

Jobsplus

Compendium of Circulars

Issued by the Free Childcare Scheme Unit

16/12/2025

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Temporary Shutdown of the Childcare Information System (CIS)

Dear Childcare Centres

Good morning

Please be informed that owing to a technical update that the Childcare Information System (CIS) needs to undergo to be able to continue supporting the administration of the Scheme, the **System will be offline from Tuesday, 16th December at 3 pm until Wednesday, 17th December at 4 pm.**

During this time, children may still be fobbed in and out of the Centre, but you will not be able to use the System to enter new data. In view of this, we are extending the deadline from the 19th of December to the 20th of December. Any inconvenience is regretted.

When the system comes back online, all the fob scans recorded during the outage will be automatically synchronised and uploaded onto the system.

After this technical update, you will notice that when inputting applications

It will become compulsory for you to record the Nationality and Gender of the child; and

In situations where a child is registered with two centres, we have introduced a safeguard so that the cumulative hours booked by both Centres cannot go over the entitled hours of Parent 1 of the child.

Finally, following a request by Centres, when you print the End of Month Payment Report, you will note that the report will now include a breakdown of the payment rates used per child at your Centre.

Thanks for your kind attention

Kind regards

FCSU Team

FCS New Centre Manual

Dear all

Good morning

Attached please find the latest version of the FCS User Centre Manual for your perusal.

This document is designed to aid Child Care Centre staff in navigating and using the CIS – the database that supports the Free Childcare Scheme. All the system's features and functions are explained in this document, including the provision of step-by-step instructions for accessing and managing information efficiently.

You are thus invited to find the time to read through it to either update your knowledge on the use of the System or acquaint yourself with features that perhaps you had not been aware of previously.

Kind regards

FCSU Team

Work Declaration Template - ID Numbers and Registration of Employment with Jobsplus

Dear Childcare Centres,

The October intake is now over, and from Jobsplus' end, note was taken of the most common issues encountered. Jobsplus would like to take the opportunity to offer further guidance on the matter.

Work Declaration

For those parents eligible for the Free Childcare Scheme based on their employment, a work declaration is requested.

Jobsplus acknowledges that some employers may encounter difficulties in preparing a declaration from scratch with the required information. To this effect, a template was drawn up to assist them in this process.

Employers who have previously used accepted templates may continue to do so. Still, those facing difficulties are encouraged to use the attached template, which is also available for download on the Jobsplus website under the Free Childcare Scheme tab. <HTTPS://JOBSPLUS.GOV.MT/FUNDING/FREE-CHILDCARE-SCHEME?ID=4129>

ID Numbers

In cases where issues to input in the CIS, ID numbers of TCNs who do not have a Maltese ID number, are still encountered, you are requested to input the first 8 digits (including the letter if applicable) of the person's passport. The number is to be updated when the Maltese ID number is available.

In case of difficulty, you are invited to reach out to Jobsplus.

Registration of Employment with Jobsplus

Jobsplus reiterates its invitation to parents to check their Employment History to ensure that their employer registered their employment with Jobsplus, before submitting the FCS application.

Several instances were noted, where registration was not completed, causing significant delays in processing applications.

Parents can access their Employment History by logging on to the Jobsplus website <HTTPS://JOBSPLUS.GOV.MT/> through their EiD; or by calling 153 ext 18 and asking for the Employment History to be sent to them via email.

Regards

Free Childcare Scheme Unit

Centre Details Circulars and Fobbing

Dear all,

Good afternoon,

As summer comes to an end and the new scholastic year approaches, some of you may soon be welcoming new children into your centres. We'd like to therefore share a few important updates:

Check your Centre Details

Attached is the latest list of centres participating in the Free Childcare Scheme (also available on our website). Since this list is used by parents to find your contact information, kindly review your entry and let us know right away if any details need updating.

Circulars in One Place

We've created a *Compendium of Circulars* (attached for your reference), which is also available on the Free Childcare page on the Jobsplus website. The circulars are listed with the latest on top, and each title is hyperlinked to their correct page – so you can access older circulars quickly without endless scrolling.

Upcoming Guidelines

To make the Scheme easier for everyone, we are preparing two new documents:

Guidelines for Parents

Guidelines for Centres

These will cover FAQs, common situations, and give you clear information to guide parents properly. Both documents will be updated regularly. If you have suggestions or specific topics you'd like included, please let us know soon.

Fobbing Reminder

We've noticed that in some cases, carers are fobbing children in and out instead of parents. **This practice must stop immediately.** Parents have the responsibility to fob their children in and out themselves.

To make this process easier ensure the fob machine is placed in a comfortable, accessible spot.

Please note that we take fobbing by carers very seriously, so we ask for your full cooperation in reinforcing this with parents.

Thank you for your attention and support as we work together to make the Scheme as clear, transparent, and parent friendly as possible.

