

STUDENT CARE FEE ASSISTANCE (SCFA)

HANDBOOK FOR SCFA ADMINISTRATOR CENTRES



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INTRODUCTION

1. The SCFA Scheme provides fee assistance for children from lower-income working families, who attend student care in centres which are registered with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) i.e. SCFA Administrator centres.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

2. The SCFA Handbook provides guidelines on the administration of the SCFA Scheme. When there are changes to these guidelines, MSF will update the Handbook and circulate the updated version to SCFA Administrator Centres accordingly.
3. All centres are responsible for ensuring that their staff are informed of these guidelines, and administer the scheme based on the latest SCFA Handbook.

BACKGROUND ON SCFA SCHEME

4. The SCFA Scheme provides fee assistance for children from lower-income working families enrolled in MSF-registered Student Care Centres (SCCs).
5. Under the scheme, successful applicants will receive a monthly fee subsidy and/or a one-time Start-Up Grant (SUG). MSF disburses the subsidies to the SCC, where it then deducts the subsidy against the SCC monthly fees, to derive the amount payable by applicants (co-payment).
6. The level of SCFA approved depends on the family's monthly gross household income (GHHI) or monthly per capita income (PCI).

Commonly referred terms:

7. **Higher Subsidies** i.e. a higher level of SCFA subsidy than the amount a family would typically receive based on their household or per capita income. An applicant may appeal for higher subsidies if faced with extenuating family circumstances, for which more help is needed to pay the monthly SCC fees. The applicant can submit an appeal on his/her own (via self-referral) or supported by a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from the social worker working with the family.
8. **Special Student Care Centres (SSCCs)** provides before-and-after school care services to children with special needs, who attend Special Education (SPED) schools.

ROLE OF SCFA ADMINISTRATOR CENTRES

9. SCFA administrator centres must understand the scheme’s eligibility criteria and the different processes involved in administering the scheme. This will help centres to collect a complete set of application and supporting documents from the applicants, and minimise the need for MSF to request additional information or supporting documents, if the application is incomplete.
10. Centres submit the SCFA applications and supporting documents to MSF by uploading them onto the Enhanced Student Care Portal: www.msf.gov.sg/studentcare. A CorpPass Account is required to access the Portal.

SCFA ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

S/N	Criteria	Definitions
1	Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student must be Singapore Citizen (SC) or Permanent Resident of Singapore (SPR)¹.• If the student is an <u>SPR</u>, at least one immediate family member (parent or sibling) of the student must be a Singapore citizen. If the Singapore citizen parent is deceased or does not have legal custody of the student (in the event of the parents’ divorce), the

¹ A student who is issued with an Entry Permit (EP) or Re-entry Permit (REP) is considered a PR. However, a student born before 15 January 2005 may be allowed to stay in Singapore without being placed on restricted stay, although he is not issued an EP or REP. The status of such children can be verified by Permanent Resident Services Centre of the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) of Singapore.

S/N	Criteria	Definitions
		<p>student would still be considered as having met the citizenship criterion because an immediate family member is a Singapore citizen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an SPR student becomes a member of a reconstituted family (e.g. through a parent's remarriage) which includes Singapore citizens, then the citizenship of the step-parent would qualify the student for SCFA.²
2	Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must be between 7 and 14 years old (or up till Secondary 2) in the year of SCFA application or renewal. • If the child attends Special Student Care Centre (SSCC), the student must be between 7 and 18 years old.
3	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parents must each be working at least 56 hours per month. • A parent can be exempted from the employment criterion if he/she is in the process of looking for work, is medically certified unfit to work, certified as a caregiver of a family dependent (e.g. caregiver for a child with special needs, elderly dependent etc.), is studying or undergoing training. Such

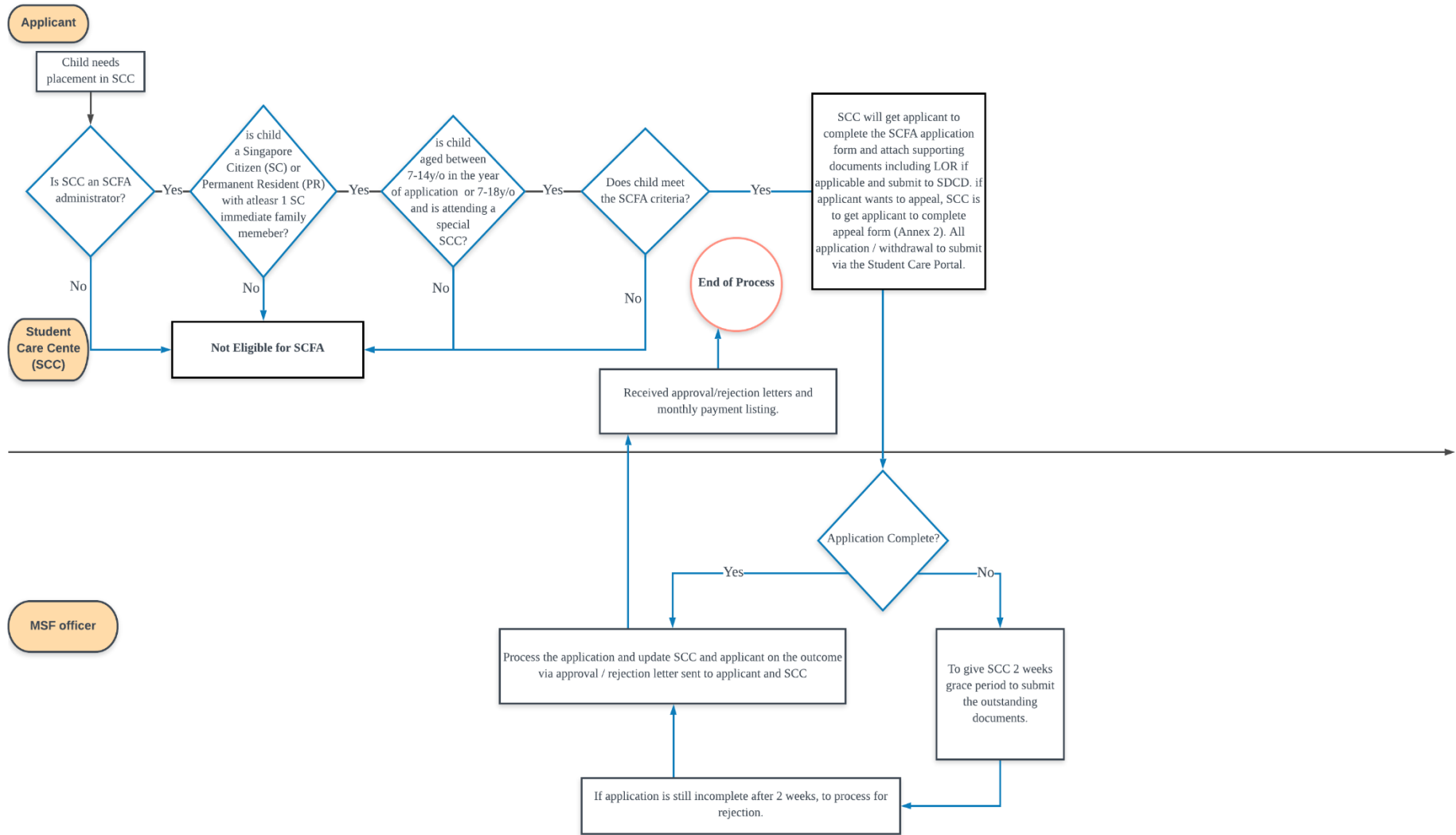
² For example, the biological parents of a child are both SPRs. His parents divorced, leaving him in his mother's custody. His mother subsequently re-married to a Singapore citizen. The student is eligible to apply for SCFA because his stepfather is a Singapore citizen, even though both his biological parents are not.

