

Defense Department Expands Military Child Care Program to Increase Availability of Affordable, Quality Child Care for Military Families

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The Defense Department is beginning the expansion of a program that increases access to quality civilian providers when on-installation child care is unavailable to military families.

The program, Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood-PLUS, or MCCYN-PLUS, is currently active in four states – Virginia, Maryland, Nevada and Washington. Today, MCCYN-PLUS expands to Miami-Dade County, Florida. The expansion continues into Texas in October and Colorado in November. The department is working to rapidly expand MCCYN-PLUS, to Washington, D.C., and all states with quality rating and improvement systems.

MCCYN-PLUS maintains high quality standards by depending on the states' child care quality rating and improvement systems. Qualifying civilian providers must meet DOD requirements, which include being licensed and regulated by the state with annual licensing agency inspections, completing employee background checks and participating in their state's quality rating and improvement system.

The DOD's expansion of the MCCYN-PLUS program benefits the broader community by raising the quality of child care for both military and civilian families. Local community providers eligible for MCCYN-PLUS have the opportunity to increase their income and expand their services to military families.

“The Defense Department recognizes our military families need and deserve quality, affordable care for their children in order to be mission ready,” said deputy assistant secretary of defense for Military Community and Family Policy Patricia Montes Barron. “The department invites Washington, D.C., and all remaining states that operate child care quality rating and improvement systems to partner with us and join the MCCYN-PLUS initiative, so the department can provide more military families with fee assistance to offset the high cost of child care in the community.”

In August 2022, the Defense Department held virtual information sessions with 31 states and the District of Columbia to provide information about the MCCYN-PLUS initiative and requested states join the Department in this endeavor. The department is conducting follow on planning sessions with each state to develop implementation plans and timelines.

By expanding the pool of child care providers who are eligible to participate in military fee assistance through MCCYN-PLUS, parents can expect that providers are working toward quality standards that are higher than minimum licensing requirements.

“For military families, this comprehensive expansion means they will have more quality child care options available at subsidized rates in most U.S. locations,” said under secretary of defense for Personnel and Readiness Gilbert R. Cisneros Jr. “Civilian providers

participating in their state’s quality improvement program may also benefit from other state offered incentives, such as technical assistance, which provides customized support from subject matter experts, and/or financial incentives for professional development training, national accreditation costs and background check processing.”

For a list of approved MCCYN-PLUS providers, visit the Child Care Aware® of America [webpage](#). Military parents can also learn more about their state’s quality rating and improvement system, which aims to provide more options for quality child care at the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance [website](#).

About Military Community and Family Policy

[Military Community and Family Policy](#) is directly responsible for establishing and overseeing quality-of-life policies and programs that help our service members, their families and survivors be well and mission-ready. [Military OneSource](#) is the gateway to programs and services that support the everyday needs of the 5.2 million service members and immediate family members of the military community. These DOD services can be accessed 24/7/365 around the world.

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