



## Wisconsin Shares EBT Basics



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# Introduction

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# Wisconsin Vision

**Parents will initiate  
Wisconsin Shares payments  
to child care providers via an  
Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card**



# EBT Card Benefits for Parents

- Issuing the benefits to the parent reinforces that Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program is a financial benefit program for working parents.
- Puts the parent in charge of the selection, purchase, and payment for child care services.
- When selecting care, parents will understand the costs and see the value of high-quality child care.
- Promotes a business relationship between parents and providers.
- Parents are fully engaged in paying for their child care services; assists parents' transition to the private market.

# EBT Card Benefits for Providers

- More closely mirrors private market: Arrangement between provider and parent
- After selecting the provider, the child care benefits are placed on the EBT Card.
- Similar to private market practices, the parent initiates the payment to the provider, in advance, before care is provided.
- Increases stability for child care operators and promotes the continuity of care for children.
- Eliminates Wisconsin Shares attendance reporting, and speeds up the payment to the provider.

# What is an EBT Card?

- Plastic card, similar to a bank card, issued to benefit recipients
- Card is loaded with benefits on a monthly or other periodic basis
- Cardholder (parent) initiates benefit transactions to service providers
- Card can be used *only* to access child care benefits – *not cash*

Wisconsin Shares EBT Card

SAMPLE CARD

Parent Name

# EBT Implementation Timeline

- Request for Proposals (RFP) – Issued November 2013
  - Specifications for Wisconsin Shares EBT Card
- Vendor Selected: FIS – Fidelity National Information Services
  - Experienced vendor - Wisconsin FoodShare
  - Implemented child care EBT card in Kansas and Utah
- Phase I: October 2016 in a Few Counties
- Phase II: February 2017 Statewide Rollout



# How EBT Works

- Automated daily file transfers between Department of Children and Families and the EBT vendor (FIS)
- Files Include: Parent Demographics, Provider Information, Benefit Amounts
- Vendor issues the cards to parent/cardholder
  - One card per family (With one optional alternate card holder)
  - Parent/cardholder activates the card and selects a PIN number



# How EBT Works *(continued)*

- Child care authorized for specific child care provider(s)
- Authorized amount of child care benefits for each provider is “loaded” onto the card on a monthly basis
- Parent initiates payments to provider via telephone, website, or swipe card
- Vendor sends payment to the provider’s bank account within 1-3 banking business days
- There are *no EBT transaction fees* paid by parents or providers

**Authorized  
amount  
\$\$**



**Wisconsin Shares EBT Card**

***SAMPLE CARD***

Account #

Toll-free #

Website

Parent Name

# EBT Vendor Services for Parents

- Vendor (FIS) will operate a website for parents to access EBT information
  - Confirm that benefits are loaded on the card, check balances, and review transaction history
  - Initiate payments to providers
- Have a toll-free phone line to access EBT information and assist parents
  - Have trained customer service agents for problem resolution
  - To report lost or stolen cards, etc.



# EBT Vendor Services for Providers

- Vendor (FIS) will outreach providers
- Enroll child care providers into the EBT database, including EFT banking information
- Have a provider web portal and a toll-free provider phone line
  - Providers can review payment transactions and payment history
  - Trained customer service agents for problem resolution



# Point of Service (POS) Card Reader Device for Providers

- Available to providers from the vendor (Optional)
- Fee: \$14.50 per month
- Vendor is responsible to provide and maintain the POS device
- Vendor is responsible to train providers on the use of POS device



# EBT Processes for Workers

- Worker and parent determine the family's child care needs.
- Parent identifies the provider or providers that will care for the children.
- Worker enters info into CSAW.
- "EBT Authorization" is created and communicated to the parent and to the provider.
- DCF sends subsidy benefit amounts to the EBT vendor to load the EBT card each month.
- Parent uses the EBT card to initiate the child care payment or payments to the identified providers.
- Vendor issues payment transaction to the provider.

# EBT Automation Workgroups

**EBT Workgroup:** File Exchange with Vendor, Identify vendor portal requirements; EBT Policy changes; CSAW Authorization Flow Module to improve accuracy.

**Parent Portal:** Piggyback with CARES ACCESS redesign effort; For Parents to report Eligibility Changes and Child Care Needs; Provide links to other resources that help the Parent choose a Child Care Provider.

**Provider Portal:** Currently CCPI. Allows Child Care Providers to know that children are authorized to receive subsidized child care. Eventually will give Providers password-protected access to information about other DCF programs: Regulation, Licensing, and YoungStar.

# EBT Communication Plan

- 2014-15 Communication Plan for:
  - Provider Organizations
  - Counties, Tribes, and Child Care Workers
- 2016-17 Training and Outreach for:
  - Parents
  - Providers
  - Child Care Workers
- 2017 Information for:
  - Partners
  - Legislators
  - Public



# Thank You and Q&A