S/N	Criteria	Definitions
		<p>exemptions must be supported by the relevant supporting document.</p>
4	Income (Household)	<p>For households with 4 or fewer family members.</p> <p>Total gross household income (GHHI) should not exceed \$4,500 a month.</p> <p>The GHHI refers to the <u>combined gross income of the child's parents only</u>. It does not include the income of other working family members e.g. child's siblings, uncles, aunts or grandparents living in the same household.</p> <p>The household income includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Income from work (including regular income from temporary work). b) Regular allowances (e.g. shift allowances, training allowances etc). c) Regular incentives. d) Overtime pay. e) Commission (take an average of 3 months, by self- declaration if necessary). f) For property or insurance agent - Monthly gross income is based on the average earnings per month over 12 months. g) Pension. h) Income from subletting of room(s).

S/N	Criteria	Definitions
		<p>Components that are not received regularly (e.g. bonus) should not be included in the calculation.</p>
5	Income (PCI)	<p>For households with 5 or more family members living in the same household/address.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Per Capita Income (PCI) should be equal to or less than \$1,125. • PCI is calculated as follows: $\frac{\text{Total Gross Income of Applicant + Spouse}}{\text{Total No. of Family Members within the same household}}$ <p>“Family Members within the same household” include:</p> <p>Applicant + Spouse + total Dependents* who do not earn any income.</p> <p><i>*Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applicant’s / Spouse’s parents with no income.</i> • <i>School-going children.</i> • <i>Children studying full-time but working part-time e.g. engaged in holiday job with irregular, low income (income is not included).</i> • <i>Children waiting to enlist into National Service (NS).</i> • <i>Children serving NS (NS allowance is not included).</i> • <i>Waiting to start school or seeking employment.</i>

For the list of supporting documents to be submitted together with the application, please refer to the [Checklist of Supporting Documents](#).

OVERVIEW OF SCFA APPLICATION PROCESS



ESTIMATING MONTHLY CO-PAYMENT BY APPLICANTS BEFORE CONFIRMATION OF APPROVED SCFA SUBSIDY

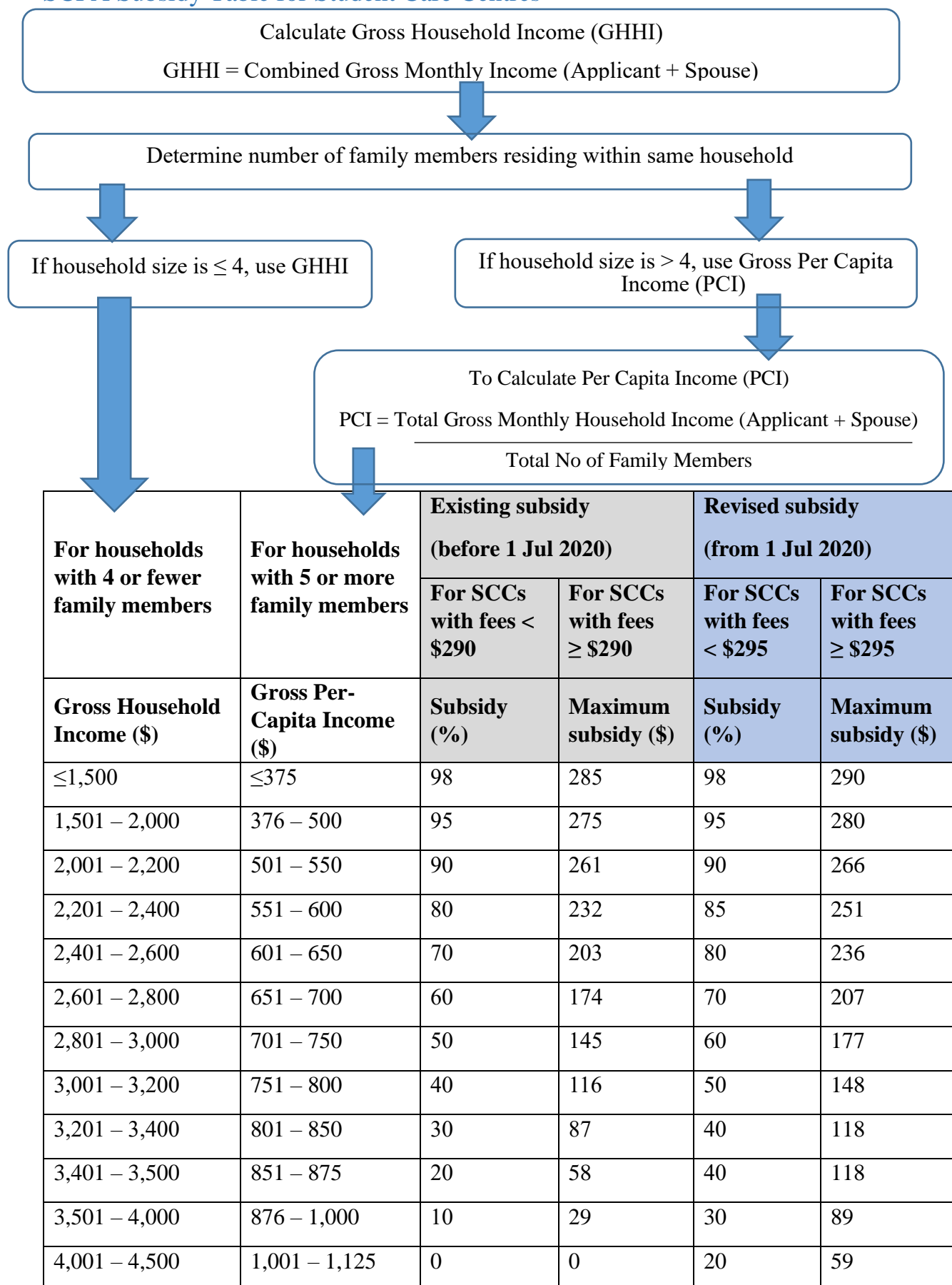
11. Whilst awaiting MSF's confirmation of the application outcome and approved monthly subsidy, the SCC can estimate the applicants' monthly fee co-payment using the Online Subsidy Calculator in the Enhanced Student Care Portal³.

12. The SCC is strongly encouraged to estimate the co-payment based on the latest household income and family circumstances, and not advise applicants to co-pay the same amount as before. The SCFA approved amount for the latest application may differ from the previous amount due to changes in the applicants' household income or circumstances.

13. The Administrator should note that the SCC's estimate of the SCFA subsidy and applicant's co-payment may differ from MSF's assessment. Nonetheless, this is a useful exercise, as it gives applicants a sense of the amount payable every month.

³ The Enhanced Student Care Portal is accessible via <https://www.msf.gov.sg/studentcare>.

SCFA Subsidy Table for Student Care Centres



Worked Examples

Refer to the SCFA subsidy table above for subsidy percentage and maximum SCFA amount, for the corresponding household income or PCI.

