

EXTENDED FREE CHILDCARE ENTITLEMENT IN OVERSEAS LOCATIONS

BACKGROUND

1. In overseas locations the MOD provides services (or access to services) that, so far as is reasonably practicable, conform in type, scope and standard to that required by legislation in England (but paying due regard to the equivalent legislation in the Devolved Administrations).
2. The 2006 Childcare Act provided for 15 hours of childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year for 3 and 4 year olds free of charge. In overseas locations the MOD currently delivers this entitlement through places at MOD-provided settings or through access to the MOD Overseas Nursery Allowance.
3. The 2016 Childcare Act provides for an extension of the current entitlement and offers an additional 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year of free childcare for children that are eligible, with effect from 1 September 2017.
4. The additional 15 hours will be available to families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family) a minimum of 16 hours each per week. Parents each earning £100,000.00 or more do not qualify for the additional entitlement.

ENTITLEMENT

5. The additional entitlement will be introduced by government on 1 September 2017 across England and is mirrored in MOD locations overseas, using the same eligibility criteria defined under the 2016 Childcare Act above.
6. The additional entitlement has been trialled across England prior to the rollout on 1 September 2017. The MOD entitlement will not be backdated to include these periods.
7. In overseas locations where the MOD-provided settings have sufficient capacity, the additional entitlement will be provided through those settings, free of charge. Free childcare cannot be claimed when using childminders or nannies.
8. In overseas locations where there are no MOD-provided settings, or where MOD-provided settings lack sufficient capacity, the additional entitlement will be provided through the MOD Overseas Nursery Allowance.
9. The entitlement applies to eligible Service Personnel and entitled Civilians only. The latter means UK Based Civil Servants posted overseas or Specially Recruited for Overseas Service. Fee-paying contractors cannot apply.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE ADDITIONAL 15 HOURS

10. The MOD currently delivers 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year free early education to all Regular Service Personnel, Reserve Personnel undertaking Full Time Reserve Service (Full Commitment) (FTRS FC) and entitled Civilians who are assigned overseas where they are accompanied by their eligible children, through places at MOD-provided settings or through access to the MOD Overseas Nursery Allowance.
11. In order to be eligible for the additional 15 hours of free childcare each parent must be working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family) a minimum of 16 hours each per week. These limits are measured for eligibility purposes on average over a period of three months on a reasonable expectation basis.
12. In order to be eligible for the additional 15 hours of free childcare, the maximum income per parent is £100,000.00 per annum.
13. For Dependants working overseas who pay Income Tax to HMRC or devolved equivalents, confirmation of eligibility is required from their employer (DBS).
14. For Dependants working overseas as Locally Engaged Civilians (LECs) not paying Income Tax to HMRC or devolved equivalents, it will be the responsibility of the local Command through the LEC employer or agency, to confirm their eligibility.
15. Dependants working overseas on the local economy will be required to provide proof from their employer in order to confirm their eligibility.
16. To ensure stability for children, parents and providers, the government has introduced a grace period should families cease to be eligible, before the existing entitlement is withdrawn. This grace period will be mirrored, where reasonably practicable, by the MOD.

HOW TO APPLY

17. If you currently qualify for the free 15 hours in an MOD-provided setting and fulfil the above eligibility criteria for the additional 15 hours entitlement, please complete Annex A to this DIN and forward to the address on the Application Form.
18. If you qualify for MOD Overseas Nursery Allowance and fulfil the above eligibility criteria for the additional 15 hours entitlement, please complete Annex A alongside your application for MOD Overseas Nursery Allowance and forward to the address on the Application Form.

CONTACT

- 19 Please contact SO2 Policy, DCYP for further information on DCYP-DCYP-Mailbox@mod.uk.