Best regards,

Free Childcare Scheme Unit

Supporting Documentation for Application into the Free Childcare Scheme - EHs and Documents in a Foreign Language AND eligibility of TCN Students

Dear all

Good morning

Reference is made to the above subject matter and the communication sent to you some time ago re incomplete applications.

Following feedback received may we suggest that most especially in respect of TCNs, before you send us applications you invite them to check their employment history (EH) to make sure that their employer has registered their employment with Jobsplus.

Employment histories can be downloaded by the parents themselves from our website, using their EiD. If the parents do not have an EiD account yet, they can call 153 ext 18 and ask for their EH to be sent to them by email – this is a free of charge service.

If their EH is not found on their identity card number, the parents are to ask the call centre agent to try and find their EH from their passport number.

In respect of non-Maltese nationals, we note that we are being sent supporting documents in foreign languages. Please note that we only accept documents that are in Maltese or English as these are the official languages. Documents in any other language **MUST** be translated in Maltese or English by an official translator.

If the translation is done in Malta and the document being translated is an original document there is no need for the translation to be apostilled, but it needs to have the stamp of the translator.

If the document being translated is a copy of the original it needs to be apostilled and translated (stamp of translator needed), even if translated in Malta

If the document is translated abroad, the document needs to be apostilled in Malta.

If you are asked for a list of translators you can refer them to either the list of translators registered with the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade via the MFT portal:

[HTTPS://CONSULARPLUS.GOV.MT/LEGALISATION/REGISTER?LANG=EN](https://consularplus.gov.mt/legalisation/register?lang=en),

or with the Malta Courts as listed in the Expert Interpreters and Translators section available at:

[HTTPS://COURTS.GOV.MT/](https://courts.gov.mt/) (search under *Resources*).

Another query that often comes our way is in relation to TCNs who come to Malta to study under the Students Directive. Please note that such persons are not eligible for the Free Childcare Scheme unless they are in employment – and this employment is duly registered with Jobsplus

Please be guided accordingly

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager – Free Childcare Scheme

Request for support services from AIS in respect of the Fob Machines and Manual Fobbing

Dear all

Good morning

The above subject matter refers

Please note that going forward whenever you experience issues with the Fob Machines you are to immediately alert the Free Childcare Scheme Unit and from our end, we will ask AIS (the Fob Machine Supplier) to investigate.

Childcare Centres that bypass Jobsplus and proceed to directly contact AIS may be asked to pay for AIS's intervention themselves and thus a recoupment of funds will be made from the monthly payment. In such instances the Centre will be duly informed of this action.

Childcare Centres will be asked to pay the cost of the AIS call out and subsequent work in instances when the fault is not related to the equipment itself but stems from third-party sources—such as the centres' own configurations or internet problems.

Additionally going forward and with effect from August 1st, Jobsplus reserves the right not to pay for childcare hours that are manually fobbed and for which there is no reason listed in the system.

Please be guided accordingly.

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager – Free Childcare Scheme

Incomplete FCS Applications

Dear all

Good morning

Reference is made to the above subject matter.

We note that even though the Scheme has been in operation for over 10 years, and some of the Centres have been operating just as long, regrettably we are still receiving incomplete applications for enrolment in the FCS.

This incompleteness relates mostly to missing supporting documentation – payslips and employment declarations, and unsigned employment declarations and unsigned or half-filled application forms. There is also the matter of parents claiming to be in employment but not having their working status registered with Jobsplus.

All this is resulting in a lot of extra work for staff within the FCS that must communicate with the Centres back and forth until all the Ts are crossed and the Is are dotted.

It is within this context that I invite you to investigate why this is happening.

The entry requirements are publicly known and feature prominently on our brochure which in turn is available on our website.

If you think that the person responsible for administrative work within your Centre requires refresher training, we will accommodate. However, we cannot keep receiving incomplete applications. We do not exclude that going forward for Centres that repeatedly send incomplete applications our way, rather than advising them what is missing in the application, we completely reject it – resulting in the Centre having to reinput the application from scratch.

The other issue relates to the inputting into the CIS stage. Here we note that information although provided by the parents is either not being inputted or improperly inputted, resulting in the Unit having to conduct data cleaning exercises.

In this regard two areas of massive concern to us are the mix up of children's ID numbers – as this takes a lot of our time to resolve; and the improper inputting of mobile numbers and email address. The latter is leading to third parties receiving information that technically they have no right to, thus resulting in a data breach. If you are presented with handwritten applications that are perhaps not very clear to read, you are invited to verify with the parents before inputting the information onto the CIS.

Thanks for your kind attention

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager – Free Childcare Scheme

Closed days in August and revision of booked hours

Dear all

Good afternoon

We note that from over 200 childcare centres only 37 have inputted information in the CIS re their closed days for August. We are thus inviting those centres that still need to enter this information to do so by the end of July. Not inputting this data will adversely affect the children's absence entitlement.

Additionally for those centres that will have closed days it is most important that the number of booked hours are reduced to reflect the reduced hours of service. Changes in booked hours are to be submitted in the CIS by the deadline, that is 24th of July.