Example 1

Monthly SCC Fee: \$250 Household Size: 6 members		
Total HH Income: \$1,500 PCI: \$250 SCFA(98% of \$250): \$245 Parent's payment: \$5	Total HH Income: \$2,500 PCI: \$416.67 SCFA(95% of \$250): \$238 Parent's Payment: \$12	Total HH Income: \$5,900 PCI: \$983 SCFA(30% of \$250): \$75 Parent's Payment: \$175

Example 2

Monthly SCC Fee: \$300 Household Size: 4 members		
Total HH Income: \$1,500 SCFA : \$290 Parent's Payment: \$10	Total HH Income: \$2,500 SCFA : \$236 Parent's Payment: \$64	Total HH Income: \$4,100 SCFA : \$59 Parent's Payment: \$241

Outcome of SCFA application

14. SCCs will be informed of the SCFA application outcome via the Enhanced Student Care Portal. MSF will also follow up to send a letter⁴ to the applicant, SCC and the LOR agency (if applicable).
15. For approved applications, MSF will also send the Monthly Payment Listing of SCFA approved cases, with details of the SCFA amount and duration of assistance to the SCC.

⁴ For unsuccessful applications, the reason(s) for the application to be unsuccessful will be reflected.

START-UP GRANT (SUG)

16. The Start-Up Grant (SUG) is a one-time grant to help offset the initial costs of enrolling a student into a student care programme.

17. Students receiving SCFA for the first time and have not received an SUG before, may apply for the grant. It is provided if the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for the monthly SCFA subsidy.

18. SUG includes:

- a. Registration fee;
- b. Deposit (equivalent to one month's fee);
- c. Insurance fee⁵ (applicable for community-based SCCs only); and
- d. Uniforms (capped at 3 days' requirement).

The maximum claim under SUG is \$400, inclusive of GST (if applicable). When approved, all the SUG components will be paid to SCC except for the deposit which will only be released under certain conditions.

Release of SUG Deposit to SCC

19. The deposit held by MSF will be released to the SCC when the parent fails to give at least 1-month notice to the centre, prior to the withdrawal of the child from the SCC.

⁵ The insurance fee is not claimable for school-based SCCs.

Example 3A

The parent informs the SCC at the start of, or earlier than, the month of the student's withdrawal. For instance, on 1 April 2020 the parent informed the SCC that the student is withdrawing from the centre, with the last day of attendance on 30 April 2020. If the student leaves the SCC before 30 April 2020, the SCC can submit a claim to MSF for the release of the SUG Deposit, because withdrawal had taken place without one month's notice.

Example 3B

The parent gives notice of the withdrawal less than one month from the last day of attendance (for example, the parent informs SCC of the withdrawal on 10 April 2020 and the student's last day was 30 April 2020). The SCC can submit a claim for the SUG Deposit (if applicable) held by MSF, as the withdrawal was without one month's notice.

20. Without the one month's notice of withdrawal, the deposit can still be released to the centre, even after the student subsequently ceases to qualify for, or receive, SCFA monthly subsidy.

Example 3C

A student was approved for SUG and SCFA when she first enrolled into the SCC. But in subsequent periods, she no longer qualified for SCFA as her family's income had increased and exceeded the income eligibility criterion. If the student withdrew from the SCC without giving at least

one-month notice, the SCC may request for a release of the deposit which was held by MSF.

21.If a student does not attend student care for up to one month, the SCC should keep a record of the number of attempts (phone calls/ emails/ letters) made to contact the parents within the period. If uncontactable, the SCC should inform MSF immediately of the student's absenteeism by submitting a Withdrawal Form to terminate the child's subsidy for subsequent months. The SCC can then appeal for MSF to waive the attendance requirement for a month (see section on attendance requirement), and a release of SUG Deposit (if any). However, the SCC must provide documentation of the attempts, or successful contact, with the absent student or his parents, during that month.

22.If a student's application is supported with a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from a social worker working with the family, there is a longer grace period of two months, before the SCC reports the student's withdrawal. The SCC:

- should keep a record of the number of attempts (phone calls/ emails/ letters) made to contact the parents within the 2 months;
- should inform the social worker/school counsellor of the student's frequent absenteeism or non-attendance of student care;
- can submit a Withdrawal Form to MSF after 2 months of non-attendance to terminate the student's SCFA henceforth;
- can appeal for waiver of attendance requirement for the 2 months and a release of the SUG deposit (if applicable), provided that it can provide documentation to show efforts to contact the student during the 2 months.

APPLICATIONS SUPPORTED BY LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (LOR) BY MSF-APPROVED AGENCIES (HIGHER SUBSIDIES)

Target Group

23. Families who are known to MSF-approved Social Service Agencies (SSAs) may be issued with a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) for higher SCFA subsidies. The SCC should submit the student's SCFA application form and supporting documents with the LOR to MSF for processing.

Eligibility Criteria

Citizenship	Student must be Singapore Citizen (SC). If student is a Permanent Resident of Singapore (SPR), at least 1 immediate family member is an SC.
Age	Student is between 7-14 years old. Those attending Special SCCs can be between 7 and 18 years old.
Case managed by MSF or an MSF-approved SSA	The family is being case managed by an MSF-approved SSA, or MSF itself. MSF or the SSA must have managed the case for at least 6 months prior to the application, or will continue to manage the family for the next 6 months.
Risk factors	The family faces particular risk factors, over and above financial difficulties. The risks have been assessed by the social worker supporting the family.

	Examples of risk factors include single or absent parents in the family, housing issues, parent or other household members having poor health/ serious medical condition and unable to work, and so forth.
Monthly Gross Household Income (GHHI) or Per Capita Income (PCI)	The family's monthly GHHI is not more than \$2,000 , or the PCI is \$650 or lower. If the applicant has exceeded the income criteria for the scheme, the Agency should obtain in-principle approval from MSF before submitting an LOR to support the application.

Start-Up Grant (SUG)

