

24 March 2020

Early Childhood Education

## CLIENT FEES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN KOTKA FROM 1 AUGUST 2020

A monthly fee is charged for early childhood education arranged by the local administration. The fee is determined in accordance with the Finnish Act on Client Fees in Early Childhood Education and Care (Laki varhaiskasvatuksen asiakasmaksuista, 1503/2016) as well as the decision § 16 of the Committee of Children and Adolescents of Kotka of 21 February 2017 and the decision § 19 of the Welfare Committee of Kotka of 17 February 2020.

**The amount of the client fee is determined on the basis of the size and income of the family as well as the hours reserved for early childhood education**

### Size of family

The spouses / common law spouses living in a shared household and the minor children of both of them living in the same household are taken into account when determining the size of the family. A registered partnership is considered equal to a marital relationship.

### Income of family

The taxable earned income and capital income of the custodians of the family and of the child in early childhood education as well as income exempt from taxation are taken into account as income.

Maintenance allowance paid and other corresponding expenses incurred by actual family relationships as well as traditional life-annuity paid in money are taken into account as deductions from the income.

The fee decision made by the early childhood education services of Kotka is family-specific, and it itemises the client fees of all children of the family who are in early childhood education. If a child's parents live separately but in the same municipality, only one fee decision is made for early childhood education.

In such a situation, the fee is determined on the basis of the income of that parent, with whom the child has residence as specified in the Finnish act on the population data system and certification services of the Population Register Centre (Laki väestötietojärjestelmästä ja väestörekisterikeskuksen varmennepalveluista 661/2009). In this case, the parents must agree between themselves on how to divide the fee charged for early childhood education. If a child is arranged early childhood education in the area of two municipalities, the fee is determined separately in each municipality.

### Income declaration

The income declaration must be made through the online services of the early childhood education services of Kotka at <https://www.kotka.fi/kasvatus-ja-koulutus/varhaiskasvatus/sahkoinen-asiointi/> by selecting item "Tuloseelvityksen toimittaminen tai korkeimman varhaiskasvatuksen asiakasmaksun hyväksyminen" (Delivery of income declaration or accepting the maximum client fee in early childhood

education). If you cannot submit the income declaration online, please deliver the income declaration and its appendices by mail to: Hyvinvointipalvelut, Varhaiskasvatus, Laivurinkatu 4, 48100 Kotka.

If a family does not deliver its income information, the maximum fee is charged for early childhood education. The income information does not need to be delivered if the family gives its consent to the maximum fee. The consent can be given on the website of the early childhood education services of Kotka using the online service (you need to authenticate your identity for the service). The consent is valid for as long as the client declares a change to the consent.

## Adjustment of fee

If the income of the family changes essentially (+/-10%) or if the size of the family changes, the family must deliver the new information in the manner stated under item Income declaration of this bulletin. The income information affecting the fee is taken into account from that month during which the new information was delivered. The amount of the fee is rounded up to the next full amount in euros. The client fee can be corrected if its basis (such as the size of the family) turns out to be erroneous. The correction can be made at the most over one year is retrospect.

## Need for service and client fees in early childhood education

### Fee for full-time early childhood education

In full-time early childhood education, the fee for the youngest child is at the most 288 euros per month. The minimum charged fee per child is 27 euros. The fee for the next child (in age order) in full-time early childhood education is 50 per cent of the fee for the younger child. The fee for each subsequent child is 20 per cent of the fee for the youngest child.

The fee is determined so that a percentage in accordance with the below table is calculated from a monthly income that exceeds the income limit. If the number of family members is more than six, the income limit is raised by 144 euros for each subsequent minor child.

Size of family, persons	Income limit € per month	Fee percentage for the portion exceeding the income limit	Income limit under which no fee is charged	Income limit that results in the highest client fee
2	2136	10.70%	2384	4823
3	2756	10.70%	3008	5443
4	3129	10.70%	3381	5816
5	3502	10.70%	3754	6189
6	3874	10.70%	4126	6561

### Hours spent in early childhood education

Hours per month	Fee (%) of maximum fee
0 - 80	50%
81 - 100	70%
101 - 150	85%
more than 151	100%

## Fee for early childhood education that supplements pre-school education

### Fee for early childhood education that supplements pre-school education of children of 5 years of age

There are four hours of pre-school education per day during the school year. The pre-school education is free of charge. If the child is in early childhood education in addition to pre-school education, the monthly fee is charged on the basis of the hours reserved for the early childhood education of the child.

During the operating period of 1 August to 31 July, there is 20 hours per week of free-of-charge early childhood education for children of 5 years of age. The table below shows the alternatives for the supplementary hours.

Hours per month	Fee (%) of maximum fee
0 - 45	40%
46 - 80	50%
81 -100	70%
101 - 150	85%

### Charging of fee

The client fee charged monthly is based on the hours reserved for early childhood education in the service agreement. The number of early childhood education hours reserved is followed on the basis of calendar months. If the hours reserved are exceeded, a new agreement is concluded on the hours reserved for a child in early childhood education. If the hours actually used for early childhood education in a month are below the hours reserved, the fee is charged on the basis of the hours reserved.

## The client fee is invoiced in accordance with the fee decision and journal entries

### Fee decision

The family receives a fee decision, which indicates the fee for each child in early childhood education. The decision is based on the size and income of the family and on the hours reserved for early childhood education.

**If the fee decision contains erroneous information, the family must inform the client fee personnel of the early childhood education services of Kotka immediately of this, tel. 05 234 7850.**

If the size or income of the family or the reserved hours change, a new service agreement is concluded, and the family is sent a new fee decision. The decision is mailed automatically from the client data system, so the family may receive several fee decisions in a single calendar month. There can be two decisions, if for example a child who is 17 years of age at the beginning of a calendar month turns 18 or if a child's sibling starts in early childhood education.

