



Integrating

a disabled child into a childcare facility

FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE

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1. PRESENTATION OF THE ALLOWANCE FOR INTEGRATION OF A DISABLED CHILD

The *Framework and Procedure* concerning the Allowance for Integration of a Disabled Child (AIDC) presents the guidelines necessary for the implementation and management of this allowance and informs the subsidized childcare providers wishing to integrate disabled children into their environment about the applicable terms and conditions.

The ministère de la Famille (the Ministère) has provided for different support measures, including the AIDC, to favour the social participation of disabled children and incite childcare providers to receive them.

The AIDC is defined in the budget rules and in the occupancy rules the Ministère publishes annually. These rules contain the conditions of eligibility, the allowance standards and the funding scales relating to the allowance. In addition, the AIDC Directive defines the terms of management of this allowance and provides clarifications to the conditions of eligibility and the allowance standards.

1.1 DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE TO FACILITATE INTEGRATION AND BENEFIT FROM THE ALLOWANCE FOR INTEGRATION OF A DISABLED CHILD

The following documents have been drafted for subsidized childcare providers who wish to benefit from this allowance. They allow them to use the AIDC and facilitate the integration of a disabled child. Furthermore, these documents help them recognize the barriers faced or potentially faced by the child during the integration, prioritize certain actions to reduce such barriers and facilitate the periodic—at the very least annual—review of the needs of the child and of the childcare provider.

- This document, *Framework and Procedure*.
- The *Professional's Report* form, which aims to attest the child's disability in order to contribute to his/her integration into a childcare facility. It also presents relevant recommendations to the childcare provider for the reduction of the barriers the child encounters during integration.
- The *Integration Plan* form, which aims to determine the child's specific needs in terms of integration. It must specify the childcare provider's needs for material and human resources in accordance with the recommendations of different professionals. It allows periodic reevaluation of the child's integration at least once a year.
- The *Directive Concerning the Allowance for Integration of a Disabled Child* and its FAQ document, which define the terms of management of the AIDC and provide clarifications regarding what is set out in the budget rules and the occupancy rules published by the Ministère.

1.2 DÉFINITIONS

Disabled children covered by the Allowance for Integration of a Disabled Child¹

For the purposes of the AIDC, a disabled child is defined as a child with a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability, who is likely to face barriers in his/her integration process at a childcare facility. The disability must be attested by a professional recognized by the Ministère de la Famille or must be recognized by Retraite Québec.

Handicapped person²

A person with a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability, who is liable to encounter barriers in performing everyday activities.

Impairment³

A deficiency corresponds to the degree of anatomical, histological or physiological deficiency of an organic system that is a set of bodily components intended for a common function.

It may involve a loss, a malformation or an insufficiency of an organ or a structure in one of the different organic systems. It thus corresponds to a form of organic anomaly. A deficiency may be congenital, i.e. from birth, or acquired due to an illness or an accident.

Disability

A disability is a reduction of the intrinsic possibility for a person to perform a physical or mental activity. It corresponds to the degree of reduction of an ability.

The major categories of abilities are associated with intellectual activities, language, behaviours, the senses and perception, motor activities, respiration, digestion, excretion, reproduction, protection and resistance.

Significant

A disability is said to be significant when it entails a certain degree of severity or gravity. The frequency and duration of episodes also pertain to the significance of the disability. It appreciably reduces a person's ability to function physically or mentally. A disability is not significant if it is possible to restore the person's abilities to a normal level by the use of a prosthesis (for example, glasses, hearing aid) or an orthosis (for example, orthopedic shoe).

1. Ministère de la Famille definition in the context of the AIDC. This definition corresponds to that of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights, but it only concerns children in childcare. The Ministère puts the emphasis on recognition of a significant and persistent disability instead of the deficiency itself. In the context of this allowance, the Ministère interprets the notion of deficiency as potentially including a loss, a malformation or an anomaly of a structure or of a mental or psychological function.
2. Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights, chapter E-20.1, section 1, g. (came into force on March 1, 2004)
3. The definitions presented below are derived from the conceptual model of the Disability Creation Process and the website Services accessibles (Accessible services) of the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, which present a popularization of the elements of the notion of «handicapped person», as it is defined in the Act. Their content thus makes no legal, scientific or other claims.

Persistent

A disability is persistent when its disappearance cannot be foreseen. Conversely, a disability that occurs due to a disease or an injury, and when the permanent disappearance of its effects is foreseeable thanks to a treatment or the passage of time, is not considered persistent. A disability may have episodic ability and be persistent.

It must be noted that significance and persistence are determined by professionals recognized according to their specific field of expertise and that they can be determined, in particular, by means of evaluation tools that allow the result obtained to be situated in relation to a predetermined standard.