24. LOR Agencies can appeal for SUG more than once for the same child.

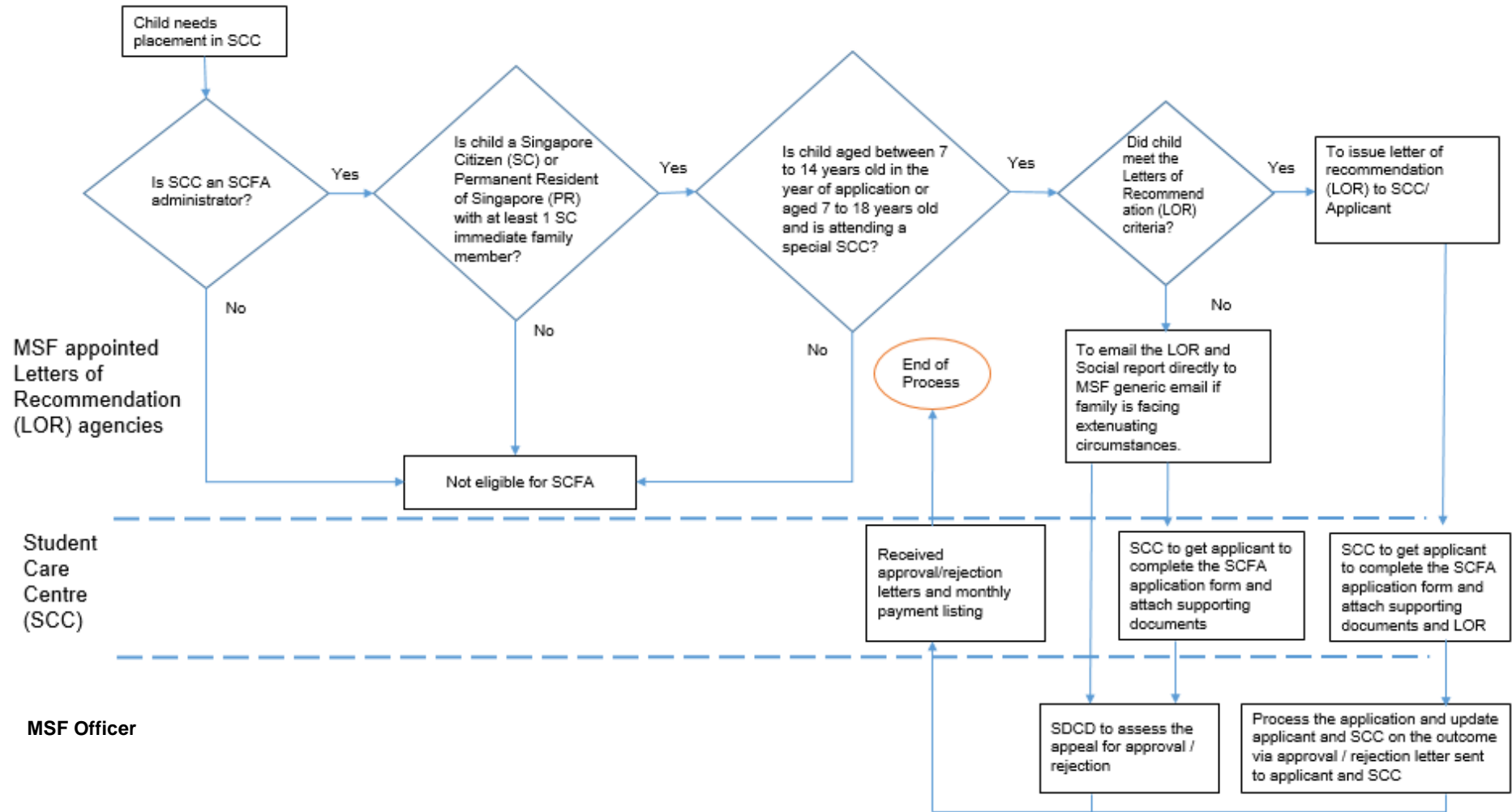
Holiday Surcharges

25. LOR Agencies can recommend that holiday surcharges be covered by SCFA in the months of March, June, September, November and December. These are months when the SCC operates full day instead of half-day.

Supporting Documents Required for LOR Cases

26. To ensure the timely processing of SCFA applications, the SCC must submit all supporting documents for the applications (similar to other cases), together with the LOR. If the applicant is unable to provide some of the supporting documents, the SCC can obtain an explanation from the Agency for the missing documents.

SCFA WORKFLOW FOR APPLICATIONS SUPPORTED WITH LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (LOR) FROM MSF DIVISION OR SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES (SSA)



MONTHLY DISBURSEMENT OF SCFA SUBSIDY TO SCCS

27. MSF disburses SCFA subsidies to the SCC for all approved cases.
28. Upon disbursement, MSF will send the Monthly Payment Listing to SCCs with the list of approved cases, their monthly SCFA subsidy and duration of assistance. The SCC will then deduct the subsidy against the centre's fees to derive the monthly co-payment amount by parents.

Example 4

Student care fee: \$300 per month

Approved SCFA per month (from Monthly Payment Listing): \$145

Parent's co-payment per month: $\$300 - \$145 = \$155$

29. MSF will send the letter of approval or rejection of SCFA to the applicant, copied to the SCC.

ASSISTANCE PERIOD FOR SCFA SUBSIDIES

30. The SCFA assistance period ranges from shorter periods of 6 months or less (interim assistance) and up to 24 months. The period of assistance is dependent on the facts concerning the case and the audit status of the SCC.

MANDATORY 30% (JUNE AND DECEMBER) AND 50% ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT (REMAINING MONTHS)

Calculation of the 30% or 50% Attendance Requirement

31. An SCFA beneficiary is required to attain an attendance rate of at least 30% per month for June and December and 50% per month for the remaining calendar months in an SCC in order to be eligible to receive the SCFA subsidy for the month. Attendance rate shall be calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{(B + C)}{A}$$

Where,

- a) “A” refers to the number of calendar days in which the Centre operates in the calendar month¹,
- b) “B” refers to the number of calendar days in which the Student attends the Centre in the calendar month, and
- c) “C” refers to the number of calendar days in which the Student is absent with a valid reason in the calendar month².

32. Once the SCC ascertains that the child’s attendance rate falls below 30% or 50% for a given calendar month, the SCC is required to refund the SCFA subsidy disbursed to MSF within the next calendar month.

Notes:

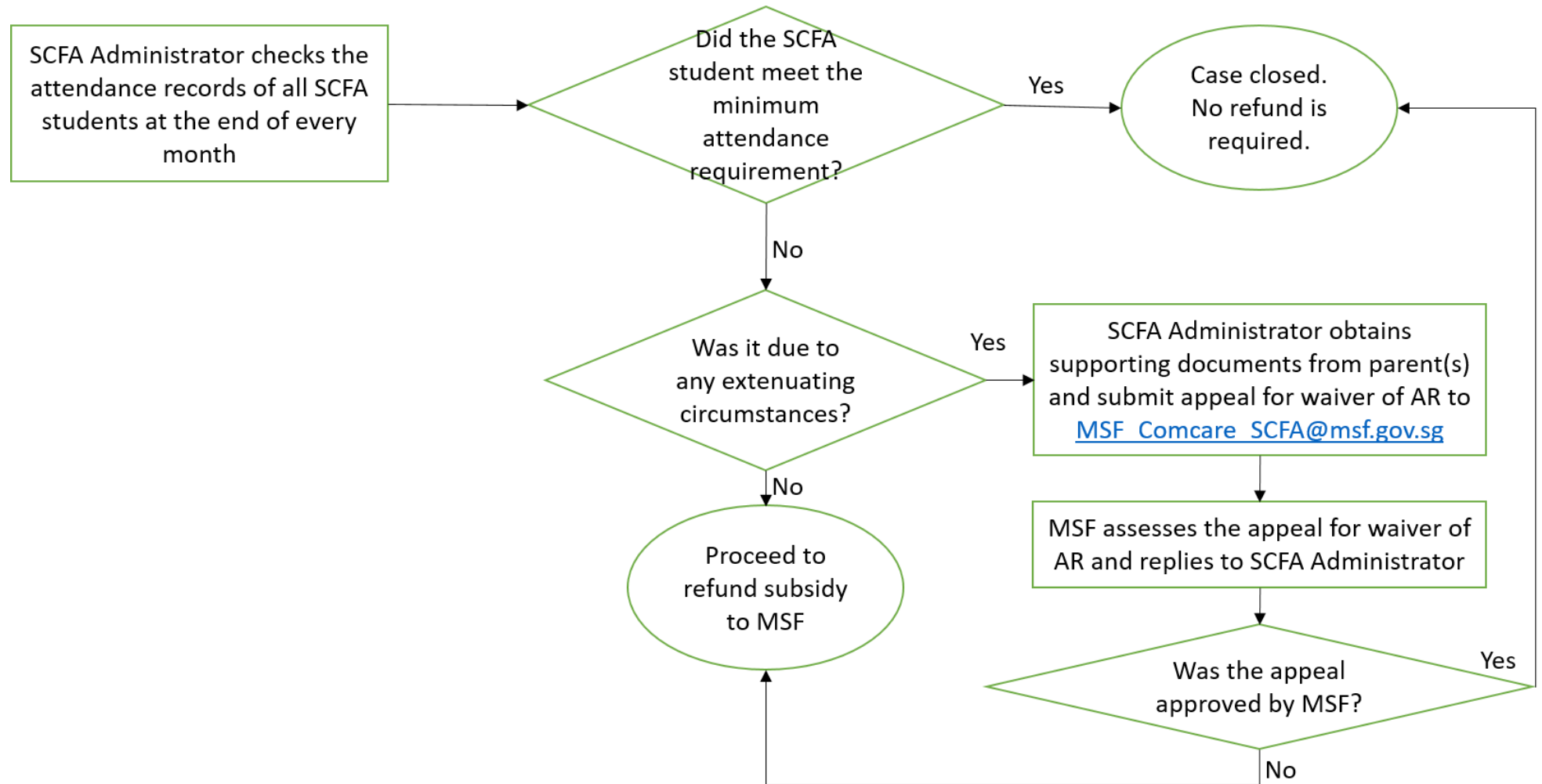
¹ If the Student is not enrolled in the beginning of the Month, (A) will be based on the number of calendar days in which the Centre operates in the month since the Student is enrolled. If the Centre operates on Saturday, the number of operating days will include the Saturdays.

