



Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process

The Department understand that many Partner Service have queries in relation to the recent announcement that fee increases will be available to some Partner Services in Year 3 of Core Funding.

We wish to inform all Partner Services that all fee increases will be managed through the new Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process which is scheduled to commence on the 31 July 2024.

As part of the progressive development of the fee management system under Core Funding, the Department is introducing a new Fee Increase Assessment and Approval process whereby a Partner Service meeting certain criteria may apply to increase their fees up to an approved level.

It is very important to note that all Partner Services are still required to keep to the conditions of the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement for the 2023/24 programme year. This includes the requirement for all Partner Services to keep their fees frozen either at 2021 levels or at the point in which they first joined Core Funding, whichever is earlier.

Services should proceed as normal with all programme readiness tasks in respect of Core Funding 2024/25, including the completion of fee tables with **current** fees charged.

Applications will be invited and processed on a phased basis to ensure Partner Services operating for the longest period without a fee increase are served first.

Phase 1 Partner Services who have not increased their fees since programme year 2017/18 or before. Applications open on **31 July 2024**.

Phase 2 Partner Services who have not increased their fees from programme year 2018/19 to September 2021. Applications open on **7 August 2024**.

Phase 3 All other Partner Services. Applications open on **19 August 2024**

To be eligible to apply for the Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process, a Partner Service must fulfil the following criteria:

1. Submitted their completed Income and Expenditure Template, in line with Core Funding Programme Year 1 (2022/23) requirements
2. Submitted fee table and Parent Statement in respect of Core Funding Year 3 (2024/25)
3. Activated a Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement for Year 3 (2024/25)
4. Have at least one fee entry on their fee table in respect of Core Funding Year 3 (2024/25) below the applicable threshold.

Interested Partner Services should contact their local CCC. The CCC will issue the Partner Service a form to self-declare their eligibility, which will be returned to the CCC who will forward it and the associated documents for verification by DCEDIY.

The associated documents include the submitted fee table in respect of Core Funding Year 3 (2024/25) identifying at least one fee entry below the applicable threshold. Historical fee table data demonstrating the length of time that their fees have been frozen should also be attached to the



self-declaration form. Local CCC can advise how these can be accessed. Additionally, applicants will be asked to indicate whether there have been any significant changes to their financial circumstances since Core Funding Year 1 2022/23. Any such changes can be reflected in an updated Income and Expenditure template before submission to the Department.

Partner Services will be asked to complete a Child Enrolment Data (CED) template in conjunction with the local CCC, the outcome of which will be submitted to the Department. Updated Income and Expenditure Templates where required will be submitted with the completed CED template.

Once the Department has received a completed submission (CED and updated Income and Expenditure Template as applicable), the Department will issue a template notice letter to the Partner Service to issue to parents/guardians advising them of an ongoing Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process. Formal notification to parents/guardians should not occur before this point.

Any approved fee increase will be capped at the value of the increase in the NCS subsidy from September 2024 (€0.74 per hour). For example, a weekly offering of 45 hours or more will be eligible for an increase of no more than €33.30 per week and weekly offerings of less hours will be proportionally less.

Obtaining written approval for a fee increase from the Department is the only circumstance in which a Partner Service may be permitted to increase their fees while under contract for Core Funding 2024/25. Any fee increase which takes place without explicit written approval from the Department would constitute a breach of Core Funding terms and conditions. In any case, no approved fee increase can take effect until the beginning of Core Funding 2024/25 on 1st September 2024 at the earliest.

Applicant Guidelines in respect of the Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process will issue in advance of 31 July 2024 and local CCC will be in a position to provide support to interested Partner Services, from 30 July 2024.

To express interest in a Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process, Partner Services can contact their local [City/County Childcare Committee \(CCC\)](#) once the relevant application window opens.



Appendix 1

Thresholds

The thresholds outlined below are based on the county average full day fee identified in the Annual Early Years Sector Profile 2022/23. These fees are assumed to relate to Band E (from 40 to under 50 hours a week), with the values for the remaining band relating proportionately to this fee.

