

Daycare Enrollment Guide (for the year of Reiwa 9; 2027)

This guide outlines the requirements and procedures for applying to Tochigi City's childcare facilities. If you plan to enroll your child, please read this information carefully. Please complete all the necessary forms and submit them by the deadline..

栃木市の保育施設の申込みに必要な事項や手続きについて説明しています。お子様の入園をご検討されている方は、必ずこちらの内容をご確認ください。書類に関しては、すべてのフォームに必要事項を記入し、期限までに提出してください。

1. Certification of the Necessity of Childcare

Please note that the 'Certification of Need for Childcare' (Benefit Certification) must be approved before your child begins attending a kindergarten or daycare facility. There are two types of Certifications of Need for Childcare (Benefit Certification): 1. Education and Childcare Benefit Certification 2. Facility Use Benefit Certification

幼児教育・保育施設等の利用に先立ち、保育の必要性の認定(給付認定)を受ける必要があります。保育の必要性の認定(給付認定)には、1. 教育給付認定と 2. 施設利用認定の2種類があります。

《Type of Certification》

Type of Certification	Applicable ages	Applicable Facilities
Certification Type 1	Kindergarten age (3 years old or above)	Certified childcare centers (Kindergarten section)
Certification Type 2	Children aged 3 to 5 (From one day before turning 3 to one day before starting school)	Daycare centers Certified childcare centers (Nursery section)
Certification Type 3	Children aged 0 to 3(until 2days before turning 3)	Daycare centers Certified childcare centers (Nursery section), Small-scale childcare facilities

・You can enroll your child in a certified childcare center (kindergarten section) even if you do not meet the work-related requirements for childcare. Please contact the facility of your choice directly.

・現在の勤務状況により保育を必要としない場合でも、認定こども園(幼稚園部門)に入園することは可能です。保育施設へ直接お問い合わせください。

2. Reasons for Requiring Childcare

To apply for a childcare facility, you must meet at least one of the 'Reasons for Requiring Childcare' criteria listed below.

保育施設に入所するには、以下の「保育を必要とする事情」のいずれかを満たしている必要があります。

Reasons for requiring Childcare	Approval Period	Childcare Hours	
		Standard time	Short time
Work (all types of work full time, part time, night shift, working from home, etc.)	Maximum until the child starts school	more than 120 hours of work per month	more than 64 hours of work per month
Before/after childbirth	From 6 weeks prior to the due date to the end of the month in which the 8th week from the delivery falls.	Applicable	
Illness/ disability	Period deemed necessary	Depending on the contents of the medical certificate	
Nursing/Caring for family member(s)	Period deemed necessary	more than 120 hours of caring per month	more than 64 hours of caring per month

Job-seeking	Up to 3 months from the day you start seeking a job hunting		Applicable
Disaster recovery	Period deemed necessary	Applicable	
Study	Until graduation	more than 120 hours of study per month	more than 64 hours of study per month
Risk of abuse or domestic violence	Period deemed necessary	Applicable	
Childcare Leave	Period deemed necessary		Applicable

3. Required Documents

The following documents must be submitted when applying for admission to a childcare facility. Please note that obtaining these documents may take time, so we recommend preparing them well in advance.

1. Application for Daycare Admission

2. Application for Education and Childcare Benefit Certification

3. Household Situation Questionnaire

4. Letter of Consent and Pledge

5. Verification documents for the 'Reasons for Requiring Childcare

保育施設の申し込みには、いくつかの書類が必要です。中には準備に時間がかかるものもあるので、早めに準備しておきましょう。

1. 保育所入所申込書
2. 教育・保育給付認定申請書
3. 家族状況調査票
4. 同意書・誓約書
5. 保育申込に必要な書類

Reasons for Application	Required Documents	Notes
Work		
Out-of-Home Work	・Certification of Employment 《Documents to be submitted as necessary》 ・Schedule(for a month)	
Self-employed	①Certification of Employment ②A photocopy of both page 1and 2 of Tax return 《Documents to be submitted as necessary》 ・A photocopy of Sole proprietorship registration with the tax office ・A photocopy of Registration of wages for family employees of blue return taxpayer	
Before/after childbirth	A photocopy of your Mother and Child Health Handbook (Page showing parent's names and expected due date)	
Illness/disability	Medical Certificate from doctor OR A copy of Physical Disability Certificate or Rehabilitation Certificate	
Nursing/Caring for family member(s)	①Report on Nursing Care ②Medical Certificate (Nursing Care) ③A photocopy of Physical Disability Certificate, Rehabilitation Certificate or Nursing Insurance Certificate	You will need to provide both ①and②.

