



Program Overview for Employers - Northwest Lower Michigan

The overall purpose of the TriShare pilot program is to improve the affordability, access, and quality of child care through implementing a model by which the state, the employer, and the employee can share equal responsibility for child care by contributing one-third of the total cost. It's believed that offering this benefit to employees will improve the ability of employers to attract and retain talent, thereby fueling economic impact and growth.

The program is being offered by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Women's Commission. United Way of Northwest Michigan (UWNWMI) was one of three initially selected communities awarded grant funds to offer the pilot phase. There are now thirteen hubs across the state, and it is considered an ongoing pilot program in the State of Michigan's budget. UWNWMI, in partnership with the Great Start Collaborative of Traverse Bay and 5toONE, is administering the program hub for ten northwest Michigan counties.

A key benefit of the program will be dedicated access to the Great Start to Quality Northwest Resource Center ("the Resource Center") staff, who will actively help employees who do not have child care find care that meets their needs. In addition, through 5toONE, employees can access various resources and learning opportunities around parenting and child development.

Eligible employers must be located in Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, or Wexford counties. There is no residency requirement for employees or child care providers.

Eligible employees will have a household income between 200% and 325% of the Federal Poverty Level relative to the number of individuals in the household (see program eligibility chart at the end of this document).

Employee eligibility will be determined using the following process.

- Employees of participating employers will sign up at [TriShare.org](https://trishare.org). They will be asked to provide information about their household composition (adults and children), monthly gross wages of the employee and, if applicable, by a spouse/partner, and any additional sources of household income such as child support, pension, alimony, or other.
- UWNWMI will verify employees' self-reported gross monthly income with employers as they apply.
- Employers will confirm, based on the two most recent pay stubs, that the employee wage information submitted is accurate.
- Eligibility is determined every two years starting July 1, 2023; the reassessment process will be completed before the participant's two-year anniversary. A participant's enrollment date occurs when the first TriShare-supported payment is made to a provider.

- Upon reassessment, participating employees' income guidelines can extend to 200 percent more than the minimum entry threshold.
- Verification of the self-reported income of a spouse/partner may be conducted. The TriShare staff will contact the employee directly if this is needed.

Funds may be used for any licensed child care provided to children aged 0-17, including but not limited to traditional child care (full or part-time), preschool, before/after-school care, and summer camp programs.

Employer Requirements and Considerations

- Employers participating in the program will make the program available to one or more employees with dependent children between 0 and 17 years old.
- Employers agree to review and confirm or correct employee wage information to determine eligibility.
- Employers agree to cover 33.33% of the cost of child care for eligible employees and will create a new employee benefit to allow for this payment.
- While enrolled in the TriShare program, employers will set up the employee portion of payment using payroll deduction. Every month, employers will pay UWNWMI via ACH per an invoice for two-thirds of the cost of child care (employer and employee portion). UWNWMI will provide full payment to the child care provider(s) and submit for reimbursement to the state for the remaining one-third.
- If a participating employee has child care arrangements changes while enrolled in the program, employers will accommodate changes in payment deductions within the terms established for the benefit.
- Employers will contact UWNWMI if a participating employee's employment status changes as the benefit ends on the termination date. Failure to report the change will result in the employer paying any care costs incurred until the notice is received.

United Way of Northwest Michigan Requirements and Considerations

- UWNWMI will serve as the "facilitator hub" for the program.
- If an eligible employee has an existing child care provider when enrolling, the TriShare staff will contact the child care and enroll the provider.
- If an eligible employee does NOT have child care, the Resource Center will make a good-faith effort to find a provider who meets the employee's needs.
- UWNWMI will enroll as many eligible employees as possible to access up to \$300,000 in State of Michigan funds allotted for this program; UWNWMI may cap program enrollment if adding additional employees could exceed the amount of this grant.

TriShare Program Eligibility 2023

Household Size	Minimum	-	Maximum Income	Household Size	Minimum	-	Maximum Income
2 People	\$39,444	-	\$64,080	6 People	\$80,568	-	\$130,908
3 People	\$49,728	-	\$80,796	7 People	\$90,840	-	\$147,612
4 People	\$60,000	-	\$97,500	8 People	\$101,124	-	\$164,316
5 People	\$70,284	-	\$114,204				

Questions may be directed to Kristina Bajtka (Kbajtka@unitedwaynwmi.org or 231-266-5513), who serves as the coordinator for the program.