County Division	Band A <i>Less than 10 hours a week</i>	Band B <i>Between 10 hours and 19 hours 59 minutes a week</i>	Band C <i>Between 20 hours and 29 hours 59 minutes a week</i>	Band D <i>Between 30 hours and 39 hours 59 minutes a week</i>	Band E <i>Between 40 hours and 49 hours 59 minutes a week</i>	Band F <i>50 or more hours a week</i>
Carlow	€ 31.52	€ 63.04	€ 94.57	€ 126.09	€ 157.61	€ 189.13
Cavan	€ 34.07	€ 68.13	€ 102.20	€ 136.26	€ 170.33	€ 204.40
Clare	€ 34.29	€ 68.58	€ 102.88	€ 137.17	€ 171.46	€ 205.75
Cork City	€ 42.64	€ 85.28	€ 127.93	€ 170.57	€ 213.21	€ 255.85
Cork County	€ 40.90	€ 81.79	€ 122.69	€ 163.58	€ 204.48	€ 245.38
Donegal	€ 35.17	€ 70.33	€ 105.50	€ 140.66	€ 175.83	€ 211.00
Dublin City	€ 45.17	€ 90.34	€ 135.50	€ 180.67	€ 225.84	€ 271.01
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	€ 52.80	€ 105.61	€ 158.41	€ 211.22	€ 264.02	€ 316.82
Fingal	€ 47.13	€ 94.26	€ 141.39	€ 188.52	€ 235.65	€ 282.78
South Dublin	€ 46.86	€ 93.72	€ 140.57	€ 187.43	€ 234.29	€ 281.15
Galway	€ 35.64	€ 71.27	€ 106.91	€ 142.54	€ 178.18	€ 213.82
Kerry	€ 36.90	€ 73.80	€ 110.69	€ 147.59	€ 184.49	€ 221.39
Kildare	€ 42.36	€ 84.71	€ 127.07	€ 169.42	€ 211.78	€ 254.14
Kilkenny	€ 34.54	€ 69.08	€ 103.61	€ 138.15	€ 172.69	€ 207.23
Laois	€ 34.77	€ 69.54	€ 104.32	€ 139.09	€ 173.86	€ 208.63
Leitrim	€ 30.34	€ 60.68	€ 91.03	€ 121.37	€ 151.71	€ 182.05
Limerick	€ 34.92	€ 69.85	€ 104.77	€ 139.70	€ 174.62	€ 209.54
Longford	€ 34.03	€ 68.05	€ 102.08	€ 136.10	€ 170.13	€ 204.16
Louth	€ 37.28	€ 74.56	€ 111.84	€ 149.12	€ 186.40	€ 223.68
Mayo	€ 34.05	€ 68.11	€ 102.16	€ 136.22	€ 170.27	€ 204.32
Meath	€ 39.84	€ 79.68	€ 119.53	€ 159.37	€ 199.21	€ 239.05
Monaghan	€ 31.07	€ 62.14	€ 93.22	€ 124.29	€ 155.36	€ 186.43
Offaly	€ 36.78	€ 73.57	€ 110.35	€ 147.14	€ 183.92	€ 220.70
Roscommon	€ 34.77	€ 69.53	€ 104.30	€ 139.06	€ 173.83	€ 208.60
Sligo	€ 34.28	€ 68.56	€ 102.85	€ 137.13	€ 171.41	€ 205.69



Tipperary	€ 33.13	€ 66.25	€ 99.38	€ 132.50	€ 165.63	€ 198.76
Waterford	€ 34.89	€ 69.79	€ 104.68	€ 139.58	€ 174.47	€ 209.36
Westmeath	€ 37.53	€ 75.05	€ 112.58	€ 150.10	€ 187.63	€ 225.16
Wexford	€ 36.73	€ 73.45	€ 110.18	€ 146.90	€ 183.63	€ 220.36
Wicklow	€ 45.44	€ 90.88	€ 136.33	€ 181.77	€ 227.21	€ 272.65

Common fee structure

Fee Band	Hours per week offered under fee option
A	Less than 10 hours
B	10 hours to 19 hours 59 minutes
C	20 hours to 29 hours 59 minutes
D	30 hours to 39 hours 59 minutes
E	40 hours to 49 hours 59 minutes
F	More than 50 hours