

Credit for Child and Dependent Care Expenses

▶ Attach to Form 1040.
 ▶ See instructions below.

Name(s) as shown on Form 1040 _____ Your social security number _____

Note: If you paid cash wages of \$50 or more in a calendar quarter to an individual for services performed in your home, you must file an employment tax return. Get **Form 942, Employer's Quarterly Tax Return for Household Employees**, for details.

- 1 Enter the number of qualifying persons who were cared for in 1986. (See the instructions below for the definition of qualifying persons.)
- 2 Enter the amount of **qualified** expenses you incurred and actually paid in 1986 for the care of the qualifying person. (See **What Are Qualified Expenses** in the instructions.) **Do not** enter more than \$2,400 (\$4,800 if you paid for the care of two or more qualifying persons)
- 3a You **must** enter your earned income on line 3a. See the instructions for line 3 for the definition of earned income.
 - b If you are married, filing a joint return for 1986, you must enter your spouse's earned income on line 3b
 - c If you are married filing a joint return, compare the amounts on lines 3a and 3b, and enter the **smaller** of the two amounts on line 3c
- 4 • If you were unmarried at the end of 1986, compare the amounts on lines 2 and 3a, and enter the **smaller** of the two amounts on line 4.
 • If you are married filing a joint return, compare the amounts on lines 2 and 3c, and enter the **smaller** of the two amounts on line 4.
- 5 Enter the percentage from the table below that applies to the adjusted gross income on Form 1040, line 33

1		
2		
3a		
3b		
3c		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

If line 33 is:		Percentage is:	If line 33 is:		Percentage is:
Over—	But not over—		Over—	But not over—	
\$0–10,000		30% (.30)	\$20,000–22,000		24% (.24)
10,000–12,000		29% (.29)	22,000–24,000		23% (.23)
12,000–14,000		28% (.28)	24,000–26,000		22% (.22)
14,000–16,000		27% (.27)	26,000–28,000		21% (.21)
16,000–18,000		26% (.26)	28,000		20% (.20)
18,000–20,000		25% (.25)			

- 6 Multiply the amount on line 4 by the percentage shown on line 5, and enter the result
- 7 Multiply any child and dependent care expenses for 1985 that you paid in 1986 by the percentage that applies to the adjusted gross income on your 1985 Form 1040, line 33, or Form 1040A, line 15. Enter the result. (See line 7 instructions for the required statement.)
- 8 Add amounts on lines 6 and 7. Enter the total here and on Form 1040, line 41. This is the maximum amount of your credit for child and dependent care expenses

General Instructions

Paperwork Reduction Act Notice.—We ask for this information to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. We need it to ensure that taxpayers are complying with these laws and to allow us to figure and collect the right amount of tax. You are required to give us this information.

What Is the Child and Dependent Care Expenses Credit?

You may be able to take a tax credit for amounts you paid someone to care for your child or other qualifying person so you could work or look for work in 1986. The credit will lower the amount of your tax. The credit is based on a percentage of the amount you paid during the year. The most the credit may be is \$720 for the care of one qualifying person, or \$1,440 for the care of two or more qualifying persons.

Additional information.—For more information about the credit, please get **Publication 503, Child and Dependent Care Credit, and Employment Taxes for Household Employers.**

Who Is a Qualifying Person?

- A qualifying person is any one of the following persons:
- Any person under age 15 whom you claim as a dependent (but see the special rule later for **Children of divorced or separated parents**).
 - Your disabled spouse who is mentally or physically unable to care for himself or herself.
 - Any disabled person who is mentally or physically unable to care for himself or herself and whom you claim as a dependent, or could claim as a dependent except that he or she had income of \$1,080 or more.

Note: You must have shared the same home with any person you claim as a qualifying person.

- Children of divorced or separated parents.**—If you were divorced, legally separated, or lived apart from your spouse during the last 6 months of 1986, you may be able to claim the credit even if your child is not your dependent. If your child is not your dependent, he or she is a qualifying person if **all five** of the following apply:
1. You had custody of the child for the longer period during the year; and
 2. The child received over half of his or her support from one or both of the parents; and
 3. The child was in the custody of one or both of the parents over half of the year; and
 4. The child was under age 15, or was physically or mentally unable to care for himself or herself; and

(Continued on back)

5. The child is not your dependent because—

- a. As the custodial parent, you have signed **Form 8332**, Release of Claim to Exemption for Child of Divorced or Separated Parents, or a similar statement, agreeing not to claim the child's exemption for 1986; or
 - b. You were divorced or separated before 1985 and your divorce decree or written agreement states that the other parent can claim the child's exemption, and the other parent provides at least \$600 in child support during the year.
- Note:** *This rule does not apply if your decree or agreement was changed after 1984 to specify that the other parent cannot claim the child's exemption.*

Who May Take the Credit?

To claim the credit, **all five** of the following must apply:

1. You paid for the care so you (and your spouse if you were married) could work or look for work (but see the rules at the line 3 instructions for **Spouse who is a full-time student or is disabled**).
2. You and the qualifying person(s) lived in the same home.
3. You (and your spouse if you were married) paid over half the cost of keeping up your home. The cost includes: rent; mortgage interest; property taxes; utilities; home repairs; and food eaten at home.
4. The person you paid to provide the care was not your spouse or a person you could claim as a dependent.

Note: *If the person you paid to provide the care was your child, he or she must have been 19 or over by the end of 1986.*

5. If you were married at the end of 1986, generally, you must file a joint tax return. However, there are two exceptions to this rule. You will be treated as unmarried and still be eligible to take the credit if:

- a. You were legally separated; or
- b. You were living apart from your spouse during the last 6 months of the year, and:
 - the qualifying person lived with you in your home over 6 months, and
 - you provided over half the cost of keeping up your home.

What Are Qualified Expenses?

Qualified expenses include amounts paid for household services and care of the qualifying person while you work or look for work. For more information on qualified expenses, see Publication 503.

Household services.—These services must be needed to care for the qualifying person as well as to run the home. They include, for example, the services of a cook, maid, babysitter, housekeeper, governess, or cleaning person if the services were partly for the care of the qualifying person. Do not include services of a chauffeur or gardener.

Note: *If you paid cash wages of \$1,000 or more for household services in any calendar quarter in 1985 or 1986, you should file a **Form 940**, Employer's Annual Federal Unemployment (FUTA) Tax Return, for 1986 by February 2, 1987.*

Care of the qualifying person.—Care includes the cost of services for the qualifying person's well-being and protection. It does not include the cost of clothing or entertainment.

Generally, care also does not include food or schooling expenses. However, if these items are included as part of the total care, and they are incident to, and cannot be separated from, the total cost, you may count the total payment. However, you may not count the cost of schooling for a child in the first grade or above.

Care outside the home.—You may count care provided outside your home if the care was for:

- a. Your dependent under age 15; or
- b. Any other qualifying person who regularly spends at least 8 hours each day in your home.

Care that is provided by a dependent care center may be counted if the center complies with all applicable state and local laws and regulations. A dependent care center is a place that provides care for at least seven persons (other than persons who live there), and receives a fee, payment, or grant for providing the services for any of those persons, regardless of whether the center is run for profit.

Medical expenses.—Some dependent care expenses may qualify as medical expenses. If you itemize deductions, you may want to take all or part of these medical expenses on Schedule A (Form 1040). If you cannot use all the medical expenses on Form 2441 because of the dollar limit or earned income limit (explained later), you may take the rest of these expenses on Schedule A. But if you deduct the medical expenses first on Schedule A, you may not use any part of these expenses on Form 2441.

Specific Instructions

The following are specific instructions for most of the lines on the form. Lines which have no instructions here are self-explanatory.

Line 2. Dollar limit.—On line 2, enter the amount of qualified child and dependent care expenses you incurred and actually paid in 1986. However, the most you may figure the credit on is \$2,400 a year for one qualifying person, or \$4,800 a year for two or more qualifying persons. Do not include amounts paid or incurred by your employer if, and to the extent, such amounts are excluded from your gross income.

Note: *Do not include on line 2 qualified expenses that you incurred in 1986 but did not pay until 1987. Instead, you may be able to increase the amount of your 1987 credit when you pay the 1986 expenses in 1987.*

Line 3. Earned income limit.—Figure your earned income limitation on line 3. The amount of your qualified expenses **may not** be more than your earned income or, if married filing a joint return, the **smaller** of your earned income or your spouse's earned income.

In general, earned income is wages, salaries, tips, and other employee compensation. It also includes net earnings from self-employment. This is usually the amount shown on Schedule SE (Form 1040), line 9. For more information on what is earned income for purposes of the credit, see Publication 503.

Unmarried taxpayers.—If you were unmarried at the end of 1986 or are treated as being unmarried at the end of the year, enter your earned income on line 3a.

Married taxpayers.—If you are married, filing a joint return, figure each spouse's earned income separately and disregard community property laws. Enter your earned income on line 3a and your spouse's earned income on line 3b. Then, enter the smaller of your earned income or your spouse's earned income on line 3c.

Spouse who is a full-time student or is disabled.—If your spouse was a full-time student or was mentally or physically unable to care for himself or herself, figure your spouse's earned income on a monthly basis to determine your spouse's earned income for the year. For each month that your spouse was disabled or a full-time student, your spouse is considered to have earned income of not less than \$200 a month (\$400 a month if more than one qualifying person was cared for in 1986).

If, in the same month, both you and your spouse were full-time students and did not work, you may not use any amount paid that month to figure the credit. The same applies to a couple who did not work because neither was capable of self-care.

A full-time student is one who was enrolled in a school for the number of hours or classes that the school considers full time. The student must have been enrolled at least 5 months during 1986.

Self-employment income.—You must reduce your earned income by any loss from self-employment. If your net earnings from self-employment are less than \$1,600, and you use the optional method to figure your self-employment tax, you may be able to increase your net earnings to \$1,600 for this credit. Get **Publication 533**, Self-Employment Tax, for details. If you only have a loss from self-employment, or your loss is more than your other earned income and you do not use the optional method, you may not take the credit.

Line 7.—If you had qualified expenses for 1985 that you did not pay until 1986, you may be able to increase the amount of credit you may take in 1986. To do this, multiply the 1985 expenses you paid in 1986 by the percentage from the table on line 6 that applies to the adjusted gross income shown on your 1985 Form 1040, line 33, or Form 1040A, line 15. Your 1985 expenses must be within the 1985 limits. Attach a computation showing how you figured the increase. (Use the example in Publication 503 as a guide.)