



Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast
Serving Citrus-Dixie-Gilchrist-Levy-Sumter Counties

Mail-in Redeterminations: Frequently Asked Questions

Question: This is a piece of cake! I don't have to take off work and if I mail in everything that's required on the day of the deadline I see on the Redetermination Notice, my subsidized child care will continue. How come it wasn't this easy before?

Answer: Actually - it is not just that easy. You have to read the contents of the redetermination packet very carefully. The packet was sent to you well ahead of time to allow time to read, fill out carefully and to gather together accurate required documents. Look again at the deadline on the Redetermination Notice. The time for some categories is **8.30AM** in the morning on the day of the deadline. The Redetermination Notice also says that if you are sending your package back by US Mail allow 5 days for delivery. It has to be **IN** the Coalition office by the deadline!

Question: What will happen if my Redetermination Package arrives in the Coalition office after the deadline or my redetermination package is incomplete?

Answer: Your subsidized child care services will be terminated. Your Client Services Counselor will contact you and your provider to notify you of the last day for services.

Question: If my services are terminated because I didn't follow through with what I had to do....what then?

Answer: You will have to discuss with your child care provider, perhaps make arrangements to become a private pay client. The termination notice you receive from the Coalition will indicate a last day for services after the redetermination deadline is missed. You may contact your Client Services Counselor to discuss other options, like applying for the waitlist, applying for Head Start, etc.

There is an appeals process if your services are terminated. Please call our office for information on Right to Appeal if you do not have a copy of the information to hand. Typically, appeals are only approved if there are extraordinary circumstances that prevented you from submitting an acceptable, accurate, and timely Redetermination Packet. A careful review is conducted by Coalition staff at management level, if you wish to appeal the termination. Both you and your provider will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible. All appeal decisions are final. If the appeal is approved there may be no break in services.

Question: I did not receive my Redetermination Package because I moved to a new address; I didn't know it was time for redetermination and my services were terminated. What now?

Answer: When you enrolled for subsidized child care services, you signed the Terms and Conditions of the program. The Terms and Conditions document contains a requirement that you let the Coalition know if changes occur to e.g. your address, family size, income within **ten (10) days** of the change. If you are terminated because you did not inform us of your new address and you appeal the termination, it is unlikely that the appeal will be approved unless there were extraordinary circumstances that prevented you from reporting.

Question: Help! I like the idea of not having to take off from work to redetermine for my subsidized child care but I am the nervous type; I think I filled out the paperwork correctly and enclosed all the required documents before I mailed it back to the Coalition but I am afraid that I will lose my child care if I got something in the process wrong. What can I do?

Answer: Coalition staff understands your concerns. When a Client Services Counselor receives your completed redetermination packet they will open it as soon as possible and examine the documents to see if anything is missing, has been filled out incorrectly, or if the supporting documents you submitted are not adequate. If any of these problems occur, your counselor will contact you by mail/phone/fax/email depending on how close the redetermination deadline is. You will have the opportunity to submit/re-submit/correct/add to: in person, by mail, email or by fax depending on the time that remains before the deadline. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that the correct documentation is at the Coalition by the deadline on your Redetermination Notice. If you do not hear from your counselor or provider and you are not sure of the status of your recertification application you are welcome to call our office to inquire.

Question: What happens after my recertification is approved?

Answer: As soon as a Client Services Counselor has processed and approved your redetermination, your provider will be informed by phone. The Client Services Counselor will forward a Child Care Certificate to the provider: It shows your (and your spouse's, if applicable) information, the children enrolled and their information, the parent fee, the provider reimbursement rate, the Counselor's processing date and the next end date for services. (Important Note: the end date on a Child Care Certificate and the date you are required to submit documentation for your next redetermination are not the same: for your next redetermination; documentation will have to be submitted on a date ahead of the Certificate's end date; paperwork submission

date is always indicated on the Redetermination Notice. Your provider will ask you to read, verify the information, and sign the Child Care Certificate. The primary applicant for School Readiness Services must sign the Child Care Certificate. The provider will also sign, and then re-submit the fully completed Child Care Certificate to the Coalition by the certificate due date. Please check with your provider to ensure they have completed the process. They will not receive reimbursement for your child's services if the document is not returned to the Coalition prior to claiming for the attendance.

