Understanding your child care benefit:
Employees and Postdoctoral Fellows of MIT

Sick kids. School closings. Summer vacation. Balancing work and family priorities can be challenging. Fortunately, you have a benefit that enables you to find the short-term in-home care you need. So you can rest easy knowing that your family is in good hands through Care.com® BackupCare™, provided by Parents in a Pinch.

Who can use this backup program?
Any benefits-eligible employee at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who has dependent children is eligible. As an employee of MIT or an MIT postdoctoral fellow, you may use up to 15 calendar days of child care and adult care per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). For families with two benefits-eligible employees, you may use up to a combined total of 30 calendar days.

When do I need backup services?
• During school vacations or when daycare is closed
• When your child is a little bit under the weather and you need to work
• When you have to work late or on weekends
• When you need care for a child with special needs
• When you’re traveling on business and your children are accompanying you
• When your nanny goes on vacation or leaves unexpectedly
• When your family needs some additional support for work/life balance
• Any time you have a gap in your regular child care arrangements and you need to work
Can I request care when my child is sick?
Yes, you can request care for a mildly ill child; however, Care.com BackupCare must make sure that your child is not contagious (and therefore may spread the illness to the caregiver and children she may care for) or too ill for care. Please review guidance at www.parentsinapinch.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/HOW-SICK-IS-SICK.pdf.

When are the caregivers available? When can I call?
In-home child care is available during the day or evening, seven days/week. You can also call for care while you’re traveling on business, as long as you’re traveling to a location where Care.com BackupCare already provides service.

The Care.com BackupCare office hours are: Monday – Thursday, 7:00 am – 8:00 pm EST; Friday from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm EST; and Sunday from 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm EST for care needed the following day.

Sometimes, a Care.com BackupCare specialist can locate a caregiver for you within an hour or two, but the further in advance you call, the better the chances for a successful match. 24-hour advance notice is usually sufficient.

What is the process for arranging child care?
Step 1: Complete MIT’s Employee Status Verification Form (http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/piap) so that MIT can verify your eligibility for this service.

Step 2: Register with Care.com BackupCare at mit.care.com or call 855-781-1303, ext. 1.

Step 3: Request backup child care at mit.care.com. Or call 855-781-1303, ext. 1, to request care. Identify yourself as an MIT employee or postdoctoral fellow. Care.com BackupCare will identify a caregiver for you who meets your specific needs.

Step 4: You’ll receive two confirmations:
- A Care.com BackupCare specialist will call to tell you about the caregiver and will email you the caregiver profile.
- The caregiver will call to confirm the details of the job.

Step 5: At the end of the backup child care service, you will need to sign the provided timesheet, and your credit card will be charged for your co-pay for the hours of care.

How much do I pay?
In Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, the hourly fee for child care is $16.00 for MIT employees and postdoctoral fellows; your credit card will be charged for the hours of care once the care is complete and the hours are confirmed. There is a four-hour minimum charge per day.

As an employee of MIT or an MIT postdoctoral fellow, you may use up to a combined total 15 calendar days of child care and adult care per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). For families with two benefits-eligible employees, you may use up to a combined total of 30 calendar days.
Can I use care on a holiday?
Yes, you can request care for school holidays and other days when your child’s school is not in session. But you must call at least several days in advance for those requests; many people will need care on those same days and if you wait until the last minute, Care.com BackupCare may not be able to fulfill your request. In addition to professional development days for teachers and school vacation weeks which are determined by town or district, the following are “high volume” days when there are many child care requests to be filled:

- Martin Luther King Day (January)
- President’s Day (February)
- Last week in August/first week in September
- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (September/October)
- Columbus Day (October)
- Veteran’s Day (November)

What if I need child care that’s not related to work?
You are welcome to use the backup services when your need is not work-related or your needs exceed the 15 placements during the year. In these cases, your credit card will be charged a placement fee of $50.00 per day in addition to an hourly fee for child care of $18.50.

How do I know I’ll get a quality caregiver?
The Care.com BackupCare screening process is thorough: candidates are screened for child care experience; child care references are checked by phone; Social Security verification and criminal background checks are completed; and each candidate is interviewed face to face. Candidates are also required to complete a health and safety training program, along with an orientation. Care.com BackupCare specialists follow up after every job with an online survey to ensure that the caregivers and their service continue to meet your expectations.

What if I need to cancel my request for care?
If you cancel once a caregiver has already been reserved for a job, your credit card will be charged $30.00.

How can I make the transition easier for my children?
- Before the caregiver arrives, let your children know that a wonderful playmate is on the way. Suggest that they show the caregiver their favorite toy or book. When the caregiver arrives, introduce her warmly to the children. If you’re nervous, the children will pick up your signals.
- Go over the house rules—TV, snacks, bedtime—with the caregiver and the children together, so that the ground rules are clearly set.
- Review the emergency telephone numbers with the caregiver. Give her the telephone number where you and/or your spouse/partner can be reached, your pediatrician’s name and number, someone to call in case of an emergency and a list of any allergies that the children may have.
- Never sneak out the door! Say goodbye happily and firmly and leave. Coming back or delaying your departure will increase your children’s anxiety.
When I call next time, can I get the same caregiver? Will she clean the house?
Care.com BackupCare strives to give your family as much consistency as possible. A Care.com BackupCare specialist will be happy to contact your last caregiver to see if she's available. Backup caregivers come prepared to make sure your children are safe and happy, but not to do regular housecleaning.

Can Care.com BackupCare help me find a nanny? Could my backup caregiver become my nanny?
Yes! Care.com BackupCare can work with you to find a nanny, or they can help your temporary caregiver become your full- or part-time nanny. (Outside of Massachusetts, a Care.com BackupCare specialist will put you in touch with their partner agency.) All you have to do is call the Nanny Placement Specialists at 855-781-1303. They’ll discuss the process and fees. MIT employees and postdoctoral fellows receive a discount on nanny placement fees (in Massachusetts).