



Late Fees

Do you have problems with parents who don't come on time to pick up their children? They may have a good excuse, but keeping children later than you expect isn't fair to you or the children. One way to keep parents coming on time is to charge an extra fee for late pick-up. If parents know they will have to pay more for coming late, they probably won't stop at the store or run some errands before they come for their child. They will want to show up on time.

Setting late fees

It's important for parents to know about late fees before you add it to their bill. Late fee policies should be written in your handbook of information that you give to families who are new to your care.

If you're starting this as a new policy, put it in writing. Give each parent two copies. Have them sign one copy and give it back to you. The other copy is for them to keep.

Keep the wording very clear and simple. For example*:

The hours of operation for Jones Family Child Care are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged for children who are picked up after 5:30 p.m., unless prior arrangements have been made.

parent signature

date

Give parents information about late fees in writing.

How much to charge

The amount to charge is up to you. Think about what your time is worth and an amount that will make parents want to come so they won't have to pay the extra fee.

Some providers charge a flat fee for late pick-up. Parents who arrive past closing time are charged a certain amount, no matter if they are 5 minutes late or 25.

Other providers base their late fees on time. There may be one fee for coming 5 to 10 minutes late and a higher fee for coming later.

Another way to charge is based on minutes. If the late fee is \$5.00 per minute and the parent arrives 5 minutes late, he will owe you \$25.00.*

Late fees for late payments

Do you have parents who don't pay on time? A fee for late payment may be just what they need to get them coming to your door with a check in their hand. The amount you charge for late payment is up to you.

Make sure parents have your policy in writing. For example*:

Child care payments at Jones Family Child Care are due every Friday for care to be given in the upcoming week. A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged to families who do not pay on time.

It would be nice if everyone would think of others and follow the rules. That isn't always the case. If people are late paying their water, heat, or other bills, they pay extra charges. The same rules can apply to child care. Parents who arrive late or pay late will pay extra. Be firm about your rules. It may take one or two late payments before parents understand that you

expect them to be on time and pay on time.

*These are examples of late fees. They are not recommendations. You, the child care provider, must decide on the rates you will charge.

Late fees help parents understand you want them to come on time and pay on time.



Pennsylvania Pathways

Professional Development
for Child Caregivers

PENNSYLVANIA



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