Job-seeking	Hello Work Registration Slip or Job-seeking Report	
Disaster recovery	Disaster Victim Certificate	
Study	①Certificate of Enrollment issued by school ②Curriculum	You will need to provide both ①and②.
Risk of abuse or domestic violence	Please consult with the Management Division of Child Institutions	
Childcare Leave	Certificate of Employment	

・It is necessary to complete 1 application per child.

・お子さま 1 人につき 1 枚の申込書が必要となります。

4. Application Deadlines (2026)

	Where to apply	Application Deadline	Decision on Enrollment
1st Application Period	If your first choice of facility is: ①A Daycare Center → Apply at the Childcare Division of Tochigi City Hall ②A Certified Childcare Center (Nursery section) or a small-scale childcare facility, →Apply the facilities directly	Tue, Sep 1, 2026～ Wed, Sep 30, 2026	Mon, Nov 30, 2026
2nd Application Period		Mon, Dec 7, 2026～ Mon, Dec 21, 2026	Fri, Jan 29, 2027
Final April admission Application Period	Childcare division of Tochigi City Hall	Mon, Feb 1, 2027～ Mon, Feb 16, 2027.	Early March, 2027
Applying mid-year	Childcare division of Tochigi City Hall	For one month before the month of enrollment	Every month from May 1, 2027

・Those who are currently seeking a job cannot apply in the 1st application period.

・現在就職活動中の方は第 1 次募集期間に応募できません。

5. Application Procedures for Childcare Facilities

Application

・Please submit your application to Tochigi City Hall. However, if your first choice is a certified childcare center (including the daycare/nursery section), please submit your application directly to that facility.

・保育施設の利用許可を市役所に申請してください。認定こども園を第一希望の場合は、認定こども園に申請書を提出してください。

Facility Interviews

・After you apply, we will conduct a face-to-face interview. Please attend the interview with your child at the designated venue (such as your first-choice childcare facility) If you need language support, you are welcome to bring an interpreter or use a translation app.

・お申し込み後、対面での面接を実施します。指定の会場(第一希望の保育施設等)にお子様と一緒にご来場ください。

言葉のサポートが必要な場合は、通訳の方を連れてきたり、翻訳アプリを使用したりしても構いません。

Screening

- Based on municipal regulations, admission will be determined on a priority basis, taking into account the household's circumstances and childcare needs.
- 市町村の条例に基づき、保護者の状況に応じて保育の必要性に応じて優先的に入所が決定されます。

Screening Results

- We will send the official notice of the admission decision to you by mail
- 決定の通知は郵送にて行います。

Notification of provisional enrollment decision

- For the first-round application period for April admission, the city will mail the selection results on the scheduled date..
- For mid-year applications, the city will contact you prior to your child's scheduled start date.
- 一斉申し込みの場合は、予定された日に内定通知を市から発送します。
- 年度途中の申込は、利用開始月の前月上旬に利用調整のため市から電話があります。

If you do not receive a provisional enrollment decision

- For the first-round applications period for April admission, the city will send a waitlist notice on the scheduled notification date.
- For mid-year applications, the city will send out a waitlist notice around the 15th of the month prior to your planned start date.
- We will continue to automatically review your application for subsequent months within the same fiscal year
- 一斉申し込みは、通知予定日に保留通知を市から発送します。決定の通知は郵送にて行います。
- 年度途中の申込は、利用開始月の 15 日頃に入園保留の通知を市から発送します。年度内は継続して利用調整を行います。