² Valid reasons stipulated by MSF are: when the Student(s) has valid medical certificate, (b) engages in school activities outside of the Centre (e.g. co-curricular activities, supplementary classes, training for sport and national tournament), or (c) engages in enrichment activities organised by VWOs outside of the Centre.

Appeal for Waiver of 30% or 50% Attendance Requirement

33. For students deemed to have valid reasons for not attending the student care regularly, the SCC may submit appeals to MSF for the waiver of 30% (for June and December only), or 50% attendance requirement (all other months). Please refer to the SCFA Appeal for Waiver of Attendance Requirement Form for the examples of valid reasons.
34. Appeals must be submitted via email to MSF_Comcare_SCFA@msf.gov.sg **no later than 3 months from the period when the minimum attendance was not met** (e.g. if the SCFA beneficiary did not meet the attendance requirement in December 2019, the SCC is required to submit the appeal latest by March 2020).
35. To appeal for waiver of attendance requirement, the SCC Administrator is to submit the following:
- a) SCFA Attendance Appeal Form indicating the number of days the child attended the SCC during the period (refer to the *Annex: SCFA Forms and Templates* that MSF has circulated);
 - b) Documents to support the appeal (e.g. medical certificate, appeal letter from parent stating the reasons for child's absence during the period etc. depending on the basis of the appeal).

WORKFLOW FOR APPEALS FOR WAIVER OF MINIMUM ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT



CHANGE OF OPERATOR

36. In the event that Centre A issues a closure notification and informs MSF that a new Centre B will take over its operation, existing students who are transferred to Centre B will continue to enjoy the period of subsidy originally approved until expiry. This is to avoid disruption to the SCFA earlier approved, as such change is not within the parents' control.

37. To ensure that payments continue, the receiving operator is required to:

- re-submit Sections IX (Details of SCFA Subsidy and Start Up Grant), Section X (SCC Particulars) and Section XI (Declaration by the SCC) of the SCFA application form for each transferred student;
- write the student's name and birth certificate number on the top of Section IX; there is no need to obtain parents' signature on the form;
- for students whose subsidies are expiring or have ended, the receiving operator needs to get the parent to submit the full set of documents for a renewal of SCFA;
 - (i) If there are new SUG components needed under the receiving operator (i.e. new uniform, insurance, deposit or registration fee), transiting children can apply for SUG again. The receiving operator is required to fill the SUG component in Section IX of the form and resubmit it to MSF for processing. No appeal for second SUG is required for such a scenario.
 - (ii) A student attended Centre A and received SUG. Then he withdrew from Centre A on his own accord and enrolled into Centre B. Centre B changed its operator and became Centre C. The student will not be

eligible for SUG at Centre C.

WITHDRAWAL OF SCFA BENEFICIARY FROM SCC

38. When a student withdraws from the SCC, the SCC should submit the Withdrawal Form to MSF immediately (defined as the child's last day) stating the reason and date of the student's withdrawal. This arrangement allows SCC and MSF to determine if the attendance requirement for the month has been met.
39. If the student's last day in the SCC does not fall on the last day of the calendar month, the attendance rate shall be calculated based on the number of days the student attended the SCC in the calendar month, divided by the number of calendar days in which the Centre operates in the calendar month.
40. Withdrawal from the SCC without one month's notice: If a student's parent/guardian does not give the SCC one month's notice of the student's intended withdrawal, the SCC can request to draw down the SUG Deposit held by MSF (if applicable). The deposit will be released within 1 month upon receiving the Withdrawal Form from the SCC.
41. If any part of the disbursed SCFA subsidy is unused when the student withdraws, the SCC should refund this remaining SCFA to MSF. If the SCC mistakenly gives the unused SCFA subsidy to the student's parents, the SCC shall remain liable to refund the amount to MSF. No part of the refundable SCFA subsidy should be used to offset any arrears in student care fees, which applicants have not paid.

Payment of Refund from Student Care Centre (SCC) to MSF

42. All SCCs should adopt an electric payment mode to MSF (e.g. GIRO or Interbank transfer).

MSF's bank information:

Bank Account Name: AG/MSF

Bank Name: DBS Bank Limited

Bank Code: 7171

Branch Code: 015

Bank Account Number: 015-020294-7

When refunding to MSF, the Centre must submit the SCFA Giro Refunds to *MSF* Excel file (Please refer to the *SCFA Forms and Templates* that MSF had circulated.).

RENEWAL OF SCFA APPLICATIONS

Before Expiry of SCFA Subsidy

43. The SCC should:

- identify those cases whose subsidies are expiring in 2 months' time;
- assess whether the families are still keen or eligible to apply for SCFA;
- if eligible, advise applicants to complete the application form and to submit the relevant supporting documents;
- ask applicants to submit income statements over 3 months from the date of application, or the new start period of SCFA, whichever is earlier (see table below);

- submit the completed forms and relevant supporting documents to MSF for processing through the SCFA Portal.

Timeline for Submitting Applications & Duration of Income Documents Require

Current SCFA ends	New SCFA starts	Submit Renewal Application from	CPF Contribution Statements for months	Pay-slips for months
August	September	July	March to May	April to June
September	October	August	April to June	May to July
October	November	September	May to July	June to August
November	December	October	June to August	July to September
December	January	November	July to September	August to October
January	February	December	August to October	September to November
February	March	January	September to November	October to December
March	April	February	October to December	November to January
April	May	March	November to January	December to February
May	June	April	December to February	January to March
June	July	May	January to March	February to April
July	August	June	February to April	March to May

After Expiry of SCFA

44. MSF will assess requests for backdating of SCFA on a case-by-case basis. The following documents should be submitted with the SCFA application form when requesting for SCFA to be back dated:

- If SCFA expired less than 6 months from the period of application, the application must include income documents covering a continuous period 3 months before, during or after the new start month for SCFA.

