

**Arizona Department of Economic Security
Higher Education Child Care Project**

Program Guidelines

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Introduction

Northern Arizona University’s Dean of Students (DOS) team is administering a pilot program for reimbursement of qualified child care expenses through the Higher Education Child Care Project (HECCP). Funding for the HECCP is provided by the Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES) Division of Child Care through federal Child Care and Development Block Grant COVID-19 relief funds. The pilot project end date is June 30, 2024.

The purpose of the NAU HECCP is to provide qualified child care assistance to income eligible student-parents of children ages birth through twelve (12) who are enrolled full-time (no work requirement) or part-time and employed in a work activity for monetary compensation. Student-parents who attend NAU online, in-person, partner programs, and state-wide are eligible to apply with consideration of other eligibility criteria. The income requirement is based on the State Median Income (SMI), which is updated annually. To be income eligible, student-parents must have an annual household income of 85% or less than the SMI for their household size. Please see the HECCP Income Requirement Chart below effective for all applications from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023. The income requirement will be updated on October 1, 2023 and become effective for all applications from October 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 or when the final application due date is determined.

Priority will be given to qualified student-parents in the following programs/areas: School of Nursing, Early Childhood Education, or K-12 Education, but student-parents enrolled in any NAU degree pathway approved by ADES (all NAU degree pathways are approved) who meet the income requirement are eligible to apply.

Eligibility

- **Priority Degree Pathways:** NAU School of Nursing and College of Education Early Childhood Education and K-12 Education students.
- **Other Degree Pathways:** All NAU degree pathways as approved by ADES.
- **Enrollment:** Currently enrolled full-time with no work requirement or part-time with employment in a work activity for monetary compensation. NAU HECCP staff will refer to <https://nau.edu/university-policy-library/> to determine enrollment. Eligible

student-parents who were enrolled according to the guidelines above in any term dating back to Fall 2021 are also considered eligible to apply for retroactive qualified child care reimbursements from October 1, 2021.

- Income:** Annual State Median Income (SMI) of not more than 85% of SMI based on household/family size for each applicable program year (updated on October 1, 2023). A copy of the student-parents page 1 of Tax Form 1040 must be provided at time of application. Line 11 of Tax Form 1040 will be used to determine income eligibility. The income chart below is effective for application review from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2023:

HECCP Income Requirements
Effective October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2023

Household / Family Size	Family Adjusted Gross Monthly Income	Family Adjusted Gross Annual Income (Tax Form 1040, Line 11) of Not More Than
2	\$4,147	\$49,764
3	\$5,123	\$61,476
4	\$6,098	\$73,176
5	\$7,073	\$84,876
6	\$8,049	\$96,588
7	\$8,232	\$98,784
8	\$8,415	\$100,980
9	\$8,598	\$103,176
10	\$8,781	\$105,372
11	\$8,964	\$107,568
12	\$9,146	\$109,752

*New ADES SMI guidelines, effective October 1, 2023, will be revised as they become available.

- Parents:** Parent or legal guardian of a dependent child(ren) ages birth through twelve (12) and Arizona resident. Proof of residency will be required at time of application.
- Child:** Legal dependent child(ren) ages birth through twelve (12) (this includes children by birth or adoption, foster children, and children by court order if proper identification is provided). Birth certificates will be required at time of application to determine child(ren) age and legal guardian evidence will be required in cases of guardianship.
- Child Care Providers:** Is inclusive of ADES Certified Family Child Care Homes, ADES Contracted Child Care Centers and Group Homes that are regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and hold a current registration agreement with ADES, and Child Care Providers that are licensed and regulated by the ADHS. Child care providers must be a licensed or certified provider listed on the Arizona Child Care Resource & Referral website. Regulated providers can be found by using the “Search for Child Care” and “Advanced Search Criteria” prompts on the Child Resource and Referral (CCR&R) website (azccrr.com) and checking the “DES Provider” in the options. To narrow the search, enter the city and/or zip code for which child care is being sought.
 - As the selection of child care is the exclusive responsibility of parents, the child care provider chosen will be asked to confirm certain information. This includes confirming the provider meets the description of a qualifying child care provider as described in the program guidelines, and regarding reimbursement-related submittals for child care service occurring in all corresponding academic years.
 - Child care programs not eligible for NAU’s HECCP are those:
 - Offering experiences as “camp” or “recreational” opportunities not meeting “Qualifying Child Care” descriptions;
 - At schools without the supervision of state or local education authorities (e.g., “private schools”);
 - Where participants are allowed to sign themselves in/out; and/or
 - That reflect non-child care tuition.
- Dual eligibility:** If a student-parent has dual eligibility with *both* DES child care assistance and NAU HECCP child care reimbursements, DES child care assistance will be the payor of first resort, and any child care costs not covered by DES can then be covered by the NAU HECCP. To verify whether a student is currently receiving DES child care assistance, and what their authorized amount of assistance is, the NAU HECCP will request the student provide a copy of their [Provider/Parent/Guardian's Agreement for Child Care Charges](#). Student-parents who receive DES child care assistance will be required to provide their Provider/Parent/Guardian Agreement for Child Care Charges prior to being enrolled in the NAU HECCP.
- Employment:** If a student-parent is enrolled less than full-time, they will need to demonstrate proof of employment in a work activity for monetary compensation during all terms of requested reimbursements. Student-parents enrolled full-time at NAU do not have a work requirement.