Entrance information session and Health check

- Information regarding the date and location of the orientation session will be included with your screening results notice. The event will be held at the childcare facility your child will be attending. If your child has been accepted into a licensed daycare center or a small-scale childcare facility, the facility will contact you directly.
- 選考結果通知と一緒に日程と場所をお知らせします。入園が内定した保育施設で実施します。（認定こども園、小規模保育施設は、各施設から連絡があります。）

Enrollment

- The childcare facility will provide information regarding childcare fees and meal fees after enrollment.
- 入園後に園から保育料と給食費をお知らせします。

Age Range for Each Class (The 9th Reiwa year)

Class Age (age as of April 1)	Born on/between
0 Years old	April 2, 2026～
1 Years old	April 2, 2025～April 1, 2026
2 Years old	April 2, 2024～April 1, 2025
3 Years old	April 2, 2023～April 1, 2024
4 Years old	April 2, 2022～April 1, 2023
5 Years old	April 2, 2021～April 1, 2022

- A child's class age is determined by their age on April 1st of the current fiscal year.
- 児童の「クラス年齢」は、当該年度の 4 月 1 日時点の年齢によって決定されます。

6. Fees for Childcare Facilities

1) Childcare fees for 3 to 5-year old classes are free(0 yen).

2) Childcare fees for 0 to 2-year-old classes

Category by municipal level	Amount of municipal tax	Childcare fees(Standard time) Childcare fees(Short time)
1	Households on benefit	0 0
2	Households exempted from municipal tax	0 0
3	Households exempted from per income levy of municipal tax	4,800 (4,800)
4	Less than 48,600 yen	8,700 (8,500)
5	48,600 — 77,200 yen	12,000 (11,700)
6	77,200 — 97,000 yen	18,600 (18,200)
7	97,000 — 133,000 yen	31,200 (30,600)
8	133,000 — 169,000 yen	36,000 (35,300)
9	169,000 — 235,000 yen	42,600 (41,800)
10	235,000 — 301,000 yen	48,000 (47,100)
11	301,000 — 397,000 yen	53,000 (52,100)
12	397,000 yen and more	57,000 (56,000)



- The calculation of the basic childcare fee is based on the combined municipal income-based tax of both parents/guardians.
- Childcare fees are decided on a monthly basis.
- Childcare fees are billed on a monthly basis and will not be reduced or refunded even if your child is absent due to personal circumstances.
- 基本保育料の計算は、保護者の住民税所得割額に基づきます。
- 保育料は月単位で決定します。
- ご事情によりお子様が保育に来られなかった場合も、保育料はご負担いただきます。

• Childcare is free of charge for children in the 3-to-5-year-old class groups.(Please note that out-of-pocket expenses, such as meal fees, are not covered.)”

For households with two or more children under the age of 18 (※) living together, childcare fees are waived for the second child and any subsequent children aged 0 to 2, provided they receive childcare certification and attend an eligible facility.

• 3～5 歳児クラスは無料です。

• 保護者と同一の世帯に 18 歳未満の児童(※)が 2 人以上いる場合、0 歳から 2 歳児の保育認定を受けて保育園等を利用する児童は、令和 6 年 9 月から保育料が無償となりました。

- ・If both parents are exempt from municipal tax, the lineal relative with the highest municipal tax amount (such as a grandparent) within the same household will be included in the childcare fee calculation.
- ・Please note that the municipal tax amounts for married parents living apart, as well as unmarried partners living together, will also be included in the calculation.
- ・両親ともに市税非課税の場合は、直系血族(祖父母など)である同居者の最も高い市税所得割額を考慮します。
- ・別居中の夫婦、または同居中の未婚の夫婦の住民税額も考慮します。

3) Daycare Meal Fees

Under the government policy for free early childhood education and care, childcare services are free of charge for children in the 3-to-5-year-old classes. However, school meal fees are not covered and must be paid by parents. School meal fees are generally collected by each facility. However, for public daycare facilities, the city will collect them. For children in the 0-to-2-year-old classes, the cost of school meals is already included in the standard childcare fee.

