Presumptive Child Care Eligibility
How Monroe County Reduces the Wait for Child Care Assistance

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The Need
Parents who qualify for child care assistance often cannot wait for the time it takes to complete the application and approval process, especially if they have a job opportunity for which child care is needed.

The Solution
Monroe County issues a short-term "child care certificate" that entitles families to receive subsidized child care for 30 days while the county completes their application process.

Child care certificates allow families to begin receiving the child care subsidy immediately, supporting parents' workforce participation.

How It Works

1. Parent applies to the county for a child care subsidy

2. Department of Human Services reviews the subsidy application (OCFS-6025), proof of income (4 weeks of paystubs) and a verification of work hours from an employer. An initial eligibility determination is made.

3. Child care certificate is issued that affirms a provider will be reimbursed for care provided for the next 30 days.

4. Parent can use certificate to begin receiving subsidized care immediately from a licensed or registered provider.

5. The family provides verification of child’s citizenship or immigration status and (if needed) an attestation that a non-custodial parent cannot provide care.

6. County processes the paperwork and converts the family to a "normal" subsidy status. If the family does not qualify or loses employment during the 30 day period, the county cannot claim that month's spending against the child care block grant or county MOE.
Monroe County assumes some risk by pledging to pay for up to 30 days of care while the application is being processed. If the family is not ultimately approved for assistance, the county must cover the cost of care using general funds, not child care block grant dollars or the county’s required child care Maintenance of Effort. However, this has only occurred a handful of times over the past several years, so the actual cost to the county has been minimal.

**EQUITY**

This policy creates a more equitable solution by ensuring that families who have fewer resources can access assistance without undue barriers. It gives them quicker access to child care which translates into the ability to work and advance in their professions.

Quicker eligibility means parents can start, maintain or advance in their employment without the barrier of a protracted waiting period. This builds and sustains the workforce necessary for our economy to grow.

We urge New York State to enact legislation to make a provisional child care subsidy certificate similar to the one being used in Monroe County a statewide policy that is required in all counties.

Doing so will ensure all New York families have access to child care assistance when they need it and are able to fully engage in the workforce.

**Child Care in New York**

- **$14,000** Average annual cost of infant care
- **$21,462** Average annual cost for a family with two children
- **$15.14** Median hourly wage a child care worker earns
- **11.7%** Family income a typical family pays for child care
- **64%** New York families who live in a child care desert