Citizenship and Residency

The eligible student-parent and their family (including dependents) must be currently residing in the State of Arizona and must be physically present in Arizona to receive Child Care Assistance. The children for whom assistance is requested must be either United States citizens or Qualified Immigrants of the United States to be eligible for Child Care Assistance.

Audit and Reporting Participation

To comply with ADES's HECCP guidelines, NAU is responsible for submitting detailed reports and verifying that child care assistance parameters are being met through periodic audits. Information provided will be de-identified, so details about individual students and their child(ren) are not identifiable. NAU is also required to provide data on student undergraduate degree completion and post-graduation job placement. Therefore, as part of this program, student-parents who have received or are receiving child care reimbursements through the NAU HECCP must agree to completing surveys and providing narratives as requested by NAU. Failure to respond to surveys and narrative requests may result in repayment of all child care assistance provided through the NAU HECCP.

Documentation and Verification

- DOS staff will verify student eligibility, income, legal dependency of child(ren), ages of children, child care utilization, citizenship and residency, employment (less than full-time only), other program related details, and financial aid status to include FAFSA information, if applicable.
- Reimbursement amounts will be based on timely receipts provided monthly or retroactively (reimbursement amounts may be subject to ADES Maximum Reimbursement Rates for Child Care guidelines).
- Eligible students may be asked to provide additional information when the student's spouse or partner is also an NAU student or NAU employee.
- The following documentation may be required to determine eligibility, program enrollment continuation, and to complete program audits:
 - Proof of income (first page of applicable year's tax returns, Form 1040, line 11 Household Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) or AGI listed on the IRS tax return transcript)
 - Proof of Arizona residency for student-parent
 - Proof of child(ren)'s United States citizenship or Qualified Immigrant status
 - Proof of age for eligible child(ren) (birth certificates for all eligible children)
 - Proof of guardianship if student-parent is not listed on the birth certificate(s)
 - Proof of work activity for monetary compensation for applicable terms for those enrolled less than full-time at NAU
 - Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) review in collaboration with the NAU Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid (OSFA)
 - [Provider/Parent/Guardian's Agreement for Child Care Charges](#) for student-parents receiving DES child care assistance
 - Approved child care facility utilization confirmation
 - Approved child care facility receipts
 - Self-attestation/confirmation of other child care assistance-related information