幼児教育・保育の無償化により、3歳児から5歳児までの保育料は無料となります。ただし、給食費は実費となります。

給食費は、各施設が徴収します。ただし、公立園については市が徴収します。

0～2歳児クラスの児童は、保育料に給食費が含まれますので、原則給食費の支払は不要です。

7. Others

If you live outside of Tochigi City but wish to use a childcare facility within Tochigi City, please apply through the municipality where you currently live. Please contact your local municipality in advance, as application conditions and requirements may vary.

Your local municipality will forward your application documents to Tochigi City, where the screening process will take place. To ensure your documents arrive on time, please submit your application to your local municipality at least one week before Tochigi City's deadline.

※Those who live outside the city cannot apply in the first application period.

市外にお住まいで栃木市の保育施設に入園を希望する場合

お住まいの市町村に申請してください。取り扱いが異なる場合がありますので、事前にお問い合わせください。

申請書類はお住まいの市町村を通じて、栃木市に送付され、栃木市で審査が行われます。

申請期限までに確実に届くよう、申請期限の1週間前までに申請してください。

※市外在住者は、一次申し込みでは申込できません。

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Enrollment & Usage

Q1-1: Can my child enroll in the middle of the month?

A: No, mid-month enrollment is not available. Children must enroll on the 1st day of each month.

Q1-2: Will my child change classes if they have a birthday during the school year?

A: No. Class placement is determined by the child's age as of April 1st, so it will not change during the school year.

Q1-3: I would like to use extended childcare. What procedures are required?

A: Extended childcare is available when there is a demonstrated need for care beyond regular hours due to employment or commuting constraints. If you wish to use this service, please consult directly with the facility your child is enrolled in.

Q1-4: My child has food allergies. What should I do?

A: Accommodations vary by facility, so please report this during your interview. Facilities capable of providing allergen-free diets will require a diagnosis and instructions from your regular physician, as well as the completion and submission of medical survey forms.

Q1-5: Is there an orientation period (Narasashi-hoiku / gradual adjustment period)?

A: Tochigi City does not offer an orientation period prior to the official month of enrollment. Gradual adjustment will begin on or after the 1st day of the enrollment month, with childcare hours increasing progressively while monitoring the child's condition. If it is difficult for you to manage this at the beginning of the month due to work commitments, please consult with the facility and consider using temporary childcare services (Ichiji-azukari) prior to enrollment.

Q1-6: Can I drop off my child at the childcare facility on my day off from work?

A: Licensed childcare facilities (such as daycare centers, certified center-based preschools, and small-scale childcare facilities) are intended to provide care on behalf of parents or guardians who are unable to care for their children at home due to employment or other qualified reasons. Therefore, as a general rule, we ask that you care for your child at home on your days off.

However, even outside of the officially certified reasons, facilities may allow usage under unavoidable circumstances from the perspective of parental support. Please consult directly with the facility your child is enrolled in.

2. Application for Enrollment

Q2-1: When can I apply for the new school year?

A: Applications for enrollment for the following school year generally open every year in September.

Q2-2: Around when and where can I get the informational brochure for enrollment?

A: Informational brochures and application forms for the new school year will be available from late July at City Hall, individual childcare facilities, and comprehensive branch offices. They will also be posted on

the official city website.

Q2-3: When can I apply for mid-year enrollment?

A: For enrollment from May to October, applications are accepted two months prior to the desired month of enrollment. For enrollment from November to March, applications can be submitted from September until the end of the month two months prior to the desired month (and until the end of December for March enrollment).

Q2-4: What are the basic required documents?

A: The required forms are as follows:

- Application Form for Admission to Childcare Facilities

- Application Form for Education and Childcare Benefits Certification

- Household Status Survey Form

- Letter of Consent Regarding Education and Childcare Benefits Certification for Children and Facility Use Benefits Certification for Child-rearing

In addition to these, supporting documents to verify your need for childcare are required based on your specific reasons for application.

Q2-5: I cannot get my Employment Certificate by the deadline. Will my application still be accepted?

