**La Caisse d’Allocations Familiales/ the CAF**

**Role and Objective:**

The CAF exists to help families with their daily life; from legal services, household earnings, or other people in need.

The CAF exists to improve the quality of life for families. To achieve this, CAF has programs to help access quality housing, alleviate problems of economic inequality, and support aging community members.

**The CAF in action:**

To help improve the quality of life for families and people in need, familial benefits can provide aid in the form of services, equipment, follow-up care, and/or counseling.

There are many solutions available, you should know about:

* Payment of financial services, either supplementing existing income or providing welfare: family services, social services, financial assistance towards covering rent for minimum (help for handicapped adults, unemployment revenue, activity bonus)
* Setting up or financial assistance for different groups or services (nursery or community center)

**Family services (Les prestations familiales). Terms and conditions for qualifications, and the nature of services offered:**

**To qualify for family services, families must meet specific criteria:**

**Qualifications for parents:**

**Place of residence (lieu deresidence)**:To receive benefits, families must reside in France. The CAF is not concerned with nationality or technical status (married, bound by “PACS”, civil union; living together or separated). Those not hailing from within the European Union, the Euro zone, or Switzerland must present their valid residence permit, as proof of their right to live in France. If the children were born abroad, parents must also present paperwork proving their children are legally living in France.

**Resources (ressources)**: The services offered by the CAF vary depending on resources. Aid from the CAF depends upon yearly income and tax returns. You can estimate the level of services you are qualified to receive on the CAF website (caf.fr) and onthe dropdown menu**S’informer sur les aides**>**Petite enfance**.

**Qualifications for children:**

**Age (âge):** Children must be under the age of 16, or under 20 if they are claimed as dependents by their parents, or under 21 to receive rent assistance, for large families in need.

**Education (scolarité) and/or Employment (emploi):** Between the ages of 6 and 15 years old, children must be in school. From 16 to 20 years old, their monthly income may not exceed €907.19 as of January 1, 2017.

**Nature of family services**

Families can benefit from the following services:

After their first child:

* **The PAJE:Premium for addition of a new child (Prestation d’accueil du jeune enfant)**

Parents must declare the pregnancy to the CAF and CPAM during the first fourteen weeks of the pregnancy. This premium is only offered once for either birth of your own child or for an adoption. After, families may receive financial aid for childcare and education (the amount you qualify for depends upon your monthly income) from the time the child is one month old until the month before his/her birthday. In the case of an adoption, the money is available for three years from the arrival of the child

* **The CMG: Allowance to ensure best childcare options (complément du libre choix du mode de garde)**

The CAF will reimburse a portion of the money spent on a mother’s helper, nanny, childcare services, or a daycare. The amount of money given depends upon parents’ financial resources. The CAF will also cover some or all social security contributions. To find childcare options close to home, look at this website: mon-enfant.fr.

* **The PREPARE: Assistance for adjusting to life with a child (Prestation partagée d’education de l’enfant)**

Since January 1, 2015, this assistance is available in the instance of stopping work orcutting back on work hours to take care of a child under the age of three, OR, in the case of adoption, a dependent under the age of 20. You must have contributed to a retirement fund for at least eight trimesters of work to benefit. (In principle, you must have worked for at least two years before the birth of the child.)

* **The ARS: back to school allowance (allocation de entrée scolaire)**

This is determined by parents’ resources, from the end of the month of August, in order to help cover the return to school between the ages of 6 and 18 years old. To estimate the amount of money you will receive, based on available resources see the website caf.fr, find **Droits et prestations**>**Enfance et jeunesse**.

* **The ASF: allowance to supplement child support (allocation de soutien familial)**

This allowance is given, over the course of four months, to a single parent raising a child without help from the other parent.At the end of these four months, to supplement insufficient child support. To collect assistance at the end of the first four months, you must plead your case before the judge of family affairs (le juge aux affaires familiales) at the high court (le Tribunal de Grand Instance) for the zone where you have registered for child support. For more information about procedures and your rights, please check [www.pension-alimentaire.caf.fr](http://www.pension-alimentaire.caf.fr)

* **The AJPP: daily allowance for parental presence (allocation journalière de présence parentale)**

This daily allowance for \*parental presence\*, is given to a parent who stops working to take care of a child who has fallen gravely ill, has been in an accident, or who is handicapped.

* **The AEEJ: allowance for education of a handicapped child (allocation d’éducation de l’enfant handicapé)**

This education allowance for handicapped children helps parents cover the education and care for their handicapped children under the age of 20

After their second child:

* **Family allowance(les allocations familiales)**

Parents having at least two children under the age of 20 may receive, depending on their resources, a family allowance after the birth of their second child into their family, as long as the CAF is given notice before the child is born.

After their third child:

* **Additional family support(le complément familial)**

Additional family support is granted, depending on financial situation, to families caring for at least three children between the ages of 3 and 20 years old.

**Housing Assistance: Conditions to receive aid, and nature of aid**

This financial aid exists to help lower the amount of rent paid a family, or to cover a portion of monthly installments paid for a housing mortgage.

**Conditions:** The conditions are the same for all three types of financial assistance. The accommodation must be the principal residence of the family and the family must occupy it for at least eight months out of the year. Toreceive housing assistance for 2017, the total resources from the year 2015 may not exceed €12,012.

