

Total Family Income (TFI) Tip Sheet

All families who enroll in the Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN) program are required to provide proof of their total family income (TFI). This short guide answers some of the most common TFI questions and provides the basic information you need to have your TFI verified.

What Is TFI?

TFI stands for “Total Family Income.” It includes the earned income of all adults (married or not) who contribute to the expenses of raising and caring for the child(ren).

What Is Earned Income?

Earned income includes all wages, salaries, tips, special duty pay, active duty save pay, long-term disability benefits, voluntary salary deferrals, and retirement or other pension income. It includes Supplemental Security Income (SSI) paid to the spouse and Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits paid to the surviving spouse before deductions for taxes. It also includes housing subsistence and other allowances (whether in cash or in kind) appropriate for the rank and status of military or civilian personnel (e.g., meals, lodging).

Why Do You Need My TFI?

Fee assistance is determined by calculating the difference between the community child care provider’s monthly fee (not to exceed the established community provider cap) and the DoD Total Family Income (TFI) category. Your TFI is needed to identify your DoD TFI Category.

How Is My TFI Calculated?

You must provide proof of income when registering for MCCYN. A Fee Assistance team member will review your proof of income and calculate your TFI to determine the amount of fee assistance.

What Documents Can I Use as Proof of Income?

Depending on your employment and benefit status, proof of income varies. Listed below are some of the types of proof of income that are acceptable for TFI verification.

- Current Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for the military sponsor
- Pay stubs
- Long-term disability benefits statement
- SSI statement
- Veterans Administration (VA) benefits statement
- Retirement/pension statement
- Newly employed (or if your income fluctuates): a written estimate of your anticipated annual earnings signed by your employer
- Business owners: a copy of your business net income (found on the individual’s tax information)
- New business owners (with no history of business net income yet): a written statement with your projected net income for the coming year and a copy of your business plan

What if I Don’t Provide Proof of Income?

If you choose not to provide proof of income, you will be ineligible for participation in the MCCYN Fee Assistance program.