A: Applications can only be processed once all required documents are fully completed and submitted. Please prepare well in advance to ensure you meet the deadline.

Q2-6: Can I tour the childcare facilities?

A: Yes. Please contact the facility you wish to visit directly to schedule a tour. In addition, facility tours at various daycare centers and certified center-based preschools (Nintei Kodomo-en) are held from late July through August. Please check the city website or the "Koho Tochigi" (City Newsletter) for details.

Q2-7: Is availability information for licensed childcare facilities published?

A: For mid-year enrollment (May to March), each facility's vacancy status as of the end of the previous month is published on the city website at the beginning of each month. For April enrollment (new school year applications), vacancy statuses resulting from the first and second rounds of screening are made available on the website.

Q2-8: If there are no vacancies at my preferred licensed childcare facility, am I unable to apply?

A: You can still apply even if there are no current vacancies. Vacancies may open up after the monthly publication due to facility transfers or application withdrawals.

Q2-9: Can I apply before my child is born?

A: Yes, you can apply before birth. When applying, you must provide a copy of the front cover of your Maternal and Child Health Handbook (Boshi-techo) along with the page showing the expected date of delivery.

Q2-10: Can I apply while on childcare leave?

A: As a general rule, you cannot apply while on childcare leave. However, if your return-to-work date has been officially decided, you may apply to start childcare from the month you return to work. In this case, verification from your employer via an Employment Certificate is required.

Q2-11: Can I apply while looking for a job?

A: Yes, you can apply under the condition of job-seeking. However, you must secure employment within 3 months of enrollment. Once employed, have your employer fill out an Employment Certificate and submit it to your child's facility. Please note that the certificate must be submitted and employment must commence by the 25th day of the third month.

Q2-12: Can I apply for the new school year starting in April based on job-seeking?

A: For the new school year, applications based on job-seeking are only accepted in the second round of screening scheduled for December, and only if you wish to enroll starting in April. If you plan to look for a job after placing your child in childcare and wish to enroll from May onwards, please apply by the end of the month two months prior to your desired month. (Please also refer to Q2-3).

Q2-13: Can I apply by mail?

A: No, applications by mail are not accepted. Please apply in person at the relevant office. For mid-year enrollment, applications are accepted not only at the Childcare Division counter (Hoiku-ka) at City Hall but also at various comprehensive branch offices.

Q2-14: Where can I apply for admission to a Certified Center-based Preschool (Nintei Kodomo-en) under Category 1 Certification?

A: For Category 1 Certification (educational/kindergarten track), please contact the Certified Center-based Preschool directly. The eligible age range is from age 3 (fully turned 3) up to pre-elementary school age.

Q2-15: What happens if I leave my job after receiving a provisional enrollment offer?

A: If you leave your job after a provisional offer has been made, the offer will be revoked.

Q2-16: I have already submitted my application. Can I change my preferred childcare facilities?

A: For the general new school year application, changes can be made until each respective application deadline. For monthly mid-year applications, changes can be made up until the end-of-month deadline. Please request changes in person at the Childcare Division counter or notify us of your new preferences by phone.

Q2-17: If my application is placed on a waiting list (rejected due to full capacity), do I need to reapply every month?

A: No. For both the general new school year application and mid-year applications, your application will continue to be reviewed automatically for subsequent months within the same fiscal year. However, you will only be notified of the results if your child is accepted; subsequent waiting-list notifications will not

be sent out. If there are any changes to your household status or employment situation during this period, please notify the Childcare Division. Please note that a fresh application is required if you wish to apply for the following school year.

Q2-18: My childcare eligibility conditions changed after applying (e.g., change in work hours, leaving a job, changing jobs, or securing employment while job-hunting). Do I need to complete any procedures?

A: Yes. If your eligibility conditions change after applying, and the change is related to your employment, you must submit a new Employment Certificate. Please submit the appropriate documents depending on your updated situation. If eligibility conditions change after a provisional offer has been issued, your application will undergo a re-evaluation screening.

Q2-19: What should be written on a medical certificate if I am submitting one due to illness?

