

BCCSA Operations Memo 24-27 Attachment

Section 12.2 Authorization Comments

<updated section only>

CSAW provides comments boxes on several of the authorization-related pages in addition to a Case Comments Summary page where authorization related comments are recorded.

The following information must be documented in case comments or comment boxes:

- The reason for the authorization end date when the authorization is less than 12 months long (see 15.3)
- A statement describing the reason for a delay in the authorization being completed within two (2) business days of the authorization assessment (see 16.1)
- A summary of the reason(s) for the difference in hours between the approved activity verification and the reported child care need if the difference crosses the part-time/full-time threshold or the threshold from full-time to above full-time (see 16.1.1.1)
- The reason for the difference between the approved hours and the requested hours, as well as the rationale for the hours that were ultimately approved, if the agency worker determines that the parent's self-declared need does not reasonably align with their approved activity (see 16.1.1.1)
- Whether the criteria are met for including education hours in an authorization for a child in 4K or Head Start (see 16.1.1.3)
- The reason for a short-term emergency authorization for a school-age child during the typical school day when school is in session (see 16.1.1.4)

Section 16.1.1.4 School-Age Children Authorizations

Wisconsin Shares does not allow authorizations for time during the typical school day for children in grades K through 12 while the school year is in session. The typical school day is determined by the local agency after a review of the school district hours of operation and school district calendar for schools within the county. A child's school bell schedule does not need to be entered in CSAW or documented in case comments.

Children in grades K through 12 can receive authorizations for times outside of the typical school hours during the school year and for times when school is not in session (e.g., summer break, planned holiday breaks, or other planned school-closed times).

An authorization may be written for a school age child during the typical school day when school is in session if a short-term (defined as less than 30 days) emergency occurs in which the child needs to attend virtual school at a child care provider while the parent participates in their approved activity.

After reviewing the parent's authorization request and if it is still unclear if the situation meets the need for an authorization, the agency worker should contact the Child Care Help Desk at childcare@wisconsin.gov for review and approval or denial. A short-term emergency authorization must be documented in case comments (see 12.2).

Example 1: Sadie is in first grade and breaks her arm during recess. Sadie's mom Nichole has reached out to the school who said they will allow Sadie to attend virtual school for three weeks while she heals. Nichole contacts her local agency to request an authorization for Sadie at her current after-school child care provider for the three weeks during the typical school day while Nichole participates in her approved activity. The worker enters the authorization for the three-week time period.

The following children are not eligible for an authorization during the typical school day or for school closed hours:

- Children who are homeschooled
- Children who are truant
- Children between the ages of 6 and 18 who are required to be enrolled in school per the Department of Public Instruction and are not enrolled (excluding expelled children while the parent searches for a new education arrangement)
- Children who are suspended from school

Expelled children who are considered disenrolled may be eligible to receive an authorization during the typical school day while the parent searches for a new education arrangement. The parent will have been notified by the school if the child is expelled and disenrolled. If a child's enrollment status is questionable, the parent must provide verification of the child's school enrollment status.

Section 16.1.1.4.2 School Closed Hours

<updated section only>

Parents with children who are enrolled in school may request authorized hours when they need child care to participate in their approved activity and school is closed due to:

- Planned closures, according to the school calendar (i.e., teacher conferences, teacher in-service days, etc.)
- Unplanned closures (i.e., inclement weather, emergency maintenance, etc.)

Parents can also request additional hours if an in-person school changes from an in-person day to a virtual school day due to inclement weather or another emergency and they need to participate in their approved activity.

Children who have before and/or after school care at one (1) provider may need a second authorization to a different provider for when school is closed. If a child only needs care when school is closed, the agency worker can create a "zero-hour authorization" in CSAW (see 16.1.1.4.1).

Only children with part-time authorizations (20 weekly hours or less) or zero-hour authorizations are eligible to receive additional funds for days when school is closed. A parent with a full-time authorization (more than 20 weekly hours) or an above full-time authorization (50-75 weekly hours) for their school-age child must be advised to use their current authorized hours to meet their school closed need.

Example 1: Keith has a part-time after school authorization for 8 hours per week. On March 29, an ice storm hits and the school changes to a virtual school day instead of cancelling school for the day. Keith's dad Aaron contacts the local agency and requests school closed hours for the day at Keith's after school provider so that he can participate in his approved activity. Since Keith has a part-time authorization, the agency worker adds school closed hours for March 29.

Example 12: Tara previously worked full-time, third shift, but now works first shift for 15 hours per week. She has a 45-hour authorization for her child, Tina. She uses these hours in the evenings and on weekends. In March, Tara calls to request school closed hours for Tina for March 4 and the week of spring break (March 21–March 25). The agency worker informs Tara that the school closed hours cannot be authorized because she already has a full-time authorization.

School closed hours can be requested in advance by parents who know their school closed need ahead of time. School closed hours can also be requested within 10 calendar days after the school day closure whether the day was a planned school closed day or an unexpected closure. The 10 calendar days begins the day after the last day of the school closure or school closure period. A school closure period means multiple consecutive school closed days. Agency workers must document the reason for the school closure in case comments (see 12.2).

Example 23: Susie has a zero-hour authorization for her school-age child, Derek. She calls on January 15 to request school closed hours for Derek. His school was closed January 4 and 5 due to a snowstorm but the child care program was open, and Susie needed to work. Because the request was made within 10 calendar days from the last day the school was closed consecutively, the agency worker may add the additional hours for the days Derek attended child care while school was closed.

Example 34: Jessica has a zero-hour authorization for her school-age child, Laura. She calls on February 17 to request school closed hours for Laura because school was closed on February 5 and February 10. Because the request was made within 10 calendar days of February 10 but not February 5, the agency worker adds the additional hours only for February 10 for when Laura attended child care while school was closed. The agency worker does not add school closed hours for February 5 because Jessica requested the hours more than 10 calendar days after the school closure.