parents at the time of enrolment.

### **SALARY PACKAGING INFORMATION**

University of Melbourne staff members have the option to pay their fees for the provision of child care through salary sacrifice. Your childcare fee will automatically be deducted from your salary every fortnight before tax.

If you wish to salary package your fees, the following guidelines will apply:

- The administrative officer will hand you an application form on which the amount\* that will be deducted fortnightly is indicated.  
(\*the fortnightly amount will be based on a calculation of your yearly cost divided over the number of pay periods, plus some days to cover the period up to the start of the packaging)
- You will need to check the calculations, complete your personnel details on the form, approve and sign it, and send the form to Human Resources by the date indicated by the administrative officer. Late lodgement of your form will result in insufficient payment of fees and will therefore be placing you in debt. A copy of the form will be kept on your file.
- You will receive an account every four weeks just like every other family. You will need to check your account for the accurateness of your booking and to check whether the amount deducted each fortnight covers your childcare fees.
- All salary packaging arrangements will be reassessed quarterly and adjusted where required. Adjustments can be necessary for the following reasons:
  - a) a change to your child care benefit entitlement
  - b) an increase or decrease of your child care booking
  - c) fees for music program or any other special activity
  - d) late collection fees that you may have been charged
- Please ensure you check your pocket or pigeonhole weekly so that adjustments can be made within the required time frame

Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact:  
Administrative Officer on 8344 9621.

**See: Conditions of Child Care Fees: 3.1 - 3.10**

**It is the parent's responsibility to collect the account from their child's pigeonhole/pocket. Parents with more than one child attending will find their account in the room of the youngest child.**

### **DEPOSIT *(see Conditions of Child Care 4.1-4.3)***

Parents will also be given details on:

- a) **Late payment of fees** *(see Conditions of Child Care 3.6 and Policies and Procedures 2.2)*
- b) **Late collection of children fee** *(see Conditions of Child Care 3.9 and Policies and Procedures 2.4)*
- c) **Payment of fees for days centre is closed** *(see Conditions of Child Care 3.7)*

## **2.2 Late Payment of Fees**

It is essential that all fees are paid on time in order to ensure that centres are able to continue to operate. Procedures for overdue fees are as follows:

- a) Once fees are not paid up to date an administrative fee of 5% will be added to the next account. The parents will be given two (2) weeks from the date the account is received to pay the fees in arrears.
- b) If the full amount is not paid on or before the date given, the child's place in the centre may be forfeited immediately. Parents are to be reminded of this in writing when the account is given. (*See Conditions of Child Care 3.6*)
- c) If fees remain outstanding, the University's solicitor's office will be given details on the name of the family and fees
- d) In circumstances of genuine hardship, cases will be referred to the Child Care Management Advisory Committee for a decision to be made and a repayment agreement discussed and formalised.

Following forfeiture of a place at a centre, the Children's Services Manager is to write to the parent/s to inform them of the amount of the debt owing. This letter is to further state that the family will not be admitted to a University centre until the debt is cleared.

## **2.3 Rebate for Student users**

Student families may be eligible for a student rebate. The student rebate is calculated each year. As there is a fixed amount available the rebate is dependant on the number of applications received, and the percentage of Child Care Benefit a family receives. In March each year the rates are set for the remainder of the year. The rebate will again be reviewed in August to ensure remaining funds are sufficient. The rebate will be automatically deducted from the account.

## **2.4 Fee Box**

All monies have to be paid by cheque or credit card as the centres have no facilities for cash. All cheques and credit card slips (available from the front offices) are to be placed in the fee box in the office.

## **2.5 Late Collection of Children Fee**

### **POLICY**

The centre sessions finish at 1pm (for the morning session), and 6pm (for the afternoon session) sharp. A late collection fee will apply if children are not collected before these times.

### **PROCEDURE**

If a child remains in the centre after the session has finished time, the following rules apply:

1. No warnings, no excuses.
2. The time will be determined by the centre clock.
3. The parent will need to countersign the time filled out by the staff.
4. The amount of the fine will be added to the next account.
5. Three late fines in one month will place the child care place under review.
6. *A rate of \$7 per 5 minutes or part thereof per child is to be charged, plus an additional \$25.00 if the staff member on duty uses public transport to cover taxi costs.*
7. *After 30 minutes a charge of \$10.00 will apply for every additional 5 minutes or part thereof.*

All late fees charged are to offset the cost of overtime and administrative costs. A minimum of two staff have to be present at all times.

## **2.6 Payment of Fees on Days Centre is Closed**

Fees are to be charged for all weekdays, with the exception of centre industrial action days and times outside the operating hours. (*See Conditions of Child Care 3.7*)

Public Holidays are not considered centre closure times.

## **2.7 Guidelines for lengthy absences from child care.**

The University of Melbourne Conditions of Child Care state:

"3.8 Full fees are charged to the Parent during absences by the Child from the Centre for any reason whatsoever, including illness, school holidays and university/public holidays and exclusion under clause 8 of these Conditions."

There may be special circumstances where a child will be absent from the service for a lengthy fixed period of time. In those cases it may be possible to sell some or all of the child's booking.

Absences that will be considered:

- Maternity leave
- Interstate or overseas work requirements
- Interstate or overseas study requirements
- Child illness

### **Procedure**

How to apply for special consideration:

- Inform the Manager of Children's Services, in writing, of the proposed absence, giving exact dates of absence and which days can be "sold" during the absence
- Supply a letter of the employer, course supervisor, or doctor stating the reasons for absence

### **Approval**

The Manager Children's Services will confirm arrangements to be made in writing. The letter will specify: dates of absence and days available for selling to other families. The family will need to sign this letter and a copy of the letter will be retained on the child's file. If specific days within this period are sold the family cannot reclaim these.

Children's Services cannot guarantee that any of the time will be sold and the family will remain responsible for the payment of any fees owing.

NB. University staff should negotiate payment of their child care fees with their department if their child's absence is due to work requirements.

(procedure adopted by Child Care Management Advisory Committee 14 May 2003)

Under any other circumstances where parents have indicated that their child will not attend the centre on specific days, normal fees will be charged whether this time has been used by another family or not.

## **2.8 Temporary Enrolments**

Fees for temporary enrolments are to be the least expensive of the following alternatives:

- a) The full daily fee, or
- b) The half day fee, or
- c) The assessed fee (the family needs to notify the Family Assistance Office of their intention to use our service)

These fees must be paid by cheque or credit card on the day of enrolment.

## **2.9 Deposit**

Parents are required to pay the full deposit on Enrolment Day, or where an offer is made later in the year within five (5) days of the date of offer. The deposit is to be paid by cheque or credit card. This deposit is to be held in trust for the year and reimbursed to the family by way of contribution towards two (2) weeks care either at the end of the year or, when the child leaves the centre through refund by cheque. The Administrative Officer is to calculate the fee payable.

### **2.10 Waiting list Fee**

A non-refundable waiting list fee of ten dollars (\$10) is to be paid per family, once on initial enrolment. This enrolment fee is to cover administrative costs and postage.

### **2.11 Receipting of Fees**

Fees are receipted twice weekly. Amounts receipted will be shown on the invoice/statement for the next period.

### **2.12 Fund Raising**

Centres may choose to use fund raising activities as a means of raising extra funds for use in the centre.

If a centre is involved in fund raising activities it will endeavour to carefully select the types of activities used.