Application

- It is the student's responsibility to understand program content; to accurately complete, submit and update program/area information in a timely manner; and to receive and apply to the NAU HECCP application in accordance with program guidelines. Please email ADES.HECCP@nau.edu or call (928) 523-5181 should you have questions.
- The names of eligible NAU students – including spelling and hyphenating – should match students' NAU personal information. After updates are made by the student-parent in LOUIE (nau.edu/LOUIE), they are to email ADES.HECCP@nau.edu to communicate changes to avoid enrollment interruptions or payment delays.
- Enrolled students not complying with program guidelines, application requirements, and survey participation may be disqualified from the program and repayment of reimbursements may be required.
- Applications will be available on the date and time listed at nau.edu/HECCP.
- Student-parents in the School of Nursing, Early Childhood Education, and K-12 Education will have HECCP enrollment priority.
- Students may submit one (1) application for each enrolled term if they will be enrolled less than a full academic year or one (1) application per enrolled full academic year 2022-2023 (may include Summer 2023) and academic year 2023-2024 (no Summer 2024 included as the program will end after the Spring 2024 semester) if they are eligible. Retroactive applications for Fall 2021 (from October 1, 2021 only), Spring 2022, Summer 2022, and Fall 2022 reimbursements will be accepted until April 30, 2023. Only one (1) application for all retroactive reimbursements is necessary. The HECCP guidelines and application are available at nau.edu/HECCP.
- Application forms will be dated upon receipt and are processed and prioritized based on that date unless funding becomes limited, in which case student-parents in Nursing, Early Childhood Education, and K-12 Education degree pathways will receive priority. You will receive an autoreply confirming submittal status through your NAU email account. HECCP staff will contact you

if there are questions. Application responses from the NAU HECCP staff may take up to twelve (12) weeks.

- Program enrollment approval is based upon the date of the completed submittal. Incomplete submittals may delay the approval process.
- In the case that two parents are currently enrolled NAU students, NAU HECCP reimbursement will be considered for only a single student-parent on behalf of the family. Please submit only one application per household/family.
- In the case that one or both parents are enrolled in any ADES HECCP in the State of Arizona through any higher education institution, NAU reimbursement will only be considered for child care expenses not currently being covered for a single student-parent on behalf of the family.
- Applications for NAU’s HECCP are subject to audit and additional documentation of eligibility may be required. If found to be ineligible, such students are responsible for reimbursing/repaying all monies to NAU. Failure to comply with the above requirements may result in denial of this student service.
- If a student does not meet the application and/or child care receipt(s) due dates communicated via email, retroactive payments for Fall 2021 (back to October 1, 2021 only) through Fall 2023 will be considered only on a case-by-case basis through the month following the child care services were provided if funds are available. There will be no Spring 2024 retroactive payments as the pilot program will end after this term. Reimbursements for approved child care will end as of April 2023 unless NAU HECCP Guidelines are revised to extend the Program. Students are encouraged to apply and submit receipts in a timely manner for full consideration.
- The NAU HECCP is a pilot program contingent upon funding, assessment of need, and distribution method. Therefore, funding assistance cannot be guaranteed, and the guidelines may change at any time. Eligible students have access to apply; however, a completed application does not guarantee program enrollment and resulting reimbursement for child care expenses.
- Applications will be accepted per the following table to ensure ADES reporting is accurate and timely:

Term	Child Care Coverage*	Child Care Application Close (due by 5:00 p.m. MST for all listed dates)	Last Month’s Receipts Due	Payment Plan** (Upon program acceptance and approval of all required documentation)
Fall 2021	Oct 1 – Dec 2021	May 5, 2023	May 5, 2023	Retroactive Lump Sum
Spring 2022	Jan 1 – Apr 2022	May 5, 2023	May 5, 2023	Retroactive Lump Sum
Summer 2022	May – Jul 2022	May 5, 2023	May 5, 2023	Retroactive Lump Sum
Fall 2022	Aug – Dec 2022	May 5, 2023	May 5, 2023	Retroactive Lump Sum
Spring 2023	Jan – Apr 2023	May 5, 2023	May 5, 2023	Retroactive/Monthly
Summer 2023	May – Jul 2023	Aug 5, 2023	Aug 5, 2023	Monthly
Fall 2023	Aug – Nov 2023	Dec 5, 2023	Dec 5, 2023	Monthly
Spring 2024	Dec 2023 – Apr 2024	May 5, 2024	May 5, 2024	Monthly

*All calendar months are included to support child care continuity and some days of each semester may be truncated to allow for timely reporting to ADES.

**Please allow up to twelve (12) weeks for eligibility and receipt verification and payment processing from valid receipt(s) submission to DOS.

***No reimbursements will be paid for May 2024 and no retroactive payments will be made after April 2024 unless NAU HECCP Guidelines are revised to extend the Program.

- NAU HECCP applications and reimbursements must occur during one’s active student enrollment with the University, and in all corresponding academic years unless for retroactive payments for Fall 2021 (back to October 1, 2021 only), Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023.
- Students are responsible for providing NAU HECCP with correct student, family, and child care information, and for notifying this department of any related changes in a timely manner. Incomplete, incorrect, or delayed communications and reimbursements resulting from such inaccuracies are the responsibility of the student.

