

Client fees for home service for families with children 2021

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1 Client fees for home services for families with children

According to Section 19 of the Social Welfare Act (1301/2014), home service means the performance of, or assistance in, tasks and activities related to housing, care and maintenance of functional capacity, childcare and parenting, errands and other functions of everyday life. Families with children have the right to be provided with the necessary home service to safeguard their family's caring duties if it is not possible to ensure the well-being of a child on the grounds of reduced capacity, family situation, strain, illness, childbirth, injury or similar reasons.

Client fees in health care and social welfare are generally regulated by the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare (734/1992) and the Decree on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare (912/1992). Section 10e of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare provides for the fees to be charged for regular and continuous service provided at home.

The visits of employees of home service for families with children are subject to a fee. The initial assessment visit of the home service to the client's home is free of charge. The home service for families with children is free of charge for:

- Families whose children are in need of special support during the multi-actor service needs assessment or the client relationship with family social work under the Social Welfare Act and whose service needs and plan for its implementation are recorded in the client plan;
- Families whose children with disabilities are in need of special support during the multi-actor assessment period or if the family needs long-term regular home service for families with children and the home service is included in the client plan. (Decision of the Espoo City Board of 18 September 2017)
- Clients whose home service is organised as special care for persons with intellectual disabilities or as a child welfare support measure in open care.

2 Client fees for temporary home service for families with children

Home service for families with children is subject to a temporary home service fee if the service need is less than 3 months. The fee is determined according to the duration of the daily visit of the temporary home service according to the table below.

Duration of the visit	EUR per visit
Less than 1 h	6.60
1 h to less than 2 h	9.90
2 h to less than 4 h	16.40
4 h to less than 6 h	20.90
Over 6 h	26.50

For example, if a family receives temporary home service for families with children for 3 hours a day on 2 days a week, the monthly client fee is 8 times EUR 16.40, or EUR 131.20 in total.

If the client is visited several times a day, the maximum individual visit fee is EUR 26.50.

The fee for temporary home service for families with children is not collected if the family's gross income is less than the maximum income limit for free services for the family size according to the table below. In this case, the family must submit their income data to the Social and Health Services, Client Fees unit.

Number of family members	Maximum income limit for free services, EUR per month
1	588
2	1084
3	1701
4	2103
5	2546
6	2924

3 Client fees for regular home service for families with children

A client fee is charged for home service for families with children if the client receives the service at least once a week and, in addition, the service is estimated to last at least three months from its commencement or if the service has actually lasted at least three months (Section 7b of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

If the client applies for the service again within six months of the end of the service after at least three months of temporary or regular home service and the criteria for regular home service are met, the service will continue on a regular basis.

A service plan is prepared for the family, and a service decision is made together with the client to determine the number of hours that the service is provided each month. The number of hours may change depending on the needs of the family or reasons related to the service provider. The service need is examined regularly and no later than after three months in terms of temporary child welfare services.

3.1 Determination of the client fee

A monthly fee is charged for regular home service based on the family's income. The client fee is based on the number of service hours recorded in the service decision, the family's capacity to pay and the size of the family. (Section 10e of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare) A family consists of individuals who share a household and are married or live in

conditions similar to marriage as well as the under-aged children of both parties living in the same household (Section 2 of the Decree on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

Service hours are taken into account in the fee decision as whole hours, rounding partial service hours to the nearest whole hour and rounding up half hours.

The fee may not exceed the expenses incurred from providing the service (Section 2 of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

The income taken into account when considering the client fee is the family's gross income, less the income limit based on the number of persons in the family and the deductions according to Section 3.4. The euro amounts of the income limits are revised every two years according to the employment pension index, and the revised amounts enter into force at the beginning of the year following the review year. The income limits are as follows:

Family size, number of persons	1	2	3	4	5	6
Income limit, EUR per month	588	1084	1701	2103	2546	2924

The client fee is the amount indicated by the payment percentage of monthly income exceeding the income limit in the table below.

Number of service hours per month	Fee percentage by family size					
	1	2	3	4	5	6 persons or more
7–10	9%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%
11–15	10%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%
16–20	11%	11%	10%	9%	8%	7%
21–25	13%	13%	11%	10%	9%	8%
26–30	15%	15%	12%	11%	10%	9%
31–35	17%	17%	13%	12%	11%	10%
36–40	19%	19%	14%	13%	12%	11%
41–60	20%	20%	16%	14%	13%	11%
More than 60 h	22%	22%	18%	15%	13%	11%

If the number of family members is greater than six, the income limit is increased by EUR 357 and the payment percentage is reduced by one percentage point for each subsequent member.

Example 1. A family consists of parents and four children, so the family size is six. The combined gross income of the family is EUR 3,200 per month, and the family receives 20 hours of family work per month. Income of EUR 3,200 – maximum income limit for free services of EUR 2,924 = EUR 276, of which the client fee is 7%, or EUR 19.32 per month.

