



Scholarship Application Process – First Steps 4K + Child Care Scholarship Program

1. Families can apply online for First Steps 4K by visiting Free4KSC.org. **The First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship application is the last section of the First Steps 4K student application.**

*Note: A family should complete the First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship application if any of the following applies to the family:

- a. The family has children in the household, ages 0 through 12, in need of fulltime or part-time child care. This includes after-school care for school age children.
- b. The First Steps 4K student needs before-care or after-care (wrap-around care) at their First Steps 4K site.

If the family did not fill out the 4K+ Child Care scholarship application section of the First Steps 4K student application, have them reach out to the Eligibility Specialist who processed the application or Baylis Wright, 4K+ Eligibility Specialist (baylis.wright@dss.sc.gov).

2. The First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship applications are reviewed and processed by a staff member with the SCDSS Child Care Scholarship Program in the order they are received. First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarships can begin on the first day of the school term.

Providers should contact Baylis Wright, 4K+ Eligibility Specialist (baylis.wright@dss.sc.gov) with questions about a First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship application.

3. After the First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship application is reviewed, the family will receive an email with their application status. **The family will also receive an Eligibility/Connections Letter in the US Mail with detailed information about their scholarships. Families should communicate with their child care center upon receiving these notifications.** The child care center will need to submit a Connections Card to the SC Child Care Scholarship Program.

4. Once approvals and connections are completed, the child care providers are reimbursed via the Service Voucher Log (SVL) (the same way that they are reimbursed for all other scholarship recipients). Providers will see the eligible children on their SVL and will record hours attended and any absences just like they do for other children using scholarships issued by the SC Child Care Scholarship Program