Enrollment Priority

Funding is based on availability and priority will be given to student-parents in the School of Nursing, Early Childhood Education, and K-12 Education. Additional priority will be given to the following:

- Education majors who are student teaching
- Nursing majors who are participating in their clinicals
- Student-parents in their 3rd or 4th year

Waitlists

- If you are deemed eligible for the HECCP, but funds are not available, you will be placed on a waitlist and contacted if/when funds become available.

- If you are deemed eligible for the HECCP, but qualified child care services are not available, please contact ADES.HECCP@nau.edu to be added to the child care services waitlist.

Reimbursements

- Receipts for approved child care services are due no later than the 5th of each month following the month child care services were provided. Receipts must be uploaded using the “Upload Receipts” button at nau.edu/HECCP as one combined .pdf document. Should enrolled student-parents require support with uploading receipts, they may contact HECCP staff at ADES.HECCP@nau.edu for assistance. Approved child care receipts for all retroactive payments are due as one combined .pdf for lump sum payment. After your enrollment is verified, student-parents may also utilize the link above to submit their retroactive receipts as one submission for all retroactive receipts.
- NAU HECCP reimbursement checks will be processed monthly and may take up to twelve (12) weeks to be received/deposited after program eligibility verification and upload of accurate receipts.
- Reimbursements will be distributed per the student-parent’s NAU employment status:
 - Non-NAU Employee Student-Parents
 - Mailed checks: Reimbursements will be mailed to your mailing address in LOUIE (nau.edu/LOUIE) unless you complete the direct deposit request process.
 - Direct deposit: Directions for requesting direct deposit will be provided to each student-parent upon HECCP enrollment notification.
 - NAU Employee Student-Parents
 - Reimbursements will be sent to you via the same instrument as your NAU employment check.
 - If you wish to have your employment and HECCP reimbursement checks directly deposited, please visit <https://in.nau.edu/human-resources/direct-deposit-2/> and complete your request per the instructions listed.
- Please note that receipts from tax credit payments will not be considered for reimbursement.
- Summary of Accounts/Account Summaries from a child care provider will not be accepted as receipts.
- Please consult your professional tax advisor(s) as NAU HECCP reimbursements may be considered income and may impact financial aid or have tax implications. The program is designed to reduce tax implications; however, it is the student-parent’s responsibility to research personal tax implications.
- Students are typically notified of eligibility, enrollment, contact, or waitlist status through their NAU email account within six (6) weeks of their application submittal, however, this process may take up to twelve (12) weeks based on application volume.
- NAU HECCP reimbursements are intended for qualified child care expenses already incurred by the student-parent, which are dependent on the student’s status and current, qualifying enrollment in child care occurring in Arizona.
- Students are responsible for providing the NAU HECCP with correct student, family and child care information, for updating their LOUIE (nau.edu/LOUIE) mailing address and contact information, for ensuring direct deposit information is accurate (if applicable), and for notifying ADES.HECCP@nau.edu of any contact information changes in a timely manner. Incomplete or delayed communications and reimbursements resulting from such inaccuracies are the responsibility of the student.
- If a student does not meet the application and child care receipt(s) due date, retroactive payments for Fall 2021 (back to October 1, 2021 only) through Fall 2023 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. There will be no Spring 2024 retroactive payments or May 2024 payments as the pilot program will end after this term/month unless the NAU HECCP is extended and Guidelines are revised. Students are encouraged to apply and submit receipts in a timely manner for full consideration.
- To maintain continuity of care for children, days between sessions may be considered for reimbursement if a student is qualified for and enrolled in the NAU HECCP the following term.
- If parents remove their children from qualified child care and this results in a refund to the parents, that portion of costs previously reimbursed by NAU’s HECCP is requested to be returned to this office within 30 days.
- Enrollment will be verified prior to any/all reimbursement processing. Please refer to <https://nau.edu/university-policy-library/> to confirm your enrollment eligibility.
- **Child Care Receipt Requirements:** Child Care receipts must have the following information to be considered for reimbursement:
 - Date paid
 - Paid to whom – provider’s full business or full legal name
 - Provider’s AZ Tax ID Number
 - Paid by – parent’s full name
 - Number of children
 - Names of children
 - Days/Hours services were provided (month of service)
 - Service provided, i.e., child care, day care, after school program, etc.
 - Total amount paid for each calendar month included in the receipt period
 - Payment method (cash, check, credit card, money order, etc.)
- If receipts do not include the above information, no reimbursement will be processed. The student-parent will have until the

