



# Medically Complex Children Waiver Children's Attendant Care Frequently Asked Questions

## Overview of Program

### 1. What is children's attendant care (CAC)?

CAC is a home-based service model for Medically Complex Children (MCC) waiver participants ages one to 21.

It is extensive hands-on help for at least two of the seven key activities of daily living (ADLs). They include:

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Eating
- Hygiene
- Mobility
- Toileting
- Transferring

It allows the option for eligible parents, relatives or guardians to be paid hourly to deliver the extraordinary care their child needs for day-to-day activities. This option is self-directed and would be used instead of or in addition to an in-home care agency and personal care aide (PCA).

### 2. What do you mean by self-directed?

Participants who choose this option will manage their own CAC services.

### 3. What are the differences between CAC and PCA?

Children's attendant caregivers are not hired or paid by an in-home care agency.

Choosing self-directed CAC allows the MCC waiver participant and/or family member to:

- Hire qualified family members, including a parent of a minor child, to be the paid children's attendant caregiver
- Manage recruitment and retention of paid caregiver(s) of choice



- Have more control of scheduling service hours
- Manage and supervise staff

Choosing personal care through an in-home agency allows the MCC participant and/or family member to:

- Manage recruitment and retention of paid caregiver(s) of choice
- Manage and supervise staff
- Control scheduling of service hours

#### **4. How can my child qualify for CAC?**

To qualify for CAC, the child must require hands-on support that exceed the range of tasks a family member or responsible person would normally perform in the household for a person without a disability or chronic illness of the same age. The child must also be between the ages of one and 21 and enrolled in the MCC waiver.

#### **5. As the parent or guardian, how do I access CAC?**

If your child is approved for a PCA through the MCC waiver, please speak to your waiver nurse case manager (NCM). The waiver NCM will start the process. They will also explain the required background check and training requirements.

If your child has not accessed PCA services through the MCC waiver, your waiver NCM can start the assessment to see if your child qualifies. If qualifications for care are met, the waiver NCM can begin the process of getting CAC services in place.

#### **6. Do I have to switch from using my PCA to being my child's caregiver?**

No, you can keep your PCA, and everything will continue as normal. This CAC service model is optional.

#### **7. Why has this service model been added to the MCC waiver?**

Adding the CAC service model to the MCC waiver allows the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) to better support families of medically complex children. This option may help these families become more financially stable, address the caregiver shortage in South Carolina and allow eligible children to experience fewer disruptions in care due to caregivers' schedules and job changes. SCDHHS' goal is to protect and promote the health and welfare of as many medically complex children as possible.

The income paid to the children's attendant caregiver by Morning Sun for the provision of the CAC services is based on completion of CAC tasks outlined in the service plan. The Medicaid participant must continue to meet MCC waiver and CAC service eligibility criteria to continue to receive the waiver service. Medicaid participants who no longer meet the MCC waiver eligibility may be able to get

medically necessary state plan children's personal care and children's private duty nursing services.

## **Payment and Training**

**8. What is the hourly pay rate for eligible parent/guardian self-directed children's attendant caregivers?**

As of 2025, the hourly pay rate is \$16.20 for self-directed children's attendant caregivers.

**9. How many hours would I work as the children's attendant caregiver?**

The child's needs are assessed by the waiver NCM. The number of hours will vary based on the assessment results. However, each children's attendant caregiver will not work more than 40 hours per week. If the child is approved for more than 40 hours of care per week, there will need to be a second children's attendant caregiver to finish the total hours approved. The second children's attendant caregiver can be another family member or a PCA through an in-home care agency.

**10. Is there a timesheet or some way to keep track of my hours so I can be paid?**

Children's attendant caregivers will need to have a smartphone and use an app to clock in and out for their hours worked. Children's attendant caregivers are required to have internet access or the use of phone data. Only services provided by approved children's attendant caregivers and captured using the app are eligible for payment.

**11. How will I get paid?**

Medicaid contracts with Morning Sun Financial Services to enroll eligible attendant caregivers and process their payments. Children's attendant caregivers must complete an enrollment packet. The USC nurse will provide the packet and help the children's attendant caregiver fill it out. Payment is through direct deposit. Attendant caregivers will be paid on average twice a month.

**12. What kind of training is required?**

A University of South Carolina (USC) nurse will help you navigate your training. At a minimum, you must pass a CPR and First Aid course. The USC nurse may suggest more training based on your child's needs. Children's attendant caregivers will be paid to provide the care outlined on the care plan. Children's attendant caregivers cannot pay someone else to complete the tasks on the care plan.

**13. How will I receive the training?**

First Aid and CPR training may be delivered in an online format.

**14. Who will pay for the CPR and first aid training?**

Children's attendant caregivers are responsible for the cost of training. There are several online options for training. Contact your NCM for more information.

## **Taxes and Other Aid Programs**

**15. Will this income be taxable?**

Children's attendant caregivers should always consult with a tax expert about your family's situation and if this income is taxable.