Barrier

Barriers in the accomplishment of common activities correspond to the physical or social particularities of the setting in which a person is found (his/her environment), which, when they are associated with the disabilities, limit the person's activities.

These barriers may take many forms, such as in terms of architecture, means of communication, equipment, hardware, beliefs and attitudes, etc., which limit the support or resources available to meet the needs of disabled persons.

1.3 INTEGRATION OF A DISABLED CHILD INTO A CHILDCARE FACILITY

The Ministère pursues the following objectives regarding the integration of a disabled child into a childcare facility:

- favour the full access and participation of a disabled child into a childcare facility to enable him/her to live and grow while being better integrated into his/her community and receive the childcare services needed;
- support the childcare provider in its responsibility to integrate a disabled child, while maintaining a quality childcare service for all;
- encourage the parents' participation in integrating their child into a childcare facility.

Integration is defined as the process that consists of providing children with the means that will allow them to have social experiences in view of acquiring autonomy by favouring respect, dignity, making choices or any other valued experience that is part of a person's quality of life.

Like any child, the disabled child has personal characteristics and special needs. Thus, the integration approach must be part of a comprehensive approach. It is important to analyze the children's needs and specify their disability regarding the childcare provider, the layout of the premises and the availability of equipment.

The integration of disabled children into a childcare facility gives them the opportunity to explore their personal resources and learn to function in a new living environment with adults and other children. In addition to enabling them to take their place in a childcare facility, integration will give them the possibility to develop and acquire the greatest possible autonomy.

While applying the educational program of the Ministère, *Meeting Early Childhood Needs*, childcare providers encourage respect for differences and enable all children to have access to a healthy and stimulating childhood. Moreover, [TRANSLATION] "in the childcare environment, childcare staff and Home Childcare Providers (HCP) see to the harmonization of relations between children and adults, and of children with each other, so that everyone can have a place in the group and play a valuable role."

The Ministère supports an approach of integration of the disabled child into a childcare facility, but it is possible that the child may not be able to adapt to the operation of this service. Moreover, a childcare provider may not be able to meet the parents' expectations and the disabled child's special needs.

It is also important to know the family context and the community resources to enable the childcare provider to adapt to the disabled child's needs. Consequently, the integration approach involves collaboration among the parents, the childcare provider and the other persons involved with the child.

Appropriate selection of the childcare provider, planning of resources and collaboration among the parents, the various stakeholders and the external specialized resources thus appear to be the best guarantee of a successful integration.

1.4 ROLE OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

As mentioned previously, integration of the child and granting of the AIDC necessitate the contribution of different stakeholders: the parents, the professionals recognized by the Ministère, the childcare centre (CPE), the subsidized daycare centre, the Home Childcare Coordinating Office (CO), the person responsible for integration (pedagogical counsellor, educator, manager or HCP), and the Ministère. Each of these stakeholders has a role to play in the successful integration of the disabled child into a childcare facility.

- **Parents** – The parents' role is indispensable for the successful integration of a disabled child. They sign the integration plan, and it is important that they be engaged throughout the integration process. Thus, the parents must have the possibility to participate in decision-making and must be considered as the main informers and advisers of the childcare provider to contribute to the continuity of the interventions performed with their child.
- **Professionals** – The Ministère has entrusted recognized professionals with the responsibility for attesting the child's disability and formulating recommendations for the child's integration in the report they write. These recommendations must be taken into consideration when developing the integration plan. The list of recognized professionals is found in the Professional's Report form available on the Ministère's website.
- **CPE, subsidized daycare centre, HCP and CO** – The CPE, the subsidized daycare centre and the HCP are responsible for planning and implementing all the necessary actions for: integration of the disabled child into the childcare facility, raising awareness of the people who use this service, implementation of approaches and measures favouring integration, training, and promotion of integration. The CPE, the subsidized daycare centre and the CO are responsible for transmitting the information required by the Ministère in the annual financial report and, as applicable, for producing the occupancy forecast tables. The vouchers and the documents must be placed in the parental record and do not have to be transmitted to the Ministère. The CO is also responsible for managing the subsidies granted to the HCPs, in accordance with the instructions and directives published by the Ministère. The HCP collects all the originals of the documents, while the CO retains copies of the various vouchers or documents. The CO may also provide pedagogical and technical support on request.
- **Person responsible for integration** – This person signs the integration plan, sees to the establishment of a relationship of trust with the parents and stays in communication with them. He/she ensures their participation in the decisions that concern their child. He/she ensures that the parental record is complete and that the measures agreed with the parents for integration of the child are applied.

- Ministère – The Ministère offers advisory support to the childcare provider through its staff. It disburses the AIDC and ensures the funds disbursed are used properly.