Housing aid is calculated based on several factors: level of resources, size of the home, location of accommodation, amount of rent…

**Nature of this aid**: Housing aid is divided into three categories- APL: individual housing assistance (l’aide personnalisée au logement), ALF: family housing assistance (l’allocation de logement familiale), and ALS: social housing assistance (l’allocation de logement sociale).

* **APL** : This assistance is for those who rent their accommodation, new or old, and have entered an agreement with owner and the state. It can also be granted, under certain conditions, to owners or future owners. This allowance is sent directly to the owner or may be sent a money lender who has assisted in payments to the owner or may be used to cover monthly installments to be paid by beneficiary.
* **AFL**: This allowance is for households that do not qualify for APL, and who are responsible for children or other dependents. They must have been living together as a married couple for under five years, and both spouses must have gotten married before they turned 40 years old.
* **ALS**: This allowance is granted to people who do neither qualify for APL nor AFL.

*Please note: You may still be able to benefit from housing aid if you are living in a center, in a hotel, in a furnished apartment, or in university housing; elderly people or handicapped people in need of assistance, not receiving it for free, in a private home, in a community home, or in a long-term care facility.*

*It is possible to benefit, in specific cases, from a relocation premium, or a loan to improve living conditions.*

**Supplementing income: Conditions and types of allowances**

Supplemental income is available to workers receiving low income. Those who are most vulnerable and/or those whose income does not meet minimum income. The possible aid options are: activity bonus (la prime d’activité), active solidarity income (le revenue de solidarité active), and allowance for handicapped adults (l’allocation aux adulteshandicapés).

**To receive the activity bonus:**Must be at least 18 years old, live in France under stable conditions, and have proof of employment. Anyone born outside of France, outside of the European economic zone, or Switzerland, must have lived legally in France for at least five years or have a residence permit. The amount of the bonus is calculated according to the total of household resources. Anyone receiving this bonus must declare all three months of their income from the previous trimester online. Find “Mon Compte” on the CAF website or use the smartphone app “Caf-Mon Compte”.

**To receive the active solidarity income (RSA):** Must be at least 25 years old, live in France under and stable conditions. Anyone born outside of France, outside of the European economic zone, or Switzerland, must have lived legally in France for at least five years or have a residence permit. The RSA is calculated based on total household resources.Recipients must declare their income every three months on the website **caf.fr**. To know whether or not you qualify, visit the site **caf.fr**, find **Mes services en ligne** and then select **Estimer vos droits**.

**To receive the allowance for handicapped adults**: Must be at least 20 years old (or 16 years old in certain situations) and account for disability impairment of at least 50%.

**Social action for families.** Every CAF has their own politics regarding social action and provides different support according to existing priorities. To know more, visit **caf.fr** and enter your postal code, then on the home page, select **Menu**>**Ma Caf**>**Offre de service**.

*Examples: Subsidizing leisure activities after school and during vacation, financing domestic help, money for independent living, financial aid for BAFA training (a youth work certification program)*

**How can you access services from the CAF?**

**If you are already a recipient**, you only need to visit the site caf.fr and check “**Mon Compte**”. Enter your claim number and your password. If you have lost either one, visit caf.fr to request them. To minimize communication problems, be sure to give your email address, your cell phone number, and any changes to your living situation to the CAF. From your account, you can see your rights and the services you are qualified to receive.

**If you do not have a claim number (numéro allocataire)** To create a CAF account, you must make a request to receive services. Then you will be registered in the CAF database; you will be assigned a claim number even if your request is later refused. Visit the site**caf.fr**and from the dropdown menu select **Menu**>**Mes services en ligne**>**Faire une demande de prestation**; fill out the form “[Déclaration de situation](https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/sidoc/dgp_00000100.pdf)”: this form allows the CAF to better understand your personal situation, professional status, and your resources, to better determine your rights and qualifications.

You will be assigned a personal number and a temporary password. It is important to keep this log-in information, as it will allow you to access your account online (the password will be personalized after you access your account for the first time).

**Each step you complete on the CAF website will accelerate the process of examining your file.**

**It is important to update the CAF about all changes in your situation!**

Marriage, separation, a child leaving the home, restarting, or losing a job… These situations can impact whether or not you qualify to receive aid from the CAF and can also affect the amount of money you may receive. To update your account, log into “Mon Compte” and update in “Mon Profile”.

**To know whether or not you are qualified to benefit from CAF services, try the simulators on the website caf.fr.**

**How can you contact the CAF?**

Visit the website **caf.fr**, from the dropdown menu select **Menu**>**Ma Caf**>**Contacter ma caf**.

You can contact your CAF directly through email using your online account, by mail, at reception areas, making an appointment, using an interactive portal (this tool can offer quick and simple responses to questions about your account, how to provide confirmation/certification, or how to make a request for aid); using “Virtual-helpdesk” (“Visio-guichets”) (this allows you to speak with a CAF counselor via webcam. Thanks to an integrated scanner, this platform also allows you to send supporting documents in real time.). Enter your claim number and your confidential code to access these services.

*Each CAF determines which services it provides to communicate with recipients of aid. For example, if your home is served by the CAF at Bouches du Rhône - Caf 13, two counselors are available to respond to your questions every Friday from 8:45-12:15 and 13:30-16:00.*