- next payment period (the end of the following month) to submit accurate receipts.
- Uploading duplicate and/or fraudulent receipts may result in HECCP enrollment termination and immediate repayment/reimbursement of all monies received through the HECCP to NAU.
- Failure to comply with the above HECCP Guidelines may result in denial of this student service.

Information Updates

Please ensure your email address(es), mailing address, and telephone number are kept up to date in LOUIE (nau.edu/LOUIE) as this is the email, address, and telephone information we will be using to send you important communications and payments. Keeping this information updated is essential to ensure timely communication and payment completion. Participants are required to email ADES.HECCP@nau.edu immediately if the following occur, which may impact HECCP enrollment:

- Graduation from NAU as an undergraduate student
- Withdrawal from qualified program/college/school
- Withdrawal from NAU
- Enrollment status change and/or reduction to less than full-time enrollment at NAU (less than full-time students must meet the work requirement)
- Change in employment for less than full-time student-parents (proof of employment will be required)
- Child(ren) aging out of qualified ages (birth through twelve (12) years of age), i.e., a child who turns thirteen (13) becomes ineligible for the HECCP
- Removal of child care provider from the Child Resource and Referral (CCR&R) website (azccrr.com) approved list of providers
- Change to child(ren)'s United States citizenship or Qualified Immigrant status
- Change of guardianship status for qualified child(ren)
- Change in employment for less than full-time student-parents
- Receipt of or change to child care assistance from the State of Arizona, ADES, or any other HECCP in Arizona – updates to the [Provider/Parent/Guardian's Agreement for Child Care Charges](#) must be submitted via email to ADES.HECCP@nau.edu
- Relocation of student-parent and/or child(ren) residence out of Arizona
- Direct deposit information, if applicable
- Other changes impacting enrollment requirements as determined by ADES and/or NAU

Dependent Care and Tax Liability Issues

Child care can be a major expense for students. Contact a professional tax advisor to determine if you are eligible for a tax credit. Additionally, subsidized monies applied toward child care can be considered income and may be subject to taxation. The reimbursed expenses from the NAU HECCP may not be subject to taxation, but it is the responsibility of the enrolled student to make this determination with their professional tax advisor. This information is not intended to serve as tax advice. Consult your professional tax advisor to identify full tax implications of program use and to determine the optimal use of dependent care offerings.

The Dean of Students team is responsible for the administration of funds. Inquiries can be made by email to ADES.HECCP@nau.edu or by mail DOS, Room 104, Building 30, 1050 S. Knoles, Flagstaff, AZ, 86011, call (928) 523-5181, or visit nau.edu/HECCP should you have questions.

The NAU Higher Education Child Care Program (NAU HECCP) is a pilot program contingent upon funding, assessment of qualification, program updates, and distribution method. Therefore, funding assistance cannot be guaranteed, and method of distribution and program guidelines may change at any time. Eligible students have program access to apply; however, a completed application does not guarantee program enrollment.

Additional Support Resources

Students are encouraged to explore other helpful resources at [Child Care Resources for Lumberjacks](#) and throughout the Flagstaff community:

- [NAU Childcare Voucher Program](#)
- [NAU CARE Center | Louie's Cupboard](#)
- [NAU Lumberjack Emergency Assistance Fund](#)
- [NAU Early Learning and Development Center](#)
- [NAU Campus Living](#)
- [Arizona DES Child Care](#)
- [Arizona WIC Program](#)
- [Arizona Tribal Welfare Programs](#)
- FeedingAmerica.org/Hunger-in-America/Arizona

- [Nutritional Assistance in Arizona](#)

Any State of Arizona child care or other ADES child care assistance must be communicated and fully utilized prior to reimbursement from the NAU HECCP.

Please view this [NAU-Child-Care-Assistance chart.pdf](#) for information on the various child care support programs available at NAU.

Tax Retrieval Resources

[NAU tax forms, information & assistance](#)