2. PROCEDURE FOR INTEGRATION OF A DISABLED CHILD

2.1 TARGET CLIENTELE

In general, the AIDC is intended for the integration of a child age 59 months or less who is registered with a subsidized childcare provider and whose parent is eligible for payment of the basic contribution.

In accordance with the budget rules and the occupancy rules, this allowance may also be intended for integration of a school age or preschool-age child into a childcare facility.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the AIDC, the childcare provider needs to comply with the conditions set out in the budgetary and occupancy rules, as well as in the Directive relating to the allowance.

2.3 TWO-PART ALLOWANCE

The AIDC is a support measure to encourage childcare providers to receive a disabled child and help them adapt their environment and their practices to facilitate the child's integration. The childcare provider is entitled to the AIDC on condition of compliance with the funding standards for the allowance and compliance with the resources and requirements agreed with the parents for integration of the child.

The AIDC is composed of two parts, i.e. Part A – Record management, equipment and physical layout, and Part B – Operation – which helps fund the implementation of the integration plan. The allowance corresponds to the sum of the two amounts.

The AIDC is characterized by the flexibility of its application and its management. Indeed, the amounts under Parts A and B may be used to implement various actions agreed with the parents, in accordance with the recommendations of the various professionals recognized by the Ministère, in order to favour the integration of the disabled child. However, these actions must be specified in the child's integration plan.

2.4 DOCUMENTS TO RETAIN IN THE PARENTAL RECORD

For verification purposes, the childcare provider, and the CO in the case of a HCP, must retain the documents relating to the AIDC during the child's stay and for a period of six years after the child's departure.

2.4.1 The Board of Directors resolution

The childcare provider whose childcare service is governed by a board of directors must obtain a resolution in view of the integration of a disabled child.

2.4.2 The document attesting the child's disability

The child's disability must be certified by Retraite Québec or attested by a professional recognized by the Ministère.

Certification by Retraite Québec

The parents who benefit from the Supplement for Handicapped Children may provide proof to certify the child's disability, which they will have obtained from Retraite Québec.

A certificate may be obtained by writing to:

Retraite Québec
Child assistance measure (CAM)
P.O. Box 7777
Québec, Québec G1K 7T4
Rapport du professionnel

Professional's Report

Parents who do not benefit from the Supplement for Handicapped Children must have a professional complete the report and ensure it will be returned to the childcare provider.

In this case, for the childcare provider to be eligible for the allowance, Part C of the Professional's Report must be completed and the following three characteristics must be present concerning the child evaluated:

- 1) The disability must be significant;
- 2) The disability must be persistent;
- 3) The disability must represent a barrier to the accomplishment of common activities by the child in his/her integration into a childcare facility.

2.4.3 The recommendations of the professionals

In addition to the document attesting of the child's disability, the parents must provide recommendations from at least one professional regarding the appropriate measures to apply, particularly regarding material and human resources. These recommendations may be formulated by the professional who attested the child's disability or by other professionals recognized by the Ministère. The recommendations must be clear and precise enough to allow the childcare providers and the parents to refer to them when developing the integration plan in order to meet the child's needs precisely.

It is possible that the childcare provider will not implement all the recommendations of the professional(s) consulted. In this case, the childcare provider and the parents must indicate in an appendix why the recommended resources do not all appear in the integration plan.

2.4.4 The integration plan and its updates

In any approach for integration of a disabled child, there must be an integration plan. This plan serves as a framework and direction for decision-making and the choice of the appropriate measures to apply to facilitate the child's integration into the childcare facility.

This document, completed and signed by the parents and by the childcare provider, first allows identification of the disabled child and the childcare provider wishing to receive the child. An evaluation of the child's functioning ensues, which is necessary to determine and analyze the special needs and to choose the means that will be implemented to meet them. The last part is devoted to the indication of the childcare provider's other needs to meet those of the child.

A childcare provider who receives a disabled child is responsible for favouring the child's integration and using the funds granted for this purpose. It should be noted that these funds may be used for ad hoc interventions with the child by a professional in order to implement the

integration plan, without leading to adaptation and rehabilitation services that are regular and continuous over time.

It is recommended to review the integration plan as needed, based on the child's progress, in order to reduce the barriers confronting the child in the process of integration into the childcare facility. However, it is mandatory to review this plan at least once a year. The reference date for the annual review corresponds to the signing date of the integration plan or of its most recent review.

2.4.5 Invoices and other vouchers

These are invoices and vouchers associated with the use of Part A of the allowance, i.e. the part pertaining to record management and the material resources.

2.4.6 Reasons for refusal of integration of a child, as applicable

In the event the childcare provider refuses to integrate a disabled child, the provider must document the reasons for refusal, as specified in its integration or expulsion policy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, contact the Ministère's Information Service at:

1-855-336-8568

or visit the Ministère's website at: www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca



