



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

1. Once the First Steps 4K student has been determined eligible, a First Steps 4K Eligibility Specialist sends an approval email to the family. **The approval email gives the family a link to their First Steps 4K + Child Care scholarship 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 full-time 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.
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. Additional scholarships will be given throughout the year as a child is determined eligible for the First Steps 4K program. Providers should contact Darcy Huffman, 4K Admin Lead (dhuffman@scfirststeps.org) with questions about 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 from 4KPlus@dss.sc.gov. **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 and the approval notice reaches the family.
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 scholarship issued by the SC Child Care Scholarship Program.