

Waterloo Region looking at fee increases of up to 88 per cent for licensed home child care ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Parents with children in home daycares licensed by the Region of Waterloo could face fee increases of up to 88 per cent next year.

Regional officials are recommending the increase as part of a package of proposed increases to about 175 different fees, from transit fares to landfill fees.

The region is not only looking at increasing the child care fees, but also changing the fee structure.

Currently, parents can pay a smaller fee if they only need daycare for up to six hours a day. Under the new fees, that would be eliminated and the cheapest fee would be for child care for anything up to 10 hours a day.

That means some parents who use child care for less than six hours a day could be facing increases that are almost double what they pay now. For example, parents now pay \$25 a day for up to six hours of care for a preschooler. Under the new rates, they would pay \$47, whether they use child care for six hours or 10 hours a day — an increase of 88 per cent.

Fees for full-day child care wouldn't increase as much: a parent now paying \$45 for six to 12.9 hours of child care for an infant would pay \$55 for up to 10 hours of care, a 22-per-cent increase. If they still needed 12.9 hours, they would pay \$62, a 38-per-cent increase.

Home child care fees haven't increased since 2017. The new rates will still be below the average cost for licensed child care, said regional spokesperson Lynsey Slupeiks, who did not respond to questions about why the Region is looking at a large increase now rather than smaller increases over the past five years.

Regional council will consider the fee increases as part of its overall approval of the 2022 budget at a meeting on Dec. 15. If approved, the new child care rates would come into effect on March 1, 2022.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: child care fees ^[4]

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