Thanks for your kind attention

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager – Free Childcare Scheme

Amendment to National Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care Services (0-3)

Dear all

Good afternoon

Reference is made to the above subject matter.

Kindly be informed that as outlined in the Free Childcare Scheme guidelines, free childcare is applicable to children who are from three months up to three years of age.

Free Childcare is terminated once the child is eligible to enrol into Kindergarten 1 provided by the state. To this effect, if a child is eligible to enrol in state Kindergarten in the February intake, the parent/legal guardian of the child can no longer apply for the Free Childcare Scheme

These guidelines did not change with the recent amendment to national standards for early childhood education and care services (0-3).

Please be guided accordingly.

For more information, you are kindly requested to contact us on FREECHILDCARE@GOV.MT

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager – Free Childcare Scheme

UPDATE - Proper recording of identification numbers of parents and children benefitting from the FCS

Dear all

Reference is made to the communication issued this morning in respect of the inputting of Identity Card numbers

Please disregard the instruction given in the first bullet point re the “0” in front of the identity card number.

It seems that the “0” in front is mandatory after all, as it is automatically generated from the CDR. A matter that has come to our attention only now.

The CDR being the Common Database Register hosting ID numbers in Malta.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Proper recording of identification numbers of parents and children benefitting from the FCS

Dear all

Good morning

Following a check of the identification card numbers of all the parents and children benefitting from the Free Childcare Scheme with an active application, we note that there are **several** data entry errors.

You are cordially invited to recheck all this data against the physical identification document of the parents and the children (if applicable).

In instances when at point of entry the passport number had been recorded but now the identity card number is available, the data is to be updated.

In the case of identity card numbers when the information is keyed in in the system please follow the below format:

the “0” in front must not feature. So the number is to look like this **123456M** and not **0123456M**

No space is to be left between the numbers and the letter. So the number is to look like this **123456M** and not **123456 M**

In the instance that a child or a parent still does not have an identity card number and the passport number is being inputted, at the end of the number please put the letter P

So, passport numbers need to look like this – **9876543P** and not **9876543** or **9876543 P**

This check is to be concluded by the **16th of July 2025** after which Jobsplus will be running another check of all the data.

Centres found to be in default may have their participation in the Scheme suspended until all the data for their clients is clean.

Regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Summer Hours - Free Childcare Scheme Unit

Dear all

Good morning

A note to remind you that come Tuesday July 1st, the Free Childcare Scheme Office will be operating on the following summer hours:

Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Whilst we will endeavor to reply to your emails in a timely manner, emails received after 1.30pm in all probability will be addressed on the next working day.

Kind regards

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager i/c Free Childcare Scheme

Policy and Planning Division

Declaration from Employers and Educational Institutions

Good afternoon,

Reference is made to the above subject matter.

We are noticing that the declarations being provided by the parents re their work patterns are not providing sufficient information to assist in determining the eligible dates and days for the use of childcare facilities under the Free Childcare Scheme.

Therefore, going forward and for applications that will come into effect from July, all employer declarations need to include clearer information.

This means that for fixed schedules we require the start and end time of the working day, which day in the week the parents work and if they can be asked to perform overtime.

If parents work on shift basis, a description of the shift needs to be provided including the start and end time eg day-night-rest-off OR day in, day out.

If parents work in an environment, whereby the shift changes constantly, the average number of monthly working hours and the number of days of work per month needs to be provided.

The same goes for declarations drawn up by educational institutions. These declarations need to contain clear information on the days and times that the parent would need to attend at the educational institution.

Declarations not containing and adhering to these guidelines will be rejected.

The application form is being updated to reflect these guidelines. Changes have been made in red in the attached form so that you can easily identify them.

The updated form is available for download from our website at:

<https://jobsplus.gov.mt/funding/free-childcare-scheme?id=4129>

Regards,

Maria Bartolo Galea

Department Manager i/c Free Childcare Scheme

Update on Nationality Field on the CIS (uniformity)

Dear Childcare Centres,

We hope this email finds you well.

Firstly, we would like to thank you for your adherence to the requirement in respect of filling in the nationality field in your submissions. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and essential for maintaining accurate and standardized records across all childcare centres.

Following some queries received on the subject matter and to ensure uniformity in the way the nationality field is filled, we kindly ask you to refer to the attached list, which provides the standardized format and naming conventions to be used. Adhering to this format will help streamline data collection and reduce inconsistencies.

Key Points to Remember:

- Please ensure that all entries match the format and spelling provided in the attached list. So we suggest that you keep this list handy so that you can copy and paste the name of the nationality from the list on to the system
- Do not enter two nationalities eg MALTA / PHILIPPINES. It needs to be either MALTA or PHILIPPINES.

Thanking you once again for your support

If we can be of any help let us know.

Wishing you a pleasant day ahead.

Best regards

Free childcare Scheme