

# Parents pay \$4,000 per month in daycare costs even when kids sent home due to COVID-19 <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

A Toronto mother says she's frustrated after she paid \$4,000 in daycare fees and has been forced to care for her children more than half the time over the last two months.

"Everyday you don't know how you are going to take care of your kids and keep your job," said Sylvia Vago.

Vago has a one year old and a three year old in daycare in Toronto and said the cost for each child is \$500 per week.

Vago said she and her husband have demanding jobs and are currently working from home, but she said she is constantly getting calls from the daycare to pick up her children.

"Every single time they have a runny nose and a cough, they are being sent home and they are sent home for five days so it's a perpetual cycle," Vago said.

It's difficult to try and care for the children throughout the day while she and her husband are working and they are not refunded any of the money when their children are sent home.

"For the past month, 50 per cent of the time they were at home and we had to pay \$4,000 and next month it's probably going to be the same," said Vago.

The Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO) said daycares don't want to charge families if their children aren't there, but it explained they have fixed costs they still have to pay.

"No child-care operator wants to be charging parents during these regulations when their children are not allowed to be here (at daycare)," said Kim Yeaman, ADCO spokesperson.

Daycares have received funding from all levels of government and can decide what to do with it. Yeaman said some daycares are returning funds to parents who have to pay when their children aren't present.

"That is the goal for every childcare. I guarantee it they want to give the parents the money back for those COVID restrictions," said Yeaman.

CTV News Toronto reached out to the City of Toronto and General Manager of Children's Services Shanley McNamee said, "We recognize that families have been highly impacted by COVID-19, and it has been particularly challenging for those families with young children. Child care is under the purview of the Ministry of Education and each Municipality or Region is legislatively responsible for managing funding and service system planning for the Early Years and Child-Care Sector."

"Each child-care centre has received varying levels of financial support from federal, provincial and municipal orders of government, including Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy and Provincial Safe Restart Funding. The amount of support varies according to the individual centre's business operations and COVID recovery. In the City of Toronto, operators are given flexibility to determine how to allocate their financial supports."

"Throughout the pandemic, child-care centres were mandated to close and were not permitted to charge parents fees during these periods. Combined with increased costs due to strict health and safety protocols (i.e. cleaning and use of personal protective equipment, etc...) along with fixed costs such as rent, staffing wages and benefits, child-care operators may find it difficult to cover these fixed costs without collecting child care fees for children enrolled in their programs."

"The direction provided by Children's Services to child-care centres where we have a service agreement for fee subsidy, is for centres to consider their policies and financial viability and allocate these funding supports appropriately. Child-care providers must ensure that they can maintain financial viability before they can offer reimbursements to families for COVID-related absences."

Vago feels parents should get some money back if their children are sent home due to the pandemic measures.

Daycare operators say the pandemic has created challenges for everyone and parents who have questions about refunds if their children are absent from daycare are encouraged to check the refund policy with their municipality.

**Region:** Ontario <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** child care fees <sup>[4]</sup>

COVID-19 <sup>[5]</sup>

child care costs <sup>[6]</sup>

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**Source URL (modified on 9 Feb 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/02/parents-pay-4000-month-daycare-costs-even-when-kids-sent-home-due>

**Links**

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<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/parents-pay-4-000-per-month-in-daycare-costs-even-when-kids-sent-home-due-to-covid-19-1.5767064> [3]

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