Example 2. The family consists of a mother and two children, so the family size is three. The gross income is EUR 2,000, and the service need is 20 hours per month. Income of EUR 2,000 – maximum income limit for free services EUR 1,701 = EUR 299, of which the client fee is 10% or EUR 29.90 per month.

The client fee is valid until further notice. Client fees for regular home service for families with children are reviewed annually for changes in income and expenses. In addition, according to Section 10j of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare, the fee must be reviewed at the application of the client or their representative or at the initiative of the municipality, when:

- the client's or their family's income has changed;
- the client's or their spouse's right to deductions on income has changed;
- the circumstances of the family have changed;
- the fee proves to be incorrect;
- the client plan prepared for the client is changed in a way that affects the amount of the client fee;
- the municipal fee criteria are changed in a way that affects the amount of the client fee.

If the decision on the fee has been based on incorrect information provided by the client or their representative, the fee may be rectified retroactively for a maximum period of up to one year.

3.2 Determining income

In order to determine the client fee, the family's income is determined. The income determination and fee decisions are made in the Social and Health Services Sector Management, Client Fees unit. The client is sent an income statement form, which the client must return with the completed attachments by the given date. A written fee decision with appeal instructions is sent to the client.

Income information is primarily requested from the client or their representative. Information may also be requested from other authorities, entities or bodies. According to Section 14a of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare, a state authority, a municipal authority and other bodies governed by public law, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela), the Finnish Centre for Pensions, a pension fund and other pension institutions, an insurance institution, an employer and an unemployment fund, and a provider of social and health care services are obliged, at the request of a municipal authority, to provide, free of charge and without prejudice to confidentiality provisions, the information and statements in their possession concerning the financial standing of a client and necessary for determining the amount of a client fee if the municipality or group of municipalities imposing the fee has not received sufficient and reliable information from the client or their legal representative for the purpose of determining the fee. Income data can be verified using, for example, through Kela and the incomes register of the Tax Administration.

Where the fee is determined on the basis of the combined income of the person in the service and their spouse, the above-mentioned right to information also applies to the spouse. The above-mentioned parties are only requested to provide information relevant to the determination of the client fee.

The reporting obligation also applies to a financial institution if the municipality does not receive sufficient information and explanations from other parties mentioned above and if there are reasonable grounds to doubt the adequacy or reliability of the information provided by the client or their representative.

The Act on the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients (812/2000) lays down the obligation of the client and their representative to provide information (Section 12) and the right of a social welfare authority to confidential information (Sections 20 to 22).

If the income on which the fee is based changes, the client or their representative must notify the authority deciding on the client fee of the changed income data. A client fee decision based on incorrect information may be rectified retroactively for a period of one year (Section 10j of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

Inquiries concerning fees, invoicing and the income statement should be directed to the Client Fees unit.

asiakasmaksut@espoo.fi or tel. +358 9 816 57261 (weekdays at 9:00–13:00).

3.3 Income on which the client fee is based

Section 10f of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare defines the income on which client fees for regular home service for families with children are based. The client fee is determined by the monthly income of the family, taking into account income deductions made in accordance with Section 3.4. Gross income is taken into account as the basis for the fee, i.e. taxes are not taken into account as a deduction from income.

Monthly income includes the continuous or repeatedly received the taxable earnings, capital income and tax-exempt income of the family, less the costs incurred in obtaining income, as well as calculated forest income. Income is continuous when it continues for at least three months from the date on which the fee is determined.

If the latest documented information on the client's taxable income is not available, the corresponding taxable income established in the last tax submitted can be taken into account as taxable income, increased by the percentages set by the Tax Administration in its annual decisions based on Section 6(1) of the Act on tax prepayment (1118/1996) on the basis of the calculation of withholding tax and advance payment.

Calculated forest income means the average annual forest yield per hectare multiplied by the area of forest land, established in accordance with Section 7(3) of the Act on the valuation of assets for taxation (1142/2005). This amount is reduced by 10% and by forestry interest rates. At the request of the client or their representative, the municipality or joint municipal authority must reduce the calculated forest income if the net monetary value of the annual felling opportunity per holding is at least 10% lower than the forest income, based on a statement issued by the Finnish Forest Centre

or forest management association. The discount is equal to the difference between the forest income and the net monetary value of the felling opportunity (Section 10i of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

Continuous or repeatedly received grants or recognition awards are taken into account as income to the extent that they are regulated as taxable income in Section 82(2) of the Act on income tax.

Reimbursement of expenses and other grants for a specific purpose or other similar income which is not regular or continuous and does not form part of taxable income is not taken into account as income. Tax-exempt social benefits referred to in Section 92 of the Act on income tax are not taken into account as income, with the exception of child maintenance allowance and care allowance for pensioners. A veteran's allowance paid as part of care allowance for pensioners is not taken into account as income.

If income varies, the average monthly income of the previous 12 months is taken into account.

Gross income to be taken into account, e.g.:

- Earned income
- Pension income
- Benefit income
- Forest income
- Dividend income
- Interest income
- Capital income
- Rental income (less the maintenance fee)
- Child maintenance allowance
- Child support
- Care allowance for pensioners
- Dividends paid to an equity savings account
- Yield on investment funds paid annually
- Share of non-tax-subsidised pension insurance of pension corresponding to yield accruing on capital
- Other continuing or recurring personal income

Income not considered:

- Child benefit
- Student grant
- Adult education allowance
- Child home care allowance
- Study-related grants and other similar grants
- Child increase in accordance with the National Pensions Act
- Housing allowance
- Student allowance housing supplement
- Conscript's allowance
- Conscript's per diem allowance

- Disability allowance for persons under 16
- Disability allowance for persons aged 16 and over
- Income support
- Veterans' supplement
- Front veteran's supplement
- Extra front veteran's supplement
- Income paid to investment fund growth shares that are not distributed annually
- Capital repayment from non-tax-supported pension insurance
- Medical care and examination costs under accident insurance
- Compensation for upkeep referred to in the Act on the social insurance institution of Finland's rehabilitation services and rehabilitation allowances
- Reimbursement of family care costs
- Other similar income which is not regular or continuous and does not form part of taxable income

3.4 Deductions from income

Before imposing the regular home service fee, the deductions listed below may be taken into account from the family's income (Section 10g of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare).

3.4.1 Maintenance obligations, actual family relationships and traditional life annuity

- **Child support confirmed as to be paid by the person**
- **Other corresponding costs resulting from actual family relations** of the person;
- **Allowance withheld for a fixed period or a lifetime in connection with the transfer of property**, which they must pay in cash (traditional life annuity);
- **Compensation ordered by the receiver or the court**, referred to in the Act on the Dissolution of the Household of Cohabiting Partners (26/2011), which they must pay in cash.

3.4.2 Remuneration of a guardian and audit fee of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency

The remuneration of a guardian consists of an annual basic fee and additional fees (Government Decree 696/2012 on the amount of the guardian's remuneration).

When determining the client fee, the basic fee of a guardian's fee (EUR 440 or EUR 280 per year) and the audit fee of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency per month are taken into account as deductions from income. Correspondingly, the remuneration of a guardian is taken into

account as a reduction of up to the amount of the basic fee of the above-mentioned guardian. (Section 10c of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare)

In addition, an additional fee of EUR 200 for measures to initiate guardianship is taken into account as a deduction from income.

The client or guardian must inform the client fee decision maker of any expenses incurred in the guardianship.

4 Service Voucher for Home Help and Child Care Services for Families with Children

Families with children can receive a service voucher for temporary home help services in the case of a short-term need for extra services. The service voucher for temporary home service is worth EUR 26 per hour, and up to 40 vouchers may be granted for a three-month period.

A social welfare office-holder makes a decision concerning the service voucher, and the decision is sent to the client. The client personally chooses a service provider from among the contracting parties and orders the service. After receiving the service, the client pays the client's responsibility, i.e. the difference between the price of the service and the value of the service voucher, directly to the service provider.

5 Outsourced Home Help and Child Care Services for Families with Children

The social welfare office-holder may also decide to grant temporary or regular services for family work for families with children in the form of outsourced services.

The client pays for the services in accordance with the criteria for home service for families with children (Section 2) or the criteria for regular or continuous home service for families with children (Section 3).

6 Reduction of or exemption from client fees

On the basis of Section 11 of the Act on Client Charges in Healthcare and Social Welfare, the fee imposed for social welfare services and the fee imposed for health care services according to the client's capacity to pay must be waived or reduced to the extent that charging the fee would undermine the preconditions for the client's or family's livelihood or the client's statutory maintenance obligations. Applying for a reduction in the client fee or exemption from the fee takes precedence over income support.

Reduction of or exemption from client fees is applied for using the appropriate application form or a free-form application. The application must state the fee for which a reduction or exemption is applied for, the start date and grounds. The decision on the reduction or exemption is made on

the basis of case-specific consideration.

Inquiries on client fee reduction or exemption:

Social and Health Services, Client Fees
Tel. +358 9 8165 7261, weekdays 9:00–13:00
E-mail: asiakasmaksut@espoo.fi
www.espoo.fi/asiakasmaksut

7 Contact information

Inquiries on client fees:

Sosiaali- ja terveystoimen esikunta (Social and Health Services, Sector Management)
Asiakasmaksut ja korvaukset (Client fees and compensation)
P.O. Box 207, 02070 City of Espoo
E-mail: asiakasmaksut@espoo.fi
Tel.: +358 9 816 57261, weekdays 9:00–13:00

Inquiries on home service for families with children:

Social services for families with children – guidance and advice
Tel.: +358 9 816 23600, weekdays 9:00–14:00