

**DRAFT**

STATE PLAN FOR  
NJ DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CCDF SERVICES  
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/05 – 9/30/07

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**DRAFT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT  
CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN FOR  
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FFY 2006-2007**

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/05 – 9/30/07. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

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Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.57 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 05-31-2006)

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**TO OBTAIN COPIES OF ALL ATTACHMENTS, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**NJ DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT  
609-588-2294**



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**PART 1  
ADMINISTRATION**

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

**1.1 Lead Agency Information** (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency:

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family Development (DFD), is the designated agency of the State responsible for the overall administration of the Child Care and Development Fund Services Program.

Address of Lead Agency: New Jersey Department of Human Services  
P.O. Box 700  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0700Name and Title of the  
Lead Agency's Chief  
Executive Officer: James M. Davy, Commissioner  
DHSPhone Number: (609)292-3717  
Fax Number: (609)292-3824E-Mail Address: James.Davy@dhs.state.nj.us  
Web Address for Lead  
Agency (if any): <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices>**1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information** (day-to-day contact)Name of the State  
Child Care Contact (CCDF): Jeanette Page-Hawkins, Director, DFD  
State Child Care Beverly Wellons, Assistant Director, DFD  
Child Care AdministratorTitle of State Child  
Care Contact: Assistant Director, Child Care Operations  
Child Care Administrator

Address: Division of Family Development

6 Quakerbridge Plaza, P.O. Box 716  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0716

Phone Number: Jeanette Page-Hawkins, Director, DFD  
& Fax Number: Phone (609)588-2401; Fax (609)588-3369  
E-Mail Address [Jeanette.Page-Hawkins@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:Jeanette.Page-Hawkins@dhs.state.nj.us)

Phone Number Beverly Wellons, Assistant Director, DFD  
& Fax Number: Phone (609)588-2163; Fax (609)588-3051  
E-Mail Address [Beverly.Wellons@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:Beverly.Wellons@dhs.state.nj.us)

Phone Number for child  
care subsidy program  
information (for the  
public) (if any): New Jersey Child Care Helpline  
1-800-332-9227

Web Address for child  
care subsidy program  
information (for the  
public) (if any): <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/DFD>

### **1.3 Estimated Funding**

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006. (§98.13(a))

CCDF:	\$ <u>108.5 M</u>
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF:	\$ <u>65.2 M</u>
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care:	\$ <u>0.0 M</u>
State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds:	\$ <u>26.4 M</u>
State Matching Funds:	\$ <u>48.8 M</u>
Total Funds Available:	\$ <u>248.9 M</u>

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**1.4 Estimated Administration Cost**

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of Federal CCDF and State Matching Funds will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): \$ 9.2 M ( 3.7 %). (658E(c)(3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

**1.5 Administration of the Program**

Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

- Yes. Skip questions 1.6 and 1.7. Go to Section 1.8.
- No, and the following describes how the Lead Agency maintains overall control when services or activities are provided through other agencies: (658D(b)(1)(A), §98.11)

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family Development (DFD), is the lead state agency responsible for the overall administration of the Child Care Development Fund. DHS, through DFD coordinates and supervises the programmatic and administrative duties associated with the operation of the CCDF program and establishes program policies and procedures for its effective statewide administration. DFD works in collaboration with the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and the DHS Office of Licensing in the administration and operation of the program.

Specifically, DFD directs the development of major child care initiatives, provides child care policy leadership, is responsible for the administration of child care subsidy programs and coordinates all planning for child care programs. In addition to administering the CCDF program, DFD supervises supportive services (child care) for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and post-TANF participants under New Jersey's Transitional Child Care (TCC) program.

DFD currently contracts with 16 "Child Care Resource and Referral" (CCR&R) agencies, 14 of which are non-profit community based agencies and 2 units of local government to administer and coordinate the CCDF subsidy programs and other child care initiatives in each of New Jersey's

twenty-one counties. These agencies were formerly referred to as “Unified Child Care Agencies” (UCCAs).

Each CCR&R coordinates child care services within a designated county area including: early childhood education programs; Head Start programs; preschool programs; school-based and nonprofit child care programs, including community-based organizations receiving funds for preschool programs for disabled children; non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) districts; Abbott school districts; organizations sponsoring before and after school activities; the Work First New Jersey program (WFNJ); contracted child care centers; DYFS local and area offices; Adoption Resource Centers; DHS Office of Licensing; Department of Labor One-Stop Career Centers; private providers; sectarian providers; Federal and/or State demonstration programs; the Kinship Navigator Child Care Program and any other available provider entities, agencies or resources as appropriate.

The current CCR&R agencies are as follows:

- Child Care Network, Northfield, NJ (Atlantic County)
- Office for Children, Hackensack, NJ (Bergen County)
- Burlington County Community Action Program, Burlington, NJ (Burlington County)
- Camden County Division for Children, Blackwood, NJ (Camden County)
- Tri-County Child Care Services, Bridgeton, NJ (Cumberland & Salem Counties)
- Programs for Parents, Inc., Newark, NJ (Essex County)
- Educational Information and Resource Center (EIRC), Sewell, NJ (Cape May & Gloucester Counties)
- Urban League of Hudson County, Jersey City, NJ (Hudson County)
- NORWESCAP, Inc., Phillipsburg, NJ (Hunterdon, Sussex, & Warren Counties)
- Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ (Mercer County)
- Catholic Charities, Perth Amboy & Somerville, NJ (Middlesex & Somerset Counties)
- Child Care Services of Monmouth County, Neptune, NJ (Monmouth County)
- Child and Family Resources, Mt. Arlington, NJ (Morris County)
- CHS Child Care, Toms River, NJ (Ocean County)
- North Jersey 4C’s, Paterson, NJ (Passaic County)
- Community Coordinated Child Care, Hillside, NJ (Union County)

DFD contracts require assurances from the CCR&R that no conflict of interest exists in the agency’s provision of DHS child care programs with existing contracts and/or agreements held by that agency in administering



child care services, and that the agency institutes a conflict of interest policy that is in compliance with DHS policy and procedures.

DFD also contracts directly with approximately 480 contracted child care provider agencies. These agencies annually provide over 36,000 subsidized child care slots on a statewide basis.

Program staff in DFD provide a periodic review and set the standards/parameters for operation of all aspects of child care services and related programs including all contracted child care agencies and providers. All licensed child care centers and registered family child care providers in the State are inspected and held accountable to specific requirements by the DHS Office of Licensing or the appropriate sponsoring agency.

Where contracts are in place, a prescriptive list of requirements to which the CCR&Rs and contracted providers are held accountable is set in place to ensure that the grantee complies with all policies and procedures set forth by the Division. DFD meets on a quarterly basis with all CCR&R directors, and on a bi-monthly basis with the contracted center Policy Development Board (PDB), the Division sends representatives to monthly Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) and New Jersey Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (NJACCRRRA) meetings to discuss relevant child care initiatives and policies, and be apprised of all concerns, questions and/or situations that need the immediate attention of DFD. The Division conducts periodic monitoring of all CCR&Rs and Center Based Contract (CBC) child care centers to ensure that policy and procedures are followed.

A significant part of DFD's mission is: to continue to support work opportunities for parents, while children have access to quality child care services that enable children to develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially; to continue to develop an effective, efficient, quality state wide child care administrative operation; to effectively plan and implement fiscal policies and procedures for child care; and to manage the administration of all child care subsidy programs in New Jersey.

## **1.6 Determining Eligibility**

For child care services funded under §98.50 (e.g., certificates, vouchers, grants/contracts for slots based on individual eligibility), does the Lead Agency itself: (§98.11)

- Determine individual eligibility of non-TANF families?  
 Yes.

- No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of non-TANF families for child care:

The CCR&Rs and approximately 180 Center Based Contract (CBC) Child Care Providers under contract with DFD determine and/or verify the eligibility of families and the availability of child care service funds for all DHS administered child care service programs.

Now there is a convenient way to learn more about New Jersey State assistance programs. [WWW.NJHELPS.ORG](http://WWW.NJHELPS.ORG) is an online easy-to-use web site that can estimate whether families are eligible to participate in the New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK) child care subsidy program, as well as Food Stamps, Health Insurance Assistance, Welfare Services and Energy Assistance programs.

- Determine individual eligibility of TANF families?
  - Yes.
  - No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of TANF families for child care:

Appropriate staff of the 21 New Jersey County Welfare Agencies (CWAs) and Boards of Social Services (BSSs) are responsible for determining the eligibility for TANF families for child care services and refer eligible participants with the appropriate income and work activity information to one of the CCR&Rs identified in 1.5 to obtain the child care services in their community.

The 21 New Jersey County Welfare Agencies/Boards of Social Services are as follows:

- Atlantic County Department of Family & Community Development
- Bergen County Board of Social Services
- Burlington County Board of Social Services
- Camden County Board of Social Services
- Cape May County Board of Social Services
- Cumberland County Board of Social Services
- Essex County Department of Citizen Services
- Gloucester County Board of Social Services
- Hudson County Department of Family Services
- Hunterdon County Division of Social Services
- Mercer County Board of Social Services
- Middlesex County Board of Social Services

- Monmouth County Division of Social Services
  - Morris County Division of Employment and Temporary Assistance Program Services
  - Ocean County Board of Social Services
  - Passaic County Board of Social Services
  - Salem County Board of Social Services
  - Somerset County Board of Social Services
  - Sussex County Division of Social Services
  - Union County Division of Social Services
  - Warren County Division of Temporary Assistance and Social Services
- Assist parents in locating child care?  
 Yes.  
 No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that assists parents:

The CCR&Rs identified in Section 1.5 above, counsel parents regarding the available types of child care arrangements authorized for payment through the child care services programs (licensed child care centers, pre-kindergarten programs operated by a school district, registered family child care homes, in-home care, approved family child care homes, school-age child care programs and summer camps), and provide parents the opportunity to choose child care arrangements from those available options. This includes information to parents on how to evaluate the child care environment and make informed decisions on the selection process.

The New Jersey Child Care Helpline **1-800-332-9227**, is a toll free number parents can call which will refer them to the appropriate county CCR&R in which they need services, to assist them with accessing child care resources or to answer any question concerning child care in New Jersey.

- Make payments to providers and/or parents?  
 Yes.  
 No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that makes payments:  
**(\*See exception below)**

The CCR&Rs identified in Section 1.5 determine the amount of any payment to providers. Payments are based on the DHS maximum child care reimbursement rates and may not exceed the amounts specified. The amount of any co-payment assessed to the family is deducted from the DHS maximum child care payment rate. Payment amounts are also subject to level of service (LOS) adjustment, based on a review of child attendance

forms (vouchers). CCR&Rs certify payment for children participating in the child care service programs and ensure for the timely processing of payments to eligible providers in accordance with State and Federal requirements.

The CCR&Rs are also responsible for accounting for all funds, administrative, operational, and direct subsidies to providers of child care service in accordance with State and Federal requirements.

\* **Exception to above payment policy** – In keeping with DFD contract payment requirements for providers under contract with DFD, DFD in most cases, reimburses the Center Based Contract (CBC) child care agency on the basis of quarterly installment payments spread over the contract term.

**1.7 Nongovernmental Entities**

Is any entity named in response to section 1.6 a non-governmental entity? (658D(b), §§98.10(a), 98.11(a))

- Yes, and the following entities named in 1.6 are non-governmental:  
 No.

DFD contracts with non-profit community based Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) named in section 1.6, and described in section 1.5. The **non-governmental** CCR&Rs are as follows:

- Child Care Network, Northfield, NJ
- Burlington County Community Action Program, Burlington, NJ
- Tri-County Child Care Services, Bridgeton, NJ
- Programs for Parents, Inc., Newark, NJ
- Educational Information and Resource Center, Sewell, NJ
- Urban League of Hudson County, Jersey City, NJ
- NORWESCAP, Inc., Phillipsburg, NJ
- Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ
- Catholic Charities, Perth Amboy & Somerville, NJ
- Child Care Services of Monmouth County, Neptune, NJ
- Child and Family Resources, Mt. Arlington, NJ
- CHS Child Care, Toms River, NJ
- North Jersey 4C's, Paterson, NJ
- Community Coordinated Child Care, Hillside, NJ

- The majority of the CBCs (under contract with DFD) as mentioned in section 1.6 and described in section 1.5 are non-governmental entities.

**1.8 Use of Private Donated Funds**

Will the Lead Agency use private donated funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2) and (f)?

- Yes, The name and type of entity designated to receive private donated funds is:  
Name:  
Address:  
Contact:  
Type:
- No.

**1.9 Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children**

1.9.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

- Yes, and:
- ( ) The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).
- ( %) Estimated % of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

- No.

1.9.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

- Yes, and

( 15 %) Estimated % of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

No.

The Supreme Court of the State of New Jersey mandated that the NJ Department of Education create a high quality early childhood educational program for all three- and four-year-old children who reside in identified school districts or “Abbott Districts.” Contracts between providers and Boards of Education denote that districts provide funding for the six-hour comprehensive educational or instructional component of the 10-hour program for school calendar days. The remaining four-hour portion of the day for ten months during the school calendar year and for two months during the summer months are funded by the Department of Human Services (DHS) pursuant to the contractual agreement with DFD.

In our voucher child care programs, the CCR&Rs coordinate parents’ and childrens’ needs to ensure that TANF and CCDF eligible families receive the hours of care needed. CCR&Rs are funded to provide technical assistance to child care centers contracting with Abbott School Districts, as well as modify voucher payments for children receiving subsidies for wrap-around child care and who attend Abbott pre-K Programs.

1.9.3 If the State answered yes to 1.9.1 or 1.9.2, the following describes State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))

The availability of extended-hours or “wraparound services” for working parents so that their children could attend preschool was an executive decision made by the Governor’s Office. Abbott wraparound services are generally purchased by DFD on a one-to-one basis in amounts equivalent to the funded service capacity established in each Abbott school district.

The parents of many of these children are also Work First New Jersey/TANF clients. Welfare reform's requirement for full-time work or participation in work readiness programs makes full-time, year round early childhood education programs essential. In these cases, many parents very likely work

or attend training or educational activities more than 20 hours per week and are in need of these services. In other cases, the children may be under the child protective service supervision of the Division of Youth and Family Services. For this reason and because the need for child care is also an economic issue, the Department of Human Services (DHS) allocates funds to provide child care extended day and summer care services to meet the needs of working parents (wraparound funding).

DHS has a long standing relationship and commitment with the child care community, including those contracted by Abbott School districts to provide both preschool and wrap-around child care services.

Local boards of education must cooperate with and utilize a DHS-licensed child care provider whenever practicable to implement required early childhood education programs and not duplicate programs or services otherwise available in the community.

### **1.10 Improper Payments**

#### 1.10.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?

Parent/applicant over payments mean funds that have been erroneously paid on behalf of a family to a child care provider, whenever the family and/or child was ineligible to receive benefits from the New Jersey Cares for Kids Program (NJCK). Over payments may result in a reduction or termination of benefits. Examples of over payments related to parent/applicants include:

- Non-reporting/underreporting of income;
- Client receiving payment in more than one jurisdiction;
- Incorrect reporting of household size;
- Incorrect information on client's compliance with program; and requirements, such as participating in required activity.

Child care provider overpayments means funds that have been erroneously paid but the eligibility of the family and/or child(ren) is not affected. These overpayments may occur as a result of intentional and/or unintentional errors in the completion of the voucher made by the child care provider(s) and/or the CCR&R. Examples include overstating level of service (e.g., child attendance) and claiming for services not rendered (e.g., child enrollment). A child care provider overpayment resulting from the miss-reporting by the provider and/or the parent/applicant would necessitate the CCR&R initiating appropriate corrective legal action based on the circumstances.

1.10.2 Has your State developed strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce and/or collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)

Yes, and these strategies are:



Programmatic monitoring of the CCR&Rs during field visits includes provisions for file reviews. The content of randomly selected files are audited for completeness and accuracy.

Security measures have been upgraded to strengthen the vulnerability of the voucher payment system, through enhancement of internal controls and CCR&R supervisory control of the voucher payment approval process.

Data matching is another method used to obtain and disclose information about individuals with other agencies and/or from independent, third party sources, including federal and state agencies or private companies.

Data sources used to better ensure accurate payments for WFNJ/TANF and TCC child care services include but are not limited to.

- Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS);
- Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS);
- Social Security Administration (SSA) form W-2 (wage statements);
- SSA Social Security number verification;
- SSA Supplemental Security Income (SSI) data;
- SSI death information; and
- Ad hoc reports on existing information that resides on the CARES and OMEGA automated systems, as well as use of Shared Data Warehouse technology.

Application of data matching will be expanded for use for child care subsidy provided through the New Jersey Care for Kids Program.

**Cost effective efforts:**

Whenever an overpayment occurs, the CCR&R must recover the entire amount of the overpayment to the best of their ability whenever it is cost effective for the agency to do so.

**Written notice:**

Upon discovery of an overpayment, the CCR&R issues a written notice to the child care provider and/or the parent/applicant which informs them of the overpayment amount, indicated eligibility status and provides notice that recovery procedures are being initiated.

**Calculation of overpayment:**

The CCR&R must determine the exact amount of the overpayment based on the information reported. The overpayment amount is calculated using

only the total subsidy paid to the child care provider during the period of ineligibility.

Method of recovery:

In no instances may the period of eligibility be reduced by the amount of the overpayment. Recovery of overpayments is specific to payments issued on behalf of a child.

Types of repayment:

Repayment may be accomplished through either a lump sum total repayment, or a monthly payment similar to an installment loan repayment.

Repayment agreement:

When the amount of the overpayment is determined, the CCR&R must immediately establish a repayment agreement with the parent/applicant or the child care provider upon issuance of the written notice advising them of the overpayment. The CCR&R uses a repayment agreement form that includes all pertinent information including:

- i. A schedule which clearly outlines the amount to be repaid;
- ii. The frequency (one-time, monthly, weekly, bi-weekly) of repayment; and,
- iii. A time period for completion of total repayment including specific start and end dates.

This agreement must be signed and dated by the CCR&R representative prior to being forwarded to the parent/applicant or child care provider for their signature. The parent applicant and/or child care provider shall be permitted 18 calendar days (includes 3 days for mailing) to return the agreement signed and dated.

Length of agreement:

It is recommended that the repayment agreement be concluded during the family's current period of eligibility. However, if the family or child care provider indicates that repayment within the current eligibility period will create a hardship, then the CCR&R is authorized to negotiate a longer repayment period. All repayment agreements which exceed one year are to be brought to the attention of the DFD for approval.

No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?

Yes.

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No.

1.10.3 Has your State developed strategies to identify errors in the determination of client eligibility?

Yes, and these strategies are:

As mentioned in 1.10.2 above data matching is another method to be used to obtain and disclose information about individuals with other agencies and/or from independent, third party sources, including federal and state agencies to assist in the determination of client eligibility.

In addition to conducting CCR&R monitoring and conducting file reviews, the CCR&R must assess changes in family circumstances, employment or training and determine whether a reassessment of the program eligibility, subsidy amount and/or co-pay amount is necessary. The parent will be required to provide the required verification of the change in circumstance as indicated above.

When a change is reported by the family, the contracted agency indicates the new information into the CARES system. The receipt of this information and all supporting documentation is used to verify client eligibility. All actions completed by the CCR&R are documented and maintained in the family case record.

A redetermination of the co-pay and subsidy amount occurs when there is a change in the family size, income, hours of employment/training/education, hours of child care needed or number of children receiving services. If such a reassessment is warranted, the CCR&R must notify the family that all changes become effective with the beginning of the next full month of service. In these instances a new Parent/Applicant Provider Agreement (PAPA) must be completed.

Should the CCR&R be notified of a change in family circumstance involving a layoff/termination from employment or a break in participation in a training or education program by the eligible parent, the family may continue to receive services from this program for 30 days. After this period the family must contact the contracted agency to report current status or be terminated from the program.

Please note – DFD has organized an ongoing Quality Assurance in Child Care committee that brings together the systems and program staff with

an expertise in our payment system to develop policies procedures to decrease the potential for fraudulent and/or improper payments.

- No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
- Yes.
- No.

**PART 2  
DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

**2.1 Consultation and Coordination**

2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a), (b), §98.16(d)). Indicate the entities with which the Lead Agency has consulted or coordinated (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in the following table.

*Consultation* involves the participation of an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).

*Coordination* involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development services, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children’s emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, and (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (5) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Coordination</b>
• Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
• Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
• State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for		
○ Public health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ Employment services / workforce development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ Public education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ State pre-kindergarten programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
○ Head Start programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
○ Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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*\* Required.*

For each box checked above, (a) identify the agency providing the service and (b) describe the consultation and coordination efforts, if any. Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

DHS continues to consult with the legislatively mandated N.J. Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), the **primary advisory body** on early care and education and child care related issues, and the State Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC), the principal community advisory forum on major human services issues. These bodies serve as the primary contacts for input from the community. Presentations on a variety of child care specific issues are made at their monthly and/or quarterly statewide meetings and at various subcommittees.

The list of participating organizations consulted for the development of this Plan includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- CHSAC - County Human Services Advisory Councils, in consultation with county government officials;
- PDB/DFD - Division of Family Development Child Care Policy Development Board, a policy advisory group to DFD, consisting of contracted community based provider agencies funded through the CCDF;
- CCR&R – Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies;
- ACNJ – Association for Children of New Jersey;
- CITE – Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators;
- FDCONJ – Family Day Care Organization of New Jersey;
- LWVNJ – League of Women Voters of New Jersey;
- NCJW – National Council of Jewish Women – NJ Chapter
- NJACCRRRA – New Jersey Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies;
- NJAECTE – New Jersey Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators;
- NJAEYC – New Jersey Association for the Education of Young Children;
- NJBCDI – New Jersey Black Child Development Institute;
- NJCC – New Jersey Catholic Conference;
- NJCCA – New Jersey Child Care Association;
- NJCWDA – County Welfare Director’s Association of New Jersey;
- NJDOW – New Jersey Division on Women
- NJSACCC – New Jersey School-Age Child Care Coalition;
- NJHSA – New Jersey Head Start Association;

- NJHSDA – New Jersey Head Start Directors Association;
- NJJL – New Jersey Junior Leagues;
- NJNAP – New Jersey Network on Adolescent Programs;
- NJFCCPA – New Jersey Family Child Care Providers Association;
- NJRPA – New Jersey Recreation & Park Association;
- SPAN – Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Inc.;
- United States Military Child Care; and
- Other departments of State government including: Community Affairs, Education, Labor and Workforce Development and Health and Senior Services.

These agencies and organizations continue to provide DHS with information on the needs for the expansion of child care services and the improvement of the quality, availability and accessibility of child care within their jurisdictions. Through these consultations, DHS was able to compile information on the availability, deficiencies and additional need for child care services both statewide and at the local county level.

Through this comprehensive process, information continues to be compiled, in consultation with local government and other critical organizations, to identify child care needs or gaps in services and to prioritize the problems based on an assessment of the resources and available funding levels. Pertaining to this plan specifically, information was reviewed in the context of the CCDF regulations to ascertain how to best meet New Jersey's expanding child care needs, including strategies to increase subsidies to parents, to address the critical infrastructure needs of the service delivery system and to meet the needs of providing relevant information and training to direct caregivers.

- 2) As a result of coordinating with other Federal, State, and local agencies and programs including those involved with public health, employment, public education, and TANF, DHS has enhanced its community process for on-going communication and participation with units of local government, as well as providers, employers and the general public.
- The Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) continues to implement the goals of the NJ Better Baby Care Campaign. The Better Baby Care Campaign promotes a 12-step agenda that addresses four key areas: safe and healthy care, family centered care, developmentally appropriate care, and critical investments (direct financial support to expand and improve child care and Early Head Start). CITE has made a commitment that continues to address several of the Better Baby Care steps, which include:

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- 1) Support recommendations made by the Child Care Health Consultant Coordinators to incorporate the National Health and Safety Standards for Out-of- Home Care;
  - 2) Advocate for bilingual services where needed and for training programs that focus on respect for family diversity; and
  - 3) Promote the development of appropriate professional development opportunities for all people who care for infants and toddlers; and to help establish an Infant/Toddler Certificate.
- The Quality Infant/Toddler Initiative includes improvement efforts for the youngest children in child care settings:
    - As a part of the Healthy Child Care New Jersey collaboration, every county has a registered nurse, a Child Care Health Consultant Coordinator, employed by the CCR&R Agency to provide Technical Assistance and training to enhance and improve the quality of health related child care services.
    - The Child Care Warm Line is a statewide health information and referral service established to promote the development of New Jersey's infants and young children in child care settings.
    - The Approved Home Initiative focuses on providers whose first language is not English and providers caring for infants.
    - The First Steps Infant/Toddler Program Development Initiative is designed to create a statewide training and technical assistance system for child care providers serving children birth to 3. The program delivers four days (20 hours) of on-site assistance.
  - Healthy Child Care New Jersey is a collaboration between the American Academy of Pediatrics New Jersey Chapter; the New Jersey Department of Human Services, and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services.
    - Healthy Child Care New Jersey was selected as a model state program for a presentation on the topic: "Caring for Our Children: Raising the Bar on Quality Child Care."
    - Recently conducted a health and safety survey of all licensed child care providers and registered family child care providers to assist in determining health and safety training and consultation needs.
    - Development of Medication Administration Curriculum Training in conjunction with the American Academy of Pediatrics.
    - Collaboration between the Child Care Health Consultant Coordinators and the Pediatric and Adult Asthma Coalition for asthma training.
    - Implementation of the Universal Child Health Form.
    - Implementation of the Early Childhood Health Link, a health and safety oriented newsletter that helps unite children, parents, caregivers and health professionals in a variety of current health related topics relating to child care.



- On July 1, 2004, the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) consolidated all “To-Work” programs. As a result, the LWD is now responsible for Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) and Food Stamp Program (FSP) work-related activities. The designated agency for LWD is the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC). The OSCCs are responsible for WFNJ work requirement evaluations and planning. As a result, it is imperative that the WFNJ agency and the OSCC communicate and coordinate services. The CWA is responsible for ensuring that all essential supports, including child care, are in place prior to the start of the participant’s first activity. However, should a child care need arise for a participant that was not previously needed, the OSCC shall coordinate with the CWA to access additional supports for WFNJ participants. The 21 CWAs and BSSs refer participants to the CCR&R in their particular county for child care needs. WFNJ/TANF recipients receive child care services for as long as they are eligible for cash assistance and for up to 24 months following the closing of their TANF case known as Transitional Child Care (TCC). They are given priority for transitioning into the NJCK program.
- In addition to being the primary funder of child care subsidies, DHS continues to have a significant role in coordinating “Abbott” preschool programs. The New Jersey Supreme Court in the Abbott vs. Burke decision ordered that early childhood education must be offered to preschool children in the state’s 31 poorest school districts. The court also stated that licensed child care centers in the community should be used to provide these services. The DHS Office for Early Care and Education (OECE) is responsible for coordinating preschool programs and issues regarding before and after-school programs (Out-of-School-Time Programs) with DOE.
- Head Start Programs are coordinated through the DHS Office of Early Care and Education, Head Start Collaboration Project. For the past twelve years, New Jersey has designed and implemented a successful Head Start-State Collaboration Project with support from the Administration for Children and Families. Since its inception, the Project, in partnership with the New Jersey Head Start Association, has worked to develop collaborative relationships with a variety of state and local projects and initiatives. In doing so, the State Collaboration continues to ensure Head Start’s integral role in New Jersey’s efforts to improve services for children and families. The project continues to be administered by the Office of Early Care and Education in the Department of Human Services.
- The MAP To Inclusive Child Care Team is a statewide initiative to enhance the inclusion of children with special needs in child care settings (birth to 13). The Special Projects Manager in the DHS Office of Early Care and Education, coordinates resources among state agencies, the private sector, parents, and

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advocacy groups to both increase the number of children served and improve the quality of care for children with special needs; provides guidance and information on ADA related issues to divisions within DHS; and has developed resource guides for parents, providers and community agencies including a CD entitled "Resources for Including Children with Special Needs in child Care". The Special Projects Manager also provides guidance and monitoring for the NJ School Age Technical Assistance Project, implemented by the New Jersey School Age Care Coalition and the New Jersey Inclusive Child Care Project, implemented by the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network.

Among the goals of the MAP Team are:

- 1) Improving the quality of early care and education for children with special needs;
  - 2) Through technical assistance and training, increasing the number of child care providers that offer inclusive child care programming;
  - 3) Developing awareness among parents, child care providers, and resource and referral counselors (at the CCR&Rs) of the services available for children with special needs; and
  - 4) Increasing the delivery of services for children with special needs through collaboration among providers of child care services and special needs services. Services extend to child care center staff, family child care providers, before-and after-school programs for school-age children, resource and referral agencies, parent groups, and agencies and professionals working with children with special needs.
- The New Jersey School Age Child Coalition offers training, technical assistance and support to programs serving children ages 5 through 13. Training opportunities are geared toward supporting efforts to meet licensing requirements, improve the quality of care and achieve national accreditation.
  - In 2001, DHS, Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), and DOE signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop coordination with and between New Jersey's Head Start Agencies and local districts to ensure that mandated services be provided to children with disabilities. Subsequent to that Memorandum, in 2002, local school districts and Head Start Agencies began to meet to develop a service delivery system where partners will maximize the use of resources through communication, planning, training, and service delivery collaboration. Local Memoranda of Understanding have been encouraged to ensure that children with disabilities are appropriately served.

2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. *Good Start, Grow Smart* encourages States to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood

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programs. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area.

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (describe):**

On May 21, 1998, New Jersey's Supreme Court mandated that children in New Jersey's Abbott districts, the 30 (now 31) highest poverty districts in the state, receive a high-quality preschool education beginning at age three. The purpose is to prepare these children to enter kindergarten with skills and abilities more comparable to those of their wealthier suburban peers. The court's mandate has a strong scientific basis. Intensive, high-quality preschool programs can close much of the early achievement gap for lower income children. This substantially increases their school success and produces a host of life-long benefits, including increased school achievement and social and economic success as adults. These goals can be reached through the creation and support of high-quality preschool programs for all eligible children. The court-ordered Abbott preschool effort presents an extraordinary opportunity to meet the needs of New Jersey's most disadvantaged children.

As a result of implementing the New Jersey Supreme Court mandate, the Abbott school districts are required to submit a three-year operational plan and annual revisions for the appropriate school years to the DOE by November 15 of each year.

Describe the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

To achieve the Abbott standards, a collaborative effort has been made with school districts, Head Start agencies, licensed child care centers and representatives of the Department of Education, Department of Human Services

and/or the Administration for Children and Families regional office. These parties continue to work together to meet the full implementation of Abbott standards.

The New Jersey Supreme Court set out a few basic standards for quality preschool education, all of which have since been accomplished in the Abbott districts:

- (1) A certified teacher and an assistant for each class;
- (2) Maximum class size of 15 students;
- (3) Developmentally appropriate curriculum;
- (4) Adequate facilities; and,
- (5) Transportation, health and other related services as needed.

These standards are the essential minimum ingredients of effective preschool education. High teacher and teacher assistant quality continue to be imperative. Barriers to attendance like transportation and work schedules are being addressed. Health, nutrition, and other services are incorporated, and every attempt is made to maximize family involvement. To serve all Abbott preschool children in an expedient and high-quality manner, the court recognizes the value of working with public school, Head Start and private child care programs. School districts are primarily responsible for the provision of high-quality preschool education and related services that meet the court's standards. The court requires that the school districts conduct local needs assessments to develop program plans that meet the specific needs of their children. The court standards offer a basic framework for individual districts to utilize when developing this plan and when evaluating how well children and their communities are being served.

### **Early Launch to Learning Initiative**

The Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) is designed to increase access to preschool for four-year-olds statewide. Districts form partnerships or consortia to operate preschool programs. The level of funding is based on the number of low-income children to be served. The long term aim of ELLI is to provide access to high-quality preschool for all four-year-olds in New Jersey by 2010. High-quality preschool results in savings to society over time and improves the quality of life, not only for the participants and their families, but for the communities as a whole.

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**Early Childhood Program Aid**

**Non-Abbott** The *Comprehensive Education Improvement Finance Act* of 1996 provided children in New Jersey's Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) districts - 102 low income districts - the opportunity to receive a high-quality preschool education beginning at age four. The purpose is to prepare these children to enter kindergarten with skills and abilities more comparable to those of their wealthier suburban peers. High-quality preschool programs can close much of the early achievement gap for lower income children. This substantially increases their school success and produces a host of life-long benefits, including increased school achievement and social and economic success as adults. These goals can be reached through the creation and support of high-quality preschool programs for all eligible children.

Indicate whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

On-going coordination between early childhood programs and funding streams continues in an attempt to maximize revenues, with the state Department of Human Services (DHS) and the state Department of Education (DOE), the primary lead agencies. DHS has the responsibility for TANF and CCDF (which includes child care services for TANF-eligible and non-TANF-eligible families) programs. DOE has the responsibility for school districts and public school programs.

In addition to being the primary funder of child care subsidies, DHS has a significant role in funding and monitoring wrap around services in "Abbott" preschool programs. Currently, DOE provides funding to the Abbott districts that pays for six hours of the 10-hour, full-day education program during the school years. DHS contracts directly with community-based child care providers to pay for four hours of the same 10-hour, full-day educational program from September through June and for 10 hours daily in July and August.

The DHS Office of Early Care and Education (OECE) is responsible for coordinating School-Age Child Care; Special Needs Child Care Programs; and the Head Start Collaboration Project. The OECE is also responsible for coordinating the New Jersey Child Care Advisory Council, which is comprised of members from the early care and education, and child advocacy communities and government staff from the departments cited in the enabling legislation, and from the Departments of Education, Health and Senior Services, and Labor and Work Force Development. The Council meets on a monthly basis and is

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mandated to advise and make recommendations on child care issues, policies and programs through the DHS and the Department of Community Affairs.

DHS in cooperation with the Association for Children of New Jersey is participating in a multi-state partnership with several organizations on a project called the Build Initiative. The Build Initiative's mission is to help build a coordinated system of programs, policies, and services that is responsive to the needs of families, careful in the use of private and public resources, and effective in preparing our youngest children for a successful future. This is an early care and education funding collaborative for children, infancy to 5 years of age. A team has been developed to advance and promote early learning, to conduct an assessment of early learning, and to develop a comprehensive policy agenda, to connect programs and infrastructure into a coordinated system of policies and services.

DHS in cooperation with Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is participating in a multi-agency partnership on a project called Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS). ECCS mission is to develop an infrastructure for an early childhood system that will support the healthy growth, nurturing relationships and learning environments for children birth to five and their families. A task force has been developed to meet monthly and design an action plan that when implemented, will provide families and caregivers with the skills and knowledge to support New Jersey's children to reach their full potential.

The DFD Office of Child Care Operations coordinates and monitors the administration of all child care subsidy assistance and services and maintains open communications with DYFS, as well as DOE, concerning areas of Early Care and Education.

Describe the **results** or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

The coordination of child care services and the results of this coordination effort continue to be very productive. Through efforts of the Child Care Advisory Council information is shared throughout all areas of the state providing a forum for coordination among multiple agencies and entities for maximizing resources and improving the quality, availability, and affordability of child care services.

As a result of the collaborative efforts of the Office of Early Care and Education (OECE), the New Jersey Professional Development Center (NJPDC) for Early

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Care and Education, the Child Care Advisory Council and the many advocacy groups and government participants who have given time, knowledge and resources and participated in the various sub-committees, here are some of the outcomes of these efforts:

- DOE developed and implemented the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* in cooperation with the wide early care and education community;
- Promotes legislation that supports and early care and education goals;
- Continues to track proposed changes regarding the Reauthorization of TANF Legislation, and CCDF funding and the quality set-aside;
- Developed and distributed a position statement and recommended changes to the teacher licensing codes;
- In collaboration with Rutgers University Center for Families, DHS implemented the Family Development Credential (FDC) for family workers employed to work with families whose children are in Abbott contracted centers. Family Workers are required to complete 90 hours of interactive classroom instruction, complete a skills portfolio and pass a credentialing exam to become eligible for the credential. Credentialed Family Workers also receive 7 college credits.
- In collaboration with New Jersey City University, the New Jersey Professional Development Committee created and disseminated a statewide informational brochure on the Preschool-third grade teaching certificate;
- The Professional Development Committee developed a grid to assist in the awareness, prioritization, and identification of sources for professional development funding in New Jersey;
- Encouragement of a Memorandum of Understanding between DHS, DHSS, DOE, local school districts and Head Start Agencies for a service delivery system to ensure that mandated services be provided to children with disabilities.
- As the need arises, Ad Hoc committees are organized to address specific issues.
- The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education conducted a Child Development Associate (CDA) *Survey and*

*Follow-up Study.* The survey reflected encouraging statistics in regard to the retention of CDA professionals in the field of early care and education. This survey, focusing solely on New Jersey, showed an average 96% retention rate. Most of the respondents stated being very satisfied with the CDA process and the information learned in the preparation courses. Respondents felt that it increased their knowledge of child development and gave them a sense of professionalism. As a result of their success in obtaining the CDA credential, many have demonstrated increased levels of educational aspirations.

- The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education has developed an online service, the New Jersey Registry for Childhood Professionals, serving children birth through age thirteen. The NJ Registry is a statewide system that guides, tracks and recognizes the professional growth and development of people who work in early care and education, out-of-school time, and primary education settings in New Jersey. The NJ Registry will keep track of professional development achievements by maintaining confidential records for each individual who participates in the system. The purpose of The NJ Registry is to create a seamless plan that would define expectations for advancing through levels of professional development in New Jersey. The NJ Registry is maintained in the office of the Clearinghouse, at the New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education at Kean University in Union.

Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

Through collaboration these efforts form the basis for the development and implementation of our early learning guidelines. Through the continued efforts of the Child Care Advisory Council and the coordinated efforts of the DHS, DFD, DYFS, DCA, DOE, Department of Labor and Work Force Development, Head Start and the many advocacy groups continued coordination among programs is assured. As stated earlier on-going coordination between early childhood programs and funding streams is an evolutionary process in New Jersey and continues to change based on the needs of children and as funding priorities allow.

## **2.2 Public Hearing Process**



Describe the Statewide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description must provide:

Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing:

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing:

Date(s) of public hearing(s):

Hearing site(s):

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s):

A brief summary of the public comments from this process is included as Attachment N/A.

- Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing April 25, 2005.
- Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing Written notice is provided to the wide child care community through direct mailing, Informational Transmittals, Public Notice in several regional newspapers and inter-net posting.
- Date(s) of public hearing(s) Wednesday May 18, 2005 Central NJ; Wednesday May 25, 2005 Northern NJ; Thursday, May 26, 2005 Southern NJ
- Hearing site(s) Central Region will be held at the Children's Home Society in Trenton, NJ on Wed., May 18, 2005 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.; Northern Region will be held at the Newark Public Library, Auditorium Room- 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Newark NJ on Wed., May 25, 2005 from 11:00 am to 4:00 p.m.; and the Southern Region will be held at the Education Information Resource Center, Sewell, NJ on Thurs., May 26, 2005 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s) (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)):

Written notice of the hearings is provided to the broad child care community, consisting of the statewide child care advisory groups and child care providers, via DFD Information Transmittal Letters and announcements in various local newspapers. Prior to the hearing, copies of the CCDF State Plan are distributed to several child care advisory groups including the Child Care Advisory Council, Policy Development Board (PDB), and all CCR&Rs. The State Plan is made available to county public libraries throughout the state, and is made available on the Internet at the DHS DFD web site: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/DFD/>.

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Adequate advance notice was given for parent/provider participation for the DHS CCDF State plan public hearings. Over 10,000 notices are distributed to the following child care entities:

- The 16 CCR&Rs to share with providers and provider groups;
  - Over 4100 licensed child care providers;
  - Approximately 180 CBCs;
  - Over 5000 registered family child care providers;
  - Various Human Service agencies;
  - County Human Service Advisory Councils;
  - School Superintendents;
  - DHS Child Care Advisory Council members; and
  - All New Jersey State Departments.
- Advance notice regarding the public hearings is electronically provided via the DHS Public Notices web page.

**Three regional public hearings will be conducted:**

For the **Central Region** on May 18, 2005 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Children's Home Society, in Trenton, NJ;

For the **Northern Region** on May 25, 2005 from 11:00 am to 4:00 p.m. at the Newark Public Library, in Newark, NJ; and

For the **Southern Region** on May 26, 2005 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Education Information Resource Center, in Sewell, NJ

### **2.3 Public-Private Partnerships**

Describe (1) the activities, including planned activities, to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs, and (2) the results or expected results of these activities. (658D(b)(1), §98.16(d))

As part of New Jersey's continuing strategy for child care, including but not limited to the on-going planning for the CCDF program, the State plans to continue a broad range of existing activities which have been designed to promote the development of employer-supported child care. Through this effort, the number of employer-supported centers in New Jersey has grown from 7 in 1982 to approximately 147 as of February 24, 2005.

Employer-supported child care represents an essential public-private partnership approach to expanding the availability of child day care services in New Jersey. DHS plans to continue and enhance these partnerships:

- The New Jersey's new Child Welfare Reform Plan calls for the development of a consortium of at least five corporate and foundation leaders to identify and

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promote steps businesses and foundations can take to help implement the extensive plan. Representatives from more than 20 corporations and foundations have joined together as a working group. The consortium was created to promote the work of the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships in the Office of Children Services and support programs that prevent child abuse and neglect.

- Providing a comprehensive packet of informational resource materials for employers interested in developing an on-site or near-site employer-supported child care center or other family-supportive benefits in the workplace (e.g., consortium arrangements for child care, voucher programs, flextime programs, etc.);
- Arranging for courtesy life/safety inspections by the DHS Office of Licensing for employers considering specific space for on or near-site child care centers;
- Providing technical assistance and consultation to public/private/volunteer advocacy organizations seeking to promote employer-supported child care efforts throughout the State;
- Continuation of the NJ Bright Beginnings Loan Fund. DHS in partnership with New Jersey Community Capital and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority has developed a revolving child care loan fund for businesses seeking to establish child care centers;
- Directly supporting proposed employer-supported child care legislation;
- The Accreditation Facilitation Project of New Jersey was established to increase the availability of and access to high quality early childhood programs by increasing the number of centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The statewide accreditation project is a unique public/private partnership formed by the New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education (NJPDCECE) in collaboration with DHS, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, Lucent Technologies Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, the Johanette Wallerstein Foundation, Fleet Bank, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, AT&T Family Care Development Fund and the Victoria Foundation;
- Inclusion of the business community as an eligible participant in the RFP process to expand child care through grants and loans; and
- The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State College is conducting an Economic Impact Study of New Jersey. to provide data on the impact child care services have on New Jersey's economy.

- DHS will continue to work with business and industry within the State to encourage employers to assume a more vital role in regard to supporting working families. The State Employment and Training Commission as well as corporations such as AT&T, Johnson and Johnson, Hartz Mountain, Merck, Novartis, and Prudential, and entities such as the U.S. Military have been instrumental in shaping innovative policy that responds to the needs of both the public and private sector.

### **PART 3**

#### **CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED**

#### **3.1 Description of Child Care Services**

##### 3.1.1 Certificate Payment System

Describe the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

- (1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));
- (2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2)) and
- (3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the mix of \$98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts, and explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (98.30(a) & (b)) This may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services.

- (1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));

The child care provider selected by the parent will receive the voucher (certificate) forms from the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency. The CCR&R will forward voucher forms to the provider to extend through the end of the child's eligibility period or issue them on another schedule convenient to the agency and the provider. The appropriate items on the voucher form should be completed by the CCR&R. The CCR&R must instruct the provider and the parent on the proper completion of the voucher form.

**Maximum Reimbursement Rate:** The maximum reimbursement rate which the child care provider is authorized to receive from the CCR&R will be indicated.

This amount is the provider's agreed rate, minus the parent's required co-payment.

**Family Identifier:** The automated system will indicate the number assigned to the family. In the manual system, this number will be the same as that which is stamped on the application.

**Program:** The program component from which the family is eligible to receive a subsidy, i.e. ARCC or CCDBG, etc. will be indicated.

**Return To:** The name and address of the CCR&R will be indicated.

### **PART A**

**Provider Information:** The name, address, and telephone number and the federal identification or social security number of the licensed child care center, family child care provider or approved home will be indicated

**Period of Service:** The dates of the time period (from – to) for which payment is being requested will be indicated. For example, if service was delivered for an entire month, the dates listed should be from the first to the last day of the month.

**Child's Information:** The name, date of birth, identification number and social security number of the child for whom child care services were rendered will be indicated.

### **PART B**

**Type of Care:** The type of child care arrangement that describes the service provided would be indicated.

**Period of Care:** The provider will indicate if full-time or part-time child care services were provided during this reporting period of service.

**Child's Attendance:** To ensure the prompt and accurate payment, the provider must indicate the child's attendance using the following codes:

- P – Present
- A – Unexcused absence
- S – Sickness/illness of the child or parent
- H – Approved holiday
- C – Closed

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**Provider Signature:** The child care provider must sign the form attesting to the accuracy of the information provided.

**Parent Signature:** The provider must obtain the signature of the parent prior to sending the voucher to the CCR&R for payment.

### **PART C**

**Provider Comments:** This space is utilized by the provider to indicate any information or extraordinary circumstances that would be useful to the CCR&R.

### **PART D**

The CCR&R will complete this section of the voucher form.

**Date Received:** The date the completed voucher form was received at the CCR&R.

**Amount Authorized for Monthly Payment:** The monthly amount to be issued to the provider after all adjustments have been calculated.

**Payment Reduction Determination:**

1. The total number of care days the child was scheduled to attend care.
2. Indicate the total number of days in the reporting period on which the provider indicated an "A".

**Explanation:** If needed, the CCR&R shall provide an explanation for any reductions to the subsidy amount to be issued.

**Warrant Number:** Indicate the number of the check to be issued to the provider on behalf of the eligible child.

**Date of Warrant:** The date the check was printed.

**CCR&R Signature:** The CCR&R representative authorized to sign and date the payment.

- (2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2)) and

When a family is determined to be eligible, the county CCR&R will initiate a notification letter. The purpose of this letter is to inform the family of their eligibility determination and/or apprise them of the availability of a subsidy.

If the family is determined eligible and funds for the subsidy are available the notification letter will serve as a cover letter to the package of materials that will outline the process for parents. Parents will receive the following materials at this time:

- Preliminary Parent/Applicant/Provider Agreement (PAPA)
- Parent handbook

Parents must be informed that the PAPA must be finalized and signed by all appropriate parties before issuance of any payment for child care services. If the family is determined eligible for the program and there are no available funds, the CCR&R will indicate on the notification letter that the family is placed on the waiting list.

The CCR&R is required to partially complete and forward the preliminary PAPA to the parent for each child for whom a subsidy is requested. The parent is then responsible for the completion of the remainder of the form and for its return to the CCR&R within the allotted calendar day time period (7 days plus 3 days for mailing).

A parent may request one extension (7 days plus 3 for mailing) to the original allotted calendar days for a reasonable cause which must be documented in the case record.

Consumer information regarding the various child care services offered is available to parents/applicants and providers in both a parent handbook and a provider handbook, or by contacting the local county CCR&R.

The parent is responsible for selecting a child care provider and ensuring that the provider's name, address, residence address as well as mailing address, if different, Federal ID or social security number, and the requested monthly fee are indicated in the appropriate sections of this form.

Parents must be informed of the DHS maximum child care reimbursement rates. If the provider charges more than the maximum allowable rate, the parent is responsible for any amount over the maximum rate as well as the monthly co-payment requirement.

Licensed child care centers, school-age child care programs and summer camps are to attach to the preliminary PAPA a copy of their rate schedule or a handbook listing their published rates, on an annual basis or if rates change. Other providers are to do so if this is available.

**Types of care to choose from:**

Licensed Child Care Center  
Pre-School Program Operated by a School District  
Registered Family Child Care Home (Relative)  
Registered Family Child Care Home (Non-relative)  
Summer Day Camp  
Before and/or After School Program  
DYFS In-Home Care (Relative)  
DYFS In-Home Care (Non-relative)  
Approved Home (Relative)  
Approved Home (Non-relative)  
In-Home Care (Relative)  
In-Home Care (Non-relative)

The parent/applicant must read the PAPA, ensure that the provider has signed the form and then sign and date the form in the appropriate places. A signature implies agreement to all information contained in the agreement.

The provider must read the agreement and sign and date the form. The provider signature implies agreement to all information contained in the form.

The parent then returns the signed PAPA to the CCR&R within 10 calendar days (7 days plus 3 days for mailing).

Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) vouchers are issued and paid through a similar system as the NJCK vouchers, as explained in the WFNJ Child Care Support Parent Handbook.

3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

Yes, and the following describes the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

No

As part of a comprehensive and coordinated child care delivery system, DFD seeks to provide for safe and affordable services to equitably meet the child care service needs of eligible families by purchasing child care services from licensed child care providers and child care programs which meet specific minimum program requirements.



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DFD requires specific admissions criteria be observed by contracted child care agencies to ensure that subsidized child care services are provided on a consistent basis statewide to those eligible children and their families in greatest need of service.

- Eligible families who are placed on a waiting list in contracted centers are advised of the certificate program and where to get additional information.
- Parents/applicants are encouraged to maximize their opportunity to receive a child care subsidy by applying for a contracted slot as well as a voucher subsidy.
- CPS funds may only be used to provide voucher subsidy assistance for services provided in contracted child care centers after all available contracted slots are utilized. This child then becomes eligible for the next available contracted slot.

3.1.3 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are: (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv))

No

In-home care providers may be used for child care services in the home of a child for fewer than twenty-four (24) hours per day.

For approved home and in-home providers in New Jersey, N.J.S.A. C. 30:5B-32 requires all prospective approved home/in-home providers and all member's of the prospective provider's household who are at least 14 years of age, to provide written consent for DHS to conduct a Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against any such person. A CARI background check is a significant component of the approval process for approved homes and in-home providers.

If there is no substantiated CARI finding, the CCR&R schedules the health and safety inspection and completes the approval process. The appropriate CCR&R representative completes the Self-Arranged Care Home Inspection & Interview Checklist and an interview with the provider, prior to issuance of a payment through DHS for subsidized child care. A home inspection is not required if a home has already been inspected, approved for payment and in continuous use within the last six months. A provider may not care for more than two unrelated children or up to five children of one family in a home based setting.

3.1.4 Are all of the child care services described in 3.1.1 above (including certificates) offered throughout the State? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

Yes

No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

### **3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care**

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

These rates are provided as Attachment A.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of 7/01/04.

The following is a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: Initiated, December 2004. (§98.43(b)(2))
- A copy of the Market Rate Survey instrument and a summary of the results of the survey are provided as Attachment B\*. \* (When results become available).
- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

The payment rates in the Maximum Reimbursement Rate Tables for the provision of child care services in New Jersey, **Attachment A** (Tables I - X), include a 3.5 percent cost of living adjustment that became effective July 1, 2004. The tables have also been consolidated into a one page format, SFY 2005 Maximum Child Care Payment Rates, effective July 1, 2004. (See attachment A1)

As an incentive to increase the quality of child care in New Jersey, the rates the State pays to child care centers and family child care homes that have achieved

national accreditation were increased by 5 percent in January, 1998. Effective July 1, 2002 the American Camping Association (ACA) accreditation was added to the list of national accreditation agencies eligible for New Jersey's increased 5 percent child care subsidy reimbursement rate. The child care centers and family child care homes that are accredited also received the 3.5 percent cost of living adjustment that became effective July 1, 2004.

Comparisons of data from 2002 to 2004 show that center rates increased from 11 to 21 percent during this time for most types of child care, while family child care rates showed greater variability; some rates increased slightly, while others remained stable.

On the whole, rates in the Northern and Central regions tend to exceed the statewide average, while those in the Southern region fell below