**16. Who do I contact about completion of tax forms?**

Please contact Morning Sun for help with tax forms. The phone number is (855) 767-4871. For phone interpreters, call (888) 338-5514. If a person is signing the tax form on behalf of a participant who is over 18, legal documentation providing this authority will be required.

**17. Will the income I receive from being a children's attendant caregiver affect my eligibility for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program?**

Please check with your waiver NCM about WIC eligibility and resources to help determine any impact to WIC benefits. Please call your local health department or (855) 472-3432 for more details.

## **More Information**

**18. What happens if I get sick or there is another reason I am unable to care for my child?**

When you set up the children's attendant care service model with your waiver NCM, you will create an emergency plan. This could be moving care to another children's attendant caregiver, unpaid caregiver or selecting a PCA from an in-home care agency. Your waiver NCM will help make the change as easy as possible.

**19. Can I still have a home health nurse come into my home to perform medical care?**

Yes, a home health nurse may still come to your home to perform medical care.

You should talk with your waiver nurse case manager about when you can be clocked in as an children's attendant caregiver when a nurse is in the home.

**20. How is the number of children's attendant caregiver hours determined?**

If your child receives personal care through an in-home care agency, the process for determining hours will be the same.

An MCC waiver nurse case manager uses a comprehensive list to assign minutes and hours to the tasks required to care for each child. These are tasks that are considered "extraordinary care." This is defined as help with ADLs that is more extensive than would be required for a typically developing child of the same age. The minutes and

hours are added together to determine the length of time needed in a week. This assessment is used to list the service hours and tasks in the child's care plan. All tasks associated with an identified need are added as interventions to the service plan. You will describe your child's needs with the MCC waiver nurse during the assessment process.

**21. What if I don't agree with the number of children's attendant caregiver hours determined?**

If you do not agree with the number of hours, you have the right to request a fair hearing. To start the process, you must submit a written request stating the issue you wish to appeal along with a copy of the decision. The appeal must be given to the SCDHHS Division of Appeals and Hearings no later than thirty (30) days from the day you received the written decision. The Division of Appeals and Hearings will issue an appeal decision within ninety (90) days of the appeal being filed.

An appeal can be requested in the ways below:

- In-person: Go to a local eligibility office and request to file an appeal
- Online: [www.scdhhs.gov/appeals/file-appeal](http://www.scdhhs.gov/appeals/file-appeal)
- Email: [Appeals@scdhhs.gov](mailto:Appeals@scdhhs.gov)
- Fax: (803) 255-8251
- Mail:  
SCDHHS Division of Appeals and Hearings  
Post Office Box 8206  
Columbia, SC 29202
- Phone: (888) 549-0820

**22. My child is approved for 40 hours of care. I want to use 30 of those hours to be their paid children's attendant caregiver and I need someone to cover the other 10 hours. Can I cover those other hours with a paid PCA through an in-home care agency?**

Yes, you can cover the remaining hours with a PCA from an in-home care agency. You must arrange it with your MCC waiver NCM. There may be more required steps.

A second option is for an additional family member to be approved as a children's attendant caregiver. You can also use an unpaid family member for the other hours. As a reminder, only individuals authorized by the USC nurse can be a paid children's attendant caregiver.

**23. Can I be paid while my child is at school or in the hospital?**

No, you can only be clocked into the time management app when you and your child are at home or when you are providing care to and from a Medicaid covered service. You also may not be paid while your child is admitted to the hospital, or another inpatient

facility funded by Healthy Connections Medicaid. Contact your NCM with place of service questions.

**24. What types of care will parents/guardians perform?**

Parents/guardians will perform a **minimum of two activities of daily living** which are bathing, dressing, eating, toileting, hygiene, mobility and transferring.

Children's attendant care is not a nursing service.

**25. Can I continue to work outside the home while I am a children's attendant caregiver?**

CAC must be provided in the child's home. You may work if the outside work does not interfere or negatively affect services you provide to your child. You should discuss any special circumstances with your waiver NCM.

**26. Will I have to pass a background check to be a children's attendant caregiver?**

Yes, a background check with fingerprinting is required. People, including parents and guardians, with known convictions for abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults or children, crimes against another person or felony conviction of any kind are not eligible to be a children's attendant caregiver.

**27. Is there an age requirement for being a children's attendant caregiver?**

Yes, a children's attendant caregiver must be at least 18 years old.

**28. Are there other requirements for being a children's attendant caregiver?**

Yes, a children's attendant caregiver must also:

- Effectively communicate with the child's care team
- Be physically able to perform the duties on the plan for care
- Fill out required documents and follow billing procedures
- Submit a tuberculosis screening
- Do training to perform tasks on the care plan
- Complete CPR and First Aid training

**29. My child is not on the MCC waiver but does receive PCA hours. Can I be paid as his attendant caregiver?**

Only those enrolled in the MCC waiver are eligible for this service.

**30. Where can I learn more about CAC?**

Call your MCC waiver NCM at (888) 827-1665 to find out more about CAC. You can also visit [www.scdhhs.gov/MCC](http://www.scdhhs.gov/MCC).