



**CHILDCARE AND PARENT SERVICES (CAPS)
Georgia's Subsidy Program**

CAPS Policy – Family Unit	No.: CAPS/00-5	Effective Date: 10/01/2016
		Revised: 00/00/0000
		Revision Effective: 00/00/0000

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Federal Register: 45 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 98 and 99.

Cross Reference/See Also: CAPS Eligibility Requirements Policy (CAPS/00-6)

Note: Definitions of words or phrases in bold are located in [Definitions and Acronyms](#). Only the first occurrence of the defined words or phrases are bolded.

5 FAMILY UNIT

5.1 Purpose

Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidy funding is provided to families who meet eligibility criteria. The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures for determining who is or is not included in the family unit.

5.2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the **Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)**, all parties responsible for the administration of the CAPS program, **parents**, and child care **providers** who receive subsidies administered by DECAL on behalf of parents.

5.3 Family Unit Overview

- 5.3.1 A family unit is a parent with **legal, biological**, and/or day-to-day responsibility for children in the home and all those for whom the parent is responsible.
- 5.3.2 If the parent and other **adults** reside in the home, then the parent must be the **applicant** for the CAPS program. Biological and legal responsibility for children supersedes day-to-day responsibility unless otherwise indicated in **legal** documentation.
- 5.3.3 More than one **family unit** may live in a home.
- 5.3.4 The parent is responsible for disclosing the names and relationships of all individuals that reside together in the **household** in order to determine the composition of the family unit. In order for CAPS staff to determine the family unit, discussion will need to include who lives in the home, who is married, who are the parents of which children and what the relationships are between adults and children in the home.

5.4 Included in the Family Unit

The following individuals living in the household shall be included in the family unit:

- Biological, adopted, or step children 17 years of age or younger
- Children under legal or physical guardianship of the parent
- Spouse/parent residing in the home
- Unmarried adults living together with a mutual biological or legal child(ren) residing in the same household

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- Spouse/parent temporarily absent from the household due to **employment**, military deployment, training, or education.

5.4.1 For each child in Georgia’s Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) custody, the State shall be considered the parent and the child will be authorized as a family unit of one.

5.4.2 Siblings in Georgia’s DFCS custody will be assigned to their own case.

5.4.3 Unless otherwise specified, the chart below shall be used to determine the composition of the family unit(s):

Family Composition	CAPS Requirements
Biological or Marital Affiliation	Children 17 years of age or younger who are related to a parent as their biological child or through marriage shall be included in the family unit. Spouses are included in the family unit. Partners who have children in common shall be included in the family unit, regardless of marital status.
Adoptive Children	Children legally adopted are treated as biological children. Families must meet CAPS eligibility requirements for children in the family unit, including adoptive children.
Unmarried Parents	If a couple resides together and each has a child(ren) of their own and share no child(ren) in common (by blood, marriage or adoption), they are considered two separate family units.
Family Members Expected to Return	A family member who is away from the family residence for reasons of employment, education, training, or military deployment, and who returns regularly or is expected to return shall be considered a member in the family unit. This includes children who are part of a shared custody agreement in cases of separated or divorced parents.
Joint Custody	In situations where separated, divorced, or unmarried parents have joint physical custody of their child(ren), only one parent is required to be eligible to receive child care assistance. At the request of the custodial parent, care can continue at a different provider if within the state of Georgia with the non-custodial parent. If care is already being provided outside of Georgia in a bordering state, care can continue at the same provider. Care will not be authorized outside of Georgia for a different provider.
Multiple Family Households	In situations where adults, who are not spouses, reside together and who do not have a child in common, children in the household shall be considered part of the family unit with their parent.
Multi-Generational Households	<p>A. Although more than two generations of a family may live in one household, they shall be considered as separate family units as long as the biological parent retains legal custody of the child.</p> <p>B. In situations where the parent retains legal custody, the grandparents shall not be counted as members of the same family unit with the parent and child.</p> <p>C. In situations where the legal custody of the child rests with the grandparents, the biological parent shall not be counted as a member of the family unit when residing in the same household.</p>
Minor Parents	For the purposes of CAPS eligibility, a person 17 years of age or younger and their child shall be considered their own family unit.

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POLICY REVISION HISTORY

Date	Description of Change