### Charging of client fee during absence

The early childhood education units keep a record of the presence and absence of the child. The early childhood education unit must be informed immediately of the reason for the absence of the child, because the reason cannot be changed afterwards in invoicing. A temporary absence of the child from early childhood education does not reduce the fee. The absences listed below are exceptions to this

- if the child is absent due to the child's illness for the whole calendar month, no fee is charged
- if the child is absent due to the child's illness for at least 11 days in a calendar month, half of the monthly fee is charged
- if the child is absent due to a reason other than the child's illness for the whole calendar month, half of the monthly fee is charged
- if the child is absent for the paternity allowance period, no fee is charged.

### Invoicing

Invoicing begins from the agreed starting date of early childhood education. If early childhood education starts or finishes at a time other than the beginning or end of a calendar month, the non-full month is taken into account as a factor reducing the client fee. If the family does not use an early childhood education position and does not cancel it in writing before the agreed starting date, half of the monthly fee is charged.

The invoice is sent in the early part of the month following the calendar month invoiced. After the due date, unpaid invoices will be transferred to Sarastia Kuntaperintä Oy for collection purposes. An interest on arrears in accordance with the Finnish Interest Act (Korkolaki) will be charged for unpaid invoices from the due date onwards.

Invoicing finishes on the date when the early childhood education position is cancelled. The family must cancel an early childhood education position electronically before the need for service finishes. This can be done at

<https://www.kotka.fi/kasvatus-ja-koulutus/varhaiskasvatus/sahkoinen-asiointi>

### Paternity leave

When the father of a child has a paternity leave when the child is already in early childhood education, the family must deliver a copy of Kela's decision concerning the paternity allowance to the client fee personnel of the early childhood education services of Kotka. No client fee is charged for the paternity leave period. However, the child cannot be in early childhood education during the paternity leave. The child can still keep the early childhood education position during the paternity leave. The paternity leave periods must be notified to the early childhood education unit of the child no later than two weeks before the beginning of the period. The other children of the family can be in early childhood education during the paternity leave period.

### Client fees during holidays

If the custodians of a child reserve an early childhood education position for the child for a holiday period and the custodians do not cancel it in writing within the relevant period of time, half of the monthly fee decided for the family is charged for the early childhood education position which has not been cancelled and used, by virtue of the Act on Client Fees in Early Childhood Education and Care (Laki varhaiskasvatuksen asiakasmaksuista). If no monthly fee has been decided for the child, half of the smallest (27 €) fee is charged. The fee is also charged for July even if that month was otherwise free of charge for the family.

### July

July is free of charge if the child's valid early childhood education has started before 1 September in the previous year.

## Service guarantee

A service guarantee agreement is used for ensuring that a child, who is absent from a day care centre for a fixed period of time, can return to the same day care centre where the child has been previously.

A child who has a service guarantee in municipal family day care is guaranteed priority to a position that becomes available.

### Terms of service guarantee

- the child has been in the same early childhood education unit for a minimum continuous period of four months
- the service guarantee agreement was made at least two weeks before the beginning of the service guarantee
- the absence lasts for at least four months
- the service guarantee expires if the family changes the child's absence period to be shorter than that agreed in the service guarantee
- the maximum length of the service guarantee is 24 months.

A service guarantee agreement can be made in the summer months if the absence lasts the entire holiday period between school years in general education or for the period of 1 June to 31 August. An agreement concerning the summer holiday period must be made no later than 30 April.

Families are asked about their need for early childhood education during summer holidays. This is asked in the spring in writing.

## Other holiday periods

If the child has holidays at other times, a fee is charged for temporary days of absence. If the child is absent for the whole calendar month, half of the monthly fee is charged.

During autumn, Christmas and winter holidays:

- The holidays do not reduce the child's early childhood education fees.
- During the holidays of pre-school education (autumn, Christmas and winter holidays), the child can be in early childhood education in accordance with the agreed need for service. The pre-reserved need for service in accordance with the agreement is taken into account in invoicing.

## Discretionary reduction or exemption of fee

An application for a reduction to or an exemption from the client fee can be made on the basis of maintenance liability, subsistence difficulties or maintenance aspects. The application can be made by filling in a payment reduction form and by returning it to address: Kotkan kaupunki / Kirjaamo, Kustaankatu 2, 48100 Kotka. Further information from the service number of client fees: 05 234 7850.

### Other important issues

The family cannot obtain child home care allowance (kotihoodon tuki) or private day care allowance (yksityisen hoidon tuki) if the child is in municipal early childhood education (day care centre or family day care). A child who obtains child home care allowance can participate in other early childhood education (open day care centres, clubs) and in pre-school education for one year before the beginning of compulsory education.

A family that obtains child home care allowance is **obliged** to inform Kela immediately when the child's early childhood education or pre-school education begins. An allowance paid without cause is recovered from the family.

If the child's care has been arranged by means of a service voucher, the child cannot obtain child home care allowance and private day care allowance simultaneously. A service voucher is considered equal to municipal early childhood education in accordance with Section 11 a of the Early Childhood Education Act (Varhaiskasvatustaki). In early childhood education arranged by means of a service voucher, the deductible is determined in the same manner as the client fee in municipal early childhood education.

Further information on the fees is available from telephone number 05 234 7850 on weekdays Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 12.00 and from 13.00 to 15.00, or at address [varhaiskasvatus@kotka.fi](mailto:varhaiskasvatus@kotka.fi).