Question: I originally qualified for subsidized child care because of a referral I received from my DCF/One Stop/other referring agency caseworker. How can the mail in redetermination process work for me?

Answer: When you receive a Redetermination Notice from the Coalition you should contact the caseworker who issued your referral (or the person who currently handles your case) to see if you qualify for an updated referral. Referrals contain authorization dates and the Coalition cannot extend your child care beyond the end date without new authorization. If your caseworker is able to issue a new referral, ask them to fax it to your local Coalition office. If your Client Services Counselor receives the referral by fax, they will contact you to let you know they received it. Mail all other documents required for recertification from home as soon as you can; do not wait for the referral to be sent to the Coalition. The Client Services Counselor will then put the two sets of information together and begin processing your redetermination.

Question: I cannot seem to get in contact with the caseworker who wrote my child care referral. What can I do?

Answer: Referring caseworkers have huge caseloads. Keep trying. If you try and try and cannot reach them, ask if their supervisor can help. You may also call your Coalition Client Services Counselor and request that they assist you. Your Client Services Counselor can assist, but there is no guarantee he/she will be able to obtain a new referral before the end date of your current authorization. Ultimately, obtaining the documents you need to redetermine is your responsibility.

Question: OK - I did not get an updated referral in time and my provider tells me that my child care services are now terminated. What can I do?

Answer: Keep up your efforts to contact the caseworker if you have reason to believe that you still qualify for a referral. If you manage to contact them after termination has occurred and they are able to write a referral for you with a start date for care that is the day after the previous referral's end date, it may be possible for services to be continued without a break in subsidized child care payments. Upon receiving the referral you should call your Coalition Client Services Counselor immediately. They might not be able to see you right away. They will set up an enrollment appointment with you. If you are determined eligible at the appointment, your child care services can be made retro-active to the first date of care indicated on the new child care authorization.

If you receive an updated referral from your caseworker and there is a break between the end date of the original authorization and the start date of the new one, child care services can only begin on the first date listed on the new authorization. Again, upon receiving the referral you should call your Coalition Client Services Counselor immediately. They might not be able to see you for a few days. They will set up an enrollment appointment for you. If you are determined eligible at the appointment, your child care services can be made retro-active to the first date of care listed on the child care authorization.

Question: What if I receive the Redetermination Packet from my Client Services Counselor, I contact my caseworker and they tell me I do not qualify for a new referral?

Answer: If this happens, call your Client Services Counselor as soon as possible. It may be possible to "roll" your case to another category of subsidized child care. If you received your original child care referral because of a Protective Service Investigation or Protective Service Case and the caseworker tells you that they cannot issue a new referral because the case is closed, ask them for a "Notice of Case Closed." This is an important document if you want to explore other child care options with your Coalition Client Services Counselor.

Question: I am a relative caring for my grandchild. The caseworker who handled my case originally will not write a new referral for me because the case is now closed and I receive cash assistance for the child. Do I qualify for child care assistance?

Answer: If you are receiving cash assistance for the child in your care, you may qualify for child care as a Relative Caregiver or a Caretaker Relative. If you cannot obtain a referral to authorize your child care, you should call your local DCF Call Center and ask for a Letter of Eligibility, or call your Client Services Counselor for information about how to obtain one. The Letter of Eligibility must be dated, list the caregiver's status as a recipient of the Relative Caregiver or Caretaker Relative payment, indicate the amount of the benefit payment and bear the signature of the caseworker providing the document. If the Letter of Eligibility does not have all of these items, it cannot be accepted as proof of eligibility for child care services. Your Client Services Counselor cannot contact the DCF Call Center on your behalf, as the counselors at the call center will only discuss confidential information with you. You can request the Letter of Eligibility be faxed directly to your local Coalition office and forward the rest of the documentation required for redetermination from your home.