Example 5

The SCC submits an application to MSF in May 2020, requesting for SCFA to start from June 2019. The SCC should collect and submit the applicant's income documents for any 3 continuous months between July 2019 and April 2020, as follows:

- July 2019 to September 2019; or
- October 2019 to December 2019; or
- January 2020 to March 2020; or
- February 2020 to April 2020.

- If SCFA has expired more than 6 months from the period of application, the centre must:
 - i. submit an Appeal Form (Annex 2) and highlight the reason/s for the late submission;
 - ii. submit the child's attendance records for every month since after the expiry period until the most recent month;
 - iii. indicate if student has met 50% attendance (30% for June and December) for each month;
 - iv. submit income documents from the start of new subsidy period till current date. If SCC submits application in August 2020 for subsidy to start from 1 January 2020, MSF requires income documents from January to July 2020.

SCFA SUBSIDY FOR SPECIAL STUDENT CARE CENTRES

For households with 4 or less family members	For households with 5 or more family members	MSF Funding	Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) Subsidies	Total Subsidies
Gross Household Income (HHI) tiers	Gross Per Capita Income (PCI) tiers			
≤ \$1,500	≤ \$375	\$325	\$821	\$1146
\$1,501 – \$2,000	\$376 – \$500		\$814	\$1139
\$2,001 – \$2,800	\$501 – \$700		\$797	\$1122
\$2,801 – \$3,500	\$701 – \$875		\$754	\$1079
\$3,501 – \$4,200	\$876 – \$1,050		\$690	\$1015
\$4,201 – \$4,500	\$1,051 – \$1,125		\$582	\$907
\$4,501 – \$5,600	\$1,126 – \$1,400		\$517	\$842
\$5,601 – \$6,500	\$1,401 – \$1,625		\$332	\$657
\$6,501 – \$7,300	\$1,626 – \$1,825		\$232	\$557
\$7,301 – \$8,200	\$1,826 – \$2,050		\$102	\$427
\$8,201-9,200	\$2,051 – \$2,300		\$32	\$357
>\$9,201	>\$2,301		\$0	\$325

45. Special Student Care Centres (SSCCs) offer subsidies to eligible students attending student care at its centres. From July 2020, MSF introduced an additional funding to support SSCC operators in offering special student care services. The funding is a fixed amount of \$325 per student per month and is disbursed together with the Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) subsidy.

Deriving Parent's Co-payment of SSCC Fees

46. To calculate the fee that parents need to pay every month, please follow the steps:

Step 1: Calculate the SCFA subsidy

$$\begin{array}{rclcl} \text{SCFA subsidy} & = & \text{Monthly Grant Amount} & \text{minus} & \text{MSF Funding} \\ & = & \$1,139 & \text{minus} & \$325 \text{ (fixed)} \\ & = & \$814 & & \end{array}$$

Step 2: Calculate amount payable by family

$$\begin{array}{rclcl} \text{Amount payable} & & \text{Monthly Fee} & \text{minus} & \text{SCFA Subsidy} \\ \text{(Before GST)} & = & \text{(Before GST)} & & \\ & = & \$832 & \text{minus} & \$814 \\ & = & \$18 & & \end{array}$$

Hence, if the monthly SSCC fee is \$832, parents would have to pay an out-of-pocket amount of \$18 after subsidies.

MSF will provide a total of \$1,139 in subsidies and funding.

The amount payable is before GST if applicable. If the child is enrolled in a GST-registered centre, the amount payable may include GST.

THE STUDENT CARE FEE ASSISTANCE STREAMLINED ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (SCFA SAP)

47. The Student Care Fee Assistance Streamlined Assessment Protocol (SCFA SAP) is an effort to simplify the SCFA application process for applicants who are receiving Comcare assistance (such as Short-to-Medium Term assistance, or Long-Term Assistance) from the Social Service Office (SSO).
48. Under the SAP, the applicants would need to submit minimal supporting documents when applying for SCFA at the student care centre as SSOs will share the necessary information backend to facilitate SCFA application.
49. The SCCs only need to collect the following documents under SAP:
- a) Completed SCFA application form;
 - b) Letter of approval for ComCare assistance from SSO, together with an Annex titled “Beneficiary Details for Application for SCFA at SCCs”;
 - c) Applicant’s NRIC;
 - d) Child’s Birth Certificate;
 - e) For agency referrals, to submit the Letter of Recommendation (LOR) provided by the social worker.
50. SCCs can submit the application through the Enhanced Student Care Portal as per other applications. The SCFA Administrator should ensure that:
- a. the period of ComCare assistance remains current (should not have expired) when the parent/guardian applies for SCFA.
 - b. The child’s name should also be listed as a beneficiary in the Annex “Beneficiary Details for Application for SCFA at SCCs”.

51. If MSF needs additional information or documents from the applicant for processing the application, MSF will request for them through the SCCs.

52. Information about the SAP had been sent to all SCCs in Mar 2020.

ENHANCED ENROLMENT PROTOCOL (EEP) – FOR SCHOOL-BASED SCCS ONLY

53. The Green Lane process will cease from January 2021 and will be replaced by the EEP. The EEP is only applicable to the school-based SCCs. SCCs should refer to the EEP Guide for more details.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Applying for SCFA subsidy

Q1: Who can apply for the Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA)?

A1: A student can apply directly (Self-Referral) for SCFA if he/she meets the following criteria:

- a) Each parent work at least 56 hours per month. If any of them is not working, he or she must be looking for work, or have valid reasons for not working. The valid reasons include: parent being on medical leave, studying or undergoing training, is certified by a doctor as a full-time caregiver for a dependent family member or is imprisoned. The applicant must provide relevant supporting documents;
- b) The family's monthly gross household income is \$4,500 or less, or the monthly per capita income is \$1,125 or less;
- c) Student is a Singapore Citizen, or Singapore Permanent Resident (SPR) with at least one immediate family member (parent/sibling) in the same household who is a Singapore Citizen.
- d) Student must be between 7 and 14 years old if attending a regular SCC, or between 7 and 18 years old if attending a special SCC;
- e) The student attends an SCC registered with MSF.

If a child's family is known to MSF, or an MSF-approved Social Service Agency (SSA), the caseworker can provide a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) seeking a higher level of SCFA subsidy. To qualify:

- a) both parents are working; if any of them is not working, he or she must be looking for work or has other valid reasons for not working (substantiated by supporting documents);
- b) MSF or the SSA must have managed the case for at least 6 months prior to the application, or will manage the family for the next 6 months; and
- c) the family's monthly gross household income is \$2,000 or less, or monthly per capita income is \$650 or less.

If the family's monthly gross household income exceeds \$2,000 or \$650 for per capita income, the referral agency should first obtain MSF's in-principle approval for the application, before submitting the LOR to the SCC.

Q2 For a student with 'absent' parents (e.g. in prison or remanded in a Drug Rehabilitation Centre, living in a residential facility (e.g. Nursing Home or Home for Disabled), or no longer in contact with the family), and they are being taken care of by relatives or other non-legal guardians), can their guardians apply for the scheme?

