Northeast Indiana
Early Childhood
Coalition

NEIECC Tri-Share+ Policies
(Updated July 2025)

I. Program Eligibility

1. Household Composition and Income Policy

To determine income eligibility for the Tri-Share+ program, NEIECC applies household composition rules consistent with Indiana's CCDF guidelines.

Definition of Household:
A household includes the applicant and all individuals residing with the applicant who are financially responsible for the child(ren), including but not limited to:

- Spouses or domestic partners
- Biological or adoptive parents
- Legal guardians
- Any adult living in the home who contributes to the support of the child(ren)

NEIECC reserves the right to request additional documentation or clarification to ensure program integrity and alignment with state standards.

2. Tri-Share+ Eligibility Policy: Parent Employment or Activity Requirement

To ensure equitable access to Tri-Share+ child care cost-sharing benefits while maintaining alignment with state and federal child care assistance standards, this policy establishes the employment and activity criteria for parents or legal guardians participating in the program.

Policy Statement

Tri-Share+ provides child care cost-sharing support to working families in Northeast Indiana. To qualify, participating households must demonstrate that each parent or legal guardian residing in the household meets one of the approved employment or qualifying activity categories listed below.

This requirement ensures that Tri-Share+ resources are directed to families with an ongoing need for child care due to work, education, or documented inability to provide full-time care.

Approved Employment or Activity Categories

Each parent or legal guardian in the household must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. **Employment**
    - The parent is currently employed (full-time or part-time) and receives regular wages, salary, or self-employment income.
    - Proof of employment may include recent pay stubs, an employer verification form, or self-employment documentation (e.g., profit and loss statement or recent tax filing).
2. **Education or Job Training**
    - The parent is enrolled in an accredited or recognized educational or job training program leading to a diploma, degree, or professional certification.
    - Acceptable verification includes a current class schedule, enrollment letter, or documentation from the educational institution.
3. **Medical Disability or Incapacity**
    - The parent is medically unable to work or attend school due to a documented physical or mental health condition.
    - Verification must be provided from a licensed medical provider or through official documentation from the Social Security Administration (e.g., SSI or SSDI benefit letter).
    - This status exempts the parent from the employment requirement; however, documentation must confirm the condition prevents the parent from providing daily care during working hours.

4. **Protective or Rehabilitative Circumstances**
    - The parent is engaged in an approved rehabilitation program or participating in services recommended by a licensed provider or state agency to address health, safety, or family stability concerns.
    - Verification may include a written referral or statement from a qualified professional or agency.

Documentation Requirements

Families must provide appropriate documentation for each adult in the household. Acceptable verification includes (as applicable):

- Recent pay stubs (dated within the last 60 days)
- Employer verification or new hire form
- Enrollment or class schedule from an educational or training program
- Physician’s statement or SSA award letter verifying disability
- Agency referral or treatment plan verifying rehabilitative participation

All documentation must clearly state the individual’s name, dates of activity, and the source organization.

Duration and Reverification

Eligibility related to employment or activity is subject to periodic review. Participants must notify NEIECC within **30 days** of any change in employment, educational enrollment, or household composition that could affect eligibility.

NEIECC reserves the right to request updated documentation at renewal or any time a change is reported.

Non-Compliance

Failure to maintain an approved employment or qualifying activity status for each parent or guardian may result in suspension or termination of Tri-Share+ participation.

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2. Income Eligibility for Unpredictable or Commission-Based Pay

Families with variable or commission-based income are eligible to participate in Tri-Share; however, additional documentation may be required to determine eligibility fairly and consistently.

When income is unpredictable—such as in a new job with a commission structure or a recent change in commission arrangement—NEIECC staff will:

1. **Request a Recent W-2**
   If a W-2 from the previous tax year more accurately reflects the applicant's income, it will be used.

2. **If a W-2 Is Not Representative:**
   Applicants must provide documentation of any base pay as well as their lowest and highest monthly earnings within the past 6 months (or since the start of the commission-based role). NEIECC will average these amounts to determine monthly income.

All documentation and income calculations will be recorded in our secure system. Participants are requalified annually based on their original entry date into the program.

NEIECC staff are available to help families navigate the documentation process.

II. Program Coverage & Exclusions

3. Maximum Reimbursable Child Care Rate

Tri-Share+ reimburses child care costs up to the state-approved CCDF reimbursement rate for a Level 4 licensed provider in Allen County according to the child's age.

Any amount above the CCDF maximum is the family's responsibility.

This policy aligns with state standards and ensures equitable use of funds. NEIECC's board will review rates annually.

4. Drop-In Care Exclusion Policy

Tri-Share does not cover drop-in or occasional care. Childcare must be consistent, scheduled, and ongoing.

To qualify, a child must be enrolled in a licensed program with a predictable weekly schedule and cost structure.

NEIECC staff are happy to assist families in identifying care arrangements that align with program requirements.

III. Participation Policies

5. Unpaid Time and Leave Policy

Tri-Share+ benefits may be temporarily suspended during unpaid leave periods. NEIECC will work with individual employers in determining the policy that aligns with their benefit policies. These may include:

- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Parental or maternity leave
- Short-term disability (unpaid)
- Medical leave not covered by FMLA
- Bereavement or caregiver leave
- Personal leave of absence
- Temporary layoff or furlough without pay

1. Notification Required:
Participants or their employer must notify NEIECC of unpaid leave, including:

- Start and end dates
- Child care enrollment status

- Intent to return to work

2. Temporary Suspension of Benefits:
During the unpaid leave:

- NEIECC will not apply the subsidy
- Employers will not be invoiced
- The employee is responsible for 100% of tuition if care continues

3. Reinstatement:
To resume benefits, the employee must:

- Notify NEIECC of return to active work
- Resume payroll deductions
- Confirm the child is still enrolled

If leave exceeds 30 days, reinstatement is subject to availability.

4. Employer Verification:
NEIECC may verify return-to-work dates and leave status directly with the employer.

6. Single Employer Participation Policy

Employees may only access Tri-Share or Co-Share through one participating employer. Dual participation is not permitted.

NEIECC may request employment documentation. Noncompliance may result in program suspension or termination.

IV. Operational Requirements

7. ACH Payment Policy for Providers

To ensure prompt reimbursement, providers must enroll in ACH. Exceptions are considered case-by-case but may result in delayed payments.

8. Payroll Deduction Timeline and Account Review

NEIECC will aim to provide payroll deduction info to employers two weeks prior to payroll deadlines. In the event of delays, NEIECC will communicate promptly.

NEIECC will conduct periodic account reviews to confirm proper cost-sharing between employers and employees. Discrepancies will be addressed directly with affected parties.

9. Care Change Form Policy

Participants must submit a Care Change Form when:

- Changing providers
- Adjusting schedules or rates
- Switching between school-year and summer care

NEIECC will prompt updates at key times (e.g., start/end of school year). Failure to submit changes may lead to incorrect billing or suspension of benefits.