A: Please have your doctor state the name of the illness, the specific circumstances that prevent you from providing childcare, and the required period of medical treatment. Please use the designated medical certificate form issued by the Childcare Division. While standard hospital forms are accepted, if the form does not specify the required reduction in childcare hours, your eligibility will be automatically classified under “Short-time Childcare Certification” (Hoiku-tantajikan-nintei).

Q2-20: I had a provisional job offer, but my start date was pushed back by one month. Will my childcare enrollment date change as well?

A: Yes, your enrollment date will be pushed back by one month to match your revised employment start date. However, if your start date becomes indefinite or is delayed by two months or more, your provisional childcare offer may be revoked.

Q2-21: I am currently undergoing divorce mediation. Will I receive additional screening points as a single parent?

A: If you are living separately due to ongoing divorce mediation, or if you have retained a lawyer to prepare for mediation, you will be assessed as a single parent provided you attach a copy of the petition for mediation. However, you must update your official residency record (Jumin-hyo). Please note that if you are in the middle of a divorce discussion (協議離婚) without official mediation, you will not be treated as a single parent regardless of whether you live together or separately.

3. Employment Certificate

Q3-1: Do I also need to submit Employment Certificates for grandparents or family members living in the same household?

A: Submission is required for household members between the ages of 18 and 64 (excluding students). Co-residents under the age of 65 must work at least 64 hours per month to count toward eligibility exceptions.

Q3-2: When applying for two or more siblings at the same time, do I need to submit an Employment Certificate for each child?

A: You need to submit one original certificate and provide copies according to the number of children. However, individual copies of the "Application Form for Admission to Childcare Facilities," "Application Form for Education and Childcare Benefits Certification," and "Household Status Survey Form" must be filled out separately for each child.

Q3-3: How long is an Employment Certificate valid for?

A: It is valid for 3 months from the date of certification. If it has expired, please prepare a new Employment Certificate.

Q3-4: What should I do regarding the Employment Certificate if I am self-employed?

A: Fill out the Employment Certificate yourself and attach a copy of your final tax return (Kakutei-shinkoku). For newly established businesses, attach a copy of your notification of business opening (Kaigyo-todoke), corporate registration, business license, or similar documents. Even if you are not legally required to file a tax return under tax laws, self-employed individuals must file a tax return for employment verification purposes in order to enroll or remain in a childcare facility.

Q3-5: How should I fill out the working hours section?

A: For the employment history section (Item No. 7 on the Employment Certificate), please fill in your actual hours worked, including paid leave, break times, and overtime.

Q3-6: When will I be asked to submit an Employment Certificate?

A: Submission is required when submitting your initial application form, when submitting the annual Status Report (Genkyo-todoke) around December every year after enrollment, and for verifying your return to work upon new enrollment. Please also note that certificates are required on an as-needed basis if your reason for requiring childcare changes (e.g., illness, pregnancy, or childbirth).

4. Certification & Certification Changes

Q4-1: My child is currently enrolled under "Standard-time Childcare" (Hoiku-hyojun-jikan). Do my working hours need to exceed 120 hours every single month?

A: Yes, your working hours must consistently meet the monthly threshold corresponding to either Standard-time or Short-time care. If there are consecutive months where you do not meet the required hours, please understand that your status will be automatically switched to Short-time Childcare Certification.

Q4-2: My work situation changed and my working hours increased, so I want to change from Short-time Childcare to Standard-time Childcare. What do I need to submit and by when?

A: Please submit your updated Employment Certificate and the Application Form for Change in Benefits Certification to the Childcare Division by the 25th of the month preceding the intended change.

Submissions must be routed through the childcare facility your child is currently attending. Blank forms can be obtained at your child's facility.

Q4-3: Whose employment situation is taken into account when determining Standard-time or Short-time childcare certification?

A: It is based strictly on the employment situation of the parents (grandparents and other family members living in the same household are excluded).

Q4-4: Is commuting time included when calculating working hours?

A: No, commuting time is not included in the calculation of official working hours.

Q4-5: A family member under the age of 65 living with us has left their job. Can I still keep my child in the childcare facility?

A: If the household situation allows for care at home, it no longer meets the essential requirements for childcare. While your childcare certification will not change immediately, you are expected to engage in job-seeking activities and submit a new Employment Certificate within approximately 3 months.

5. Childcare Fees

Q5-1: How are childcare fees (user fees) determined?

A: As a general rule, childcare fees are calculated based on the combined municipal income-based tax (Shimin-zei Shotoku-wari) of both parents. Fees from April to August are based on the municipal tax from the previous fiscal year, while fees from September onwards switch to the current fiscal year's tax. Therefore, childcare fees may change depending on your annual tax amount.

Q5-2: Why are my childcare fees high even though I was on childcare leave last year?

A: Childcare fees from April to August are based on the previous year's municipal income-based tax, and fees from September to March are based on the current year's tax. Therefore, up until August, your fees are calculated based on your income from two years prior.

Q5-3: Can I find out exactly how much my childcare fees will be if my child enrolls?

A: The Childcare Division does not provide specific fee quotes over the counter or phone. Please calculate the combined municipal income-based tax of both parents yourself and reference the User Fee Scale. Once enrollment is finalized, you will receive an official Childcare Fee Determination Notice.

Q5-4: If we live with grandparents, are they included in the calculation of childcare fees?

A: If both parents are exempt from municipal tax and live with grandparents, the grandparent with the higher municipal income-based tax will be included in the fee calculation. Even if they are registered as a separate household on the residency record, they will be included if they live within the same residence.

Q5-5: What situations qualify for the Free Childcare Policy (Childcare Education Multi-Child Exemption)?

A: Free childcare applies to children aged 3 to 5 in Category 2 classes, as well as all children under Category 1. Eligible children will have their income-based childcare fees waived entirely.

Please note that out-of-pocket expenses such as school meals (lunch fees) and facility maintenance fees are not covered by the free childcare policy.

Additionally, if a child holds a valid Childcare Benefits Certification, non-licensed childcare facilities may also qualify for exemptions. This requires procedural applications before using the facility, so please consult with us in advance.

Q5-6: Are there waivers for households with multiple children?

A: Within Tochigi Prefecture, childcare fees for the second child are fully waived. For the third child and subsequent children, school meal fees (lunch fees) incurred from age 3 and above are also waived.

Q5-7: If my child is absent, will the childcare fee be calculated on a pro-rated daily basis?

A: No. Childcare fees are billed on a monthly basis. No daily pro-rated refunds can be issued for absences.

Q5-8: Do childcare fees differ between public and private facilities?

A: No, the base childcare fees are exactly the same. Fees are determined solely based on the combined municipal income-based tax of the guardians (parents). However, actual out-of-pocket expenses (such as facility fees) vary by center, so please contact each facility directly for details.

Q5-9: If the parents' municipal income-based tax cannot be verified (due to unfiled taxes, missing tax documents, etc.), will the childcare fee calculation be skipped?

A: If the information required to determine your childcare fee cannot be verified, your fee will be set automatically at the maximum tier (Tier 12).

Q5-10: Will an unmarried partner be included in the calculation of childcare fees?

A: Anyone who is actually providing care for the child?meaning someone who lives together with the child?will be included in the calculation. An Employment Certificate for that partner must also be submitted to the facility your child attends.

6. Transferring & Leaving Facilities

Q6-1: My child currently attends a licensed childcare facility. Can I transfer them to another facility? What is the procedure?

A: Yes, you can apply for a transfer even if your child is currently enrolled. The application process for a transfer is the same as a new enrollment application.

Q6-2: Can my child remain at their current childcare facility until a transfer becomes available?

A: Yes, your child can remain enrolled at their current facility until a transfer is finalized. However, please note that you cannot decline or withdraw a transfer once it has been approved.

Q6-3: My child currently attends a small-scale childcare facility (Shokibo-hoiku). Do I need to submit a new application when they turn 3?

A: Since small-scale childcare facilities cater only to children aged 0 to 2, your child must move to another facility by March 31st of the year they turn 3. Around July, the Childcare Division will send an inquiry form regarding your preferred facilities to handle the transfer process. Therefore, a brand-new application is not necessary.

Q6-4: I am planning a temporary return to my home country. How many months of absence are allowed before my child is automatically disenrolled?

A: If your child does not attend for 3 months or more due to a temporary return abroad or returning home for childbirth, they will be disenrolled. For absences of less than 3 months, please consult directly with your facility.

Q6-5: My child is leaving the childcare center because we are moving out of the city. What kind of procedures do I need to follow?

A: Please submit a Notice of Withdrawal to your current facility. Your child can remain enrolled until the final day of the month in which you move out, so please write the last day of that month as the withdrawal date.

7. Wide-Area Enrollment (Enrolling across municipal borders)

Q7-1: Can I use a licensed childcare center in Tochigi City, where my parents live, if I return home for childbirth?

A: If your child is currently enrolled in a facility in your home municipality, they cannot enroll in a Tochigi City childcare center. In that case, you must either withdraw from your home municipality's center or utilize temporary childcare services. If your child is not currently enrolled anywhere, you can apply for enrollment using "Pregnancy/Childbirth" as your eligible reason.

Please note: If you enroll under the Pregnancy/Childbirth category, you cannot continue using the facility under childcare leave once the baby is born.

Q7-2: Can I apply for a licensed childcare facility in Tochigi City if I live in a neighboring municipality?

A: You must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) One of the parents works in Tochigi City (grandparents do not count).
- (2) One of the parents goes to school in Tochigi City.
- (3) You plan to move to Tochigi City by the end of the month prior to your intended enrollment month.

If you qualify under (1) or (2), you can apply through the Childcare Division of the municipality where you currently live. If you qualify under (3), you can apply directly to Tochigi City.

Q7-3: I am moving to Tochigi City. Can I apply for enrollment?

A: Yes. If you plan to move here, you can apply by attaching a Written Pledge regarding relocation (転入に関する誓約書) along with a copy of your housing construction contract or rental lease agreement that verifies the new address and relocation timeline.

Q7-4: What should I do to use a childcare facility outside of Tochigi City?

A: Please apply at the counter of the Tochigi City Childcare Division. To use a childcare facility outside the city, at least one parent must work in the municipality where that childcare facility is located. Deadlines and required documents vary by municipality, so please check in advance with the municipality where your preferred facility is located.

8. Miscellaneous

Q8-1: I need a Waitlist Certificate (Hoju-shomeisho / Certificate of Non-Availability). Can I get one even if I haven't applied for a childcare facility?

A: No. Waitlist Certificates are issued exclusively to certify that an actual application was submitted but placed on a waiting list due to full capacity. Therefore, an official application is required. Furthermore, because it certifies that there is no prospect of enrollment for that fiscal year starting from your application month, you must submit a new application if you wish to apply again within the same fiscal year.

Q8-2: Can a Waitlist Certificate be issued if I am offered a spot but decide to turn it down?

A: No. If you decline a provisional enrollment offer, a Waitlist Certificate cannot be issued.

Q8-3: I want to decline a provisional enrollment offer. By when should I contact you? Also, will declining affect future applications?

A: For general applications for the new school year, please notify us within 2 weeks of receiving your provisional offer notice. For mid-year applications, please contact us by the 25th of the month prior to the start of usage. Cancellations cannot be accepted after these dates due to the preparations being made by the facility. Additionally, if you decline a provisional offer, screening deduction points will be applied to any subsequent applications within the same fiscal year.

Q8-4: What documents are required to extend Childcare Leave Benefits (Ikuji-kyugyo-kyufukin)?

A: If your enrollment is placed on a waiting list and you need to extend your childcare leave benefits at the Public Employment Security Office (Hello Work), you will need a copy of your Application Form for Admission to Childcare Facilities (Separate Form No. 1, related to Article 4) and the Waitlist Notice (保留通知) issued by the city. Please make sure to make copies for yourself before submitting your application to the childcare facility.