A2: Yes. However, the guardian who is submitting the application needs to account for the student's 'absent' parents by providing the relevant supporting documents for the application, such as:

- (i) Parent(s)' death certificate, if parent is deceased; or
 - (ii) A letter or a note from the residential facility (nursing home/ home for disabled) confirming that the parent(s) live in the facility; or
 - (iii) A Letter of Incarceration (LOI), or a letter from the prison or Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) with the estimated date of release, if the child's parent(s) are in prison or going through rehabilitation; or
 - (iv) If the guardian is not able to contact the parent and has no knowledge of the student's biological parents' whereabouts and income, the guardian may provide a written declaration using a Self-Declaration Form.
- The application would then be based on the NRIC address of the guardian.
 - If the student is under the care of a foster parent, the application should be accompanied by a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from an MSF Foster Care Officer or a Fostering Agency.

Q3: If the applicant is the student's legal guardian (as stated in a Court Order), would the same eligibility criteria apply?

A3: Yes, like biological parents, legal guardians have to fulfil all SCFA eligibility criteria. However, if the legal guardians are of retirement age (e.g. 62 years old), the employment criteria would not apply.

Q4: If a student's parents are divorced, can the parent who does not have "Care and Control" of the child apply for SCFA?

A4: If a student's parents are divorced, the SCFA application should be made by the parent who has been granted "Care and Control" * of the child by the Court. However, if the parent who is submitting the SCFA application, does not have "care and control" of the child, he/she should first provide a written declaration using a Self-Declaration Form.

**The "Care and Control" status is highlighted in a Court-issued divorce documents, such as the "Order of Court", "Interim Judgement" or "Final Judgement". If the applicant has lost the document, he/she can request for a copy of the document from the State Courts (fee chargeable).*

Q5: If both parents are uncontactable and the student resides in a Children's Home, who should be the applicant for SCFA?

A5: The Head/Administrator of the Children's Home would be able to apply for SCFA for the student.

Q6: Who should submit the SCFA application for a student who has been legally adopted?

A6: The adoptive parent/s can apply for SCFA, as long all eligibility criteria are met with supported legal adoption documents. The income and employment criteria would apply to the adopted parents.

Employment and Proof of Job Search

Q7: If a student's parent is retrenched, can he/she apply for SCFA?

A7: Yes. The parent should submit a copy of the retrenchment letter (if available) to verify his/her unemployment status. Alternatively, the parent can submit Annex 4: Proof of Job Search if he/she is looking for work. These are to be submitted together with the SCFA application form.

Q8: If the parent is a full-time student, can he/she apply for SCFA?

A8: Yes. If the parent is studying full-time in an MOE institution, a post-secondary educational institute, or other full-time tertiary education, he/she can submit the completed SCFA application form and supporting documents including the programme/course verification letter obtained from the school, stating the duration of study or course.

Other forms of education undertaken on a part-time basis will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by MSF.

Q9: Can the parent who is a holder of a social visit pass and who is not working apply for SCFA?

A9: Such a parent is usually not eligible to apply for SCFA, unless he/she has intention to find work and is able to provide a work permit, an employment pass, S pass, or a document to verify that he/she has applied for Long Term Visit Pass (LTVP)/ LTVP Plus (LTVP+). Acceptable proof of such applications include but is not limited to the following: E-application acknowledgement screenshot, appointment with ICA for collection of pass.

Q10: If one of the student's parent has an LTVP/ LTVP+, can he/she apply for SCFA?

A10: Yes, they can apply for SCFA as long as the parent is working or intending to look for work. If the parent is working, they need to submit their income documents. If parent is looking for job, they need to submit Proof of Job Search.

Q11: A foreigner parent is undergoing training but does not have a work permit. His/her employer will apply for the work permit only upon completion of the course. Can the parent apply for SCFA?

A11: A letter confirming that the parent is undergoing training would have to be submitted together with the SCFA application. The case will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

However, if the parent remains unemployed and is unable to obtain a work permit, the SCFA subsidy will be discontinued.

Q12: If the parent is working overseas, does he/she need to submit pay slips?

A12: Yes. The parent will need to produce income documents to support the application. Income documents showing a different currency from the Singapore Dollar is acceptable.

Q13: If the non-working parent is unable to find work by the end of the assistance period (usually 6 months), can he/she apply for a renewal of SCFA for the student?

A13: The parent may submit an updated Annex 4: Proof of Job Search or other job-search proof for his/her application, for an extension of SCFA. MSF will consider such applications on a case-by-case basis.

Q14: Can an unemployed pregnant mother be eligible for SCFA?

A14: Yes. MSF can provide short-term SCFA for such cases. The mother should provide a note from her gynaecologist stating the Estimated Date of Delivery (EDD). The mother must have plans to seek employment after delivery of the child.

Citizenship

Q15: How do we determine whether the student is a Singapore Permanent Resident (SPR)?

A15: An SPR student is issued with an Entry Permit (EP) or Re-entry Permit (REP).

Q16: What are the supporting documents required for a student who was not born as a Singapore Citizen but subsequently obtained Singapore Citizenship or Singapore Permanent Residency (SPR)?

A16: For such a student, the SCC should obtain both the Certificate of Singapore Citizenship/ Singapore PR identification documents as well as a photocopy of the student's birth certificate from his/her country of birth.

Monthly Gross Household Income

Q17: Which items should be included in the calculation of the Monthly Gross Household Income (GHHI)?

A17: The GHHI refers to the combined gross income of the child's parents only. It does not include the income of other working family members e.g. child's siblings, uncles, aunts or grandparents living in the same household.

The household income includes the following components:

- a) Income from work (including regular income from temporary work).
- b) Regular allowances (e.g. shift allowances, raining allowances etc).
- c) Regular incentives.
- d) Overtime pay.
- e) Commission (take an average of 3 months, by self declaration if necessary).
- f) For property or insurance agent - Monthly gross income is based on the average earnings per month over 12 months.
- g) Pension.
- h) Income from subletting of room(s).

Components that are not received regularly, such as bonus, should not be included in the calculation.

Q18: If a parent is unable to produce any income document because he/she works in odd jobs and the salary received is irregular, what should he/she submit?

A18: The parent can complete the Self-Declaration form to declare his/her employment status and the estimated monthly income (if working).

Q19 If parent is working as an odd-job worker/employed on an ad-hoc basis and is paid cash daily without pay slips/ CPF Contributions, what income documents can be submitted to support the application?

A19 Parent(s) should submit a Self-Declaration form indicating his/her household income if no supporting document/s can be provided.

Q20 If a parent is currently working as Private Hire Driver (e.g. GRAB, GOJEK) or food delivery services such as Grab Food, can he/she submit a Self-Declaration of his/her income?

A20 No, such parents are required to submit their latest IRAS Tax Statement. If this is not available, they are to submit their weekly statements, compiled up to 3 months.

Q21 If the parent just started work for a month or less and has only one month's payslip or letter of employment, can he/she qualify for SCFA using his/her one month's payslip / letter of employment?

A21 Yes, if the pay slip states the gross salary. Other acceptable documents include:

- (i) The letter of job offer from his/her employer, which states the gross monthly salary; or
- (ii) Annex 5: Certificate of Employment and Income by Employer; or
- (iii) Self-Declaration form providing details on his/her gross monthly income, working hours etc.

Other Application Details

Q22 Are the monthly student care fee and Start-Up Grant (SUG) components to be stated in the SCFA application form, inclusive of GST?

A22 Yes. If applicable, GST should be included.

Q23: If an SCFA recipient transfers to another centre, and this is not due to a change of operator, can he/she apply for SCFA subsidy a second time?

A23: Yes, provided he/she meet all the criteria.

Q24 For applications that are supported by a Letter of Recommendation (LOR), do the parents still need to submit all other supporting documents?

A24: The LOR only recommends that a higher monthly subsidy be given to the student, based on the co-payment amount recommended by the social worker. Similar to other applicants, the applicant needs to submit all other supporting documents.

Q25 If an SCC gives a discount to the parent, should the parent highlight the discounted fee or the original fee in the SCFA application form?

A25 SCC should highlight the discounted fee in the SCFA application form as monthly disbursement of SCFA subsidy to the SCC is based on the fee collected from the parent. SCC will deduct the subsidy against the discounted centre's monthly fees to derive the applicant's monthly co-payment amount payable.

Q26 What happens if the family experiences a decrease in household income, and parents want to ask for higher SCFA?

A26: The family can submit an appeal to request for a higher amount of SCFA subsidy. The parent should complete Annex 2: Appeal Form stating the effective date of the new income together with the latest 3 months' income statements. However, if there are CPF contributions based on the new income, there is no need to submit income slips. No new application is required. MSF will re-assess and inform the parent of the outcome, with the SCC being informed as well. Please note that the information has to reach MSF within three months after the parent is aware of the change in his/her gross income.

Q27 I am a newly registered SCFA administrator SCC which took over from another operator who was an SCFA administrator SCC. What do I need to do to transit all children who are receiving SCFA subsidies under the previous operator, to my centre?

A27 You are required to re-submit Sections IX (Details of SCFA Subsidy and Start Up Grant), Section X (SCC Particulars), and Section XI (Declaration by the SCC). You will need to write the student's name and birth certificate number on the top of Section IX. This procedure only involves your Centre and will not require parents' participation or signature. It is only applicable if the child's subsidy is still on-going. If child's subsidy is expiring or has ended, you will need to inform parents to submit a full set of documents for a renewal of subsidy.

Q28 Will transiting-children from previous SCFA administrator SCC to new SCFA administrator SCC, be able to claim for Start-Up Grant (SUG) again?

A28 If there are new SUG components needed under the new SCFA administrator SCC (i.e. new uniform, insurance, deposit or registration fee), transiting students can apply for SUG again if:

(i) Student has never received SUG before; or

(ii) Student received SUG from previous SCFA administrator SCC

Attendance Requirement

Q29 A student was not able to meet the 50% attendance requirement per month. How should the SCC appeal for a waiver of the attendance requirement?

A29 The parent should provide a written declaration and where available, to submit supporting documents. The SCC should provide attendance records to explain the reason for the student's absence. The SCC should send the appeal for waiver of attendance requirement to MSF_Comcare_SCFA@msf.gov.sg. MSF will consider the appeal on a case-by-case basis.

Renewal of SCFA Subsidies

Q30 When should a SCC send in applications for renewal of SCFA?

A30 Before the expiry of the SCFA subsidy period, the Centre:

- Should identify those cases whose subsidies are expiring in 2 months' time;
- Assess whether the families are still eligible to apply for SCFA;
- If eligible, advise parents to complete the application form and to submit the latest supporting documents to centre;
- Submit the completed forms and relevant supporting documents (not more than 3 months from date of application) to MSF for processing.
- Income statements submitted must be dated within 3 months from the date of application or subsidy application period for SCFA, whichever is earlier. For example: If the approved subsidy is going to end in August 2020, centre can get families to renew their application in June 2020. For an application form signed in June 2020, latest income statements from March to May 2020 or April to June 2020 will be accepted.

Q31 Why is the duration of SCFA lower than 12 months?

A31 Reasons for a shorter duration of SCFA subsidy are:

- i) Parent is looking for a job or just started work;
- ii) Parent is undergoing training;
- iii) Parent is in prison (SCFA assistance will be timed according to the parents' release);
- iv) Parent is in the midst of obtaining supporting documents such as medical certificate;
- v) Parents are undergoing divorce, for which we await the finalisation of the child's care and control arrangement;
- vi) Parent needs to renew his/her social visit pass or work permit;
- vii) Student's Entry Permit (EP) or Re-entry Permit (REP) is expiring;
- viii) Student's application is supported by a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) and the period of assistance is tagged to the recommendation in the LOR.

SCFA Streamlined Assessment Protocol (SAP)

Q32 What is Student Care Fee Assistance Streamlined Assessment Protocol?

A32: The Student Care Fee Assistance Streamlined Assessment Protocol (SCFA SAP) is an effort to simplify the SCFA application process. Applicants who are receiving ComCare assistance from the Social Service Office (SSO) would need to submit minimal supporting documents when applying for SCFA at the student care centre.

Q33 Who can apply for SCFA under the SCFA SAP?

A33: Applicants who have been approved to receive ComCare assistance from SSO (either short-to-medium-term assistance/SMTA or long-term assistance/LTA) can apply for SCFA for their child(ren) through SAP.

The family must be receiving ComCare assistance at the point of applying for SCFA.

Student care centres (SCCs) can look for the name of the child applying for SCFA in the Letter of Approval for ComCare Assistance. The Annex will be titled *Beneficiary Details for Application for Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) at Student Care Centres*. Families who have applied for ComCare assistance but whose applications are being processed, which are not approved, or where the ComCare assistance has expired, should not apply for SCFA through SAP. They should apply for SCFA through the normal route.

Q 34: How does an applicant apply for SCFA through the SAP?

A34: The applicant applies for SCFA at the Student Care Centre (SCC).

Q35: What supporting documents do applicants need to submit when applying for SCFA under SAP?

A35: The following documents are to be submitted to SCCs:

- a) Completed SCFA application form;
- b) Letter of approval for ComCare assistance from SSO, together with an Annex titled “Beneficiary Details for Application for SCFA at SCCs”;
- c) Applicant’s NRIC;
- d) Child’s Birth Certificate;

e) For agency referrals, to submit the Letter of Recommendation (LOR) provided by the social worker.

If MSF needs additional information or documents from the applicant for processing the application, MSF will request for them through the SCCs.

SSOs would be collecting the Care and Control / Custody documents, as well as documentation for employment / search for employment.]

Q36: Do applicants still have to complete the checklist of required documents?

A36: No. They only need to submit the documents listed in the answer to Q35.

Q37: If the child is receiving assistance from the SSO, will the child automatically be eligible for SCFA subsidy?

A37: No, the child is not automatically eligible for SCFA. SAP simplifies the application process by reducing the number of supporting documents needed. However, the application will still be assessed for SCFA according to the scheme's eligibility criteria.

Q38: Is the period of assistance for SCFA similar to the ComCare assistance period?

A38: No, the assistance period is not tied to ComCare assistance period. It will be based on the prevailing SCFA criteria.

Q39: If the applicant is receiving ComCare assistance from SSO and has a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from the family's caseworker, can he/she

also tap on SAP to apply for SCFA? Does the applicant need to submit all supporting documents like other LOR cases?

A39: Such applicants can apply for SCFA via SAP. The applicant needs to submit the documents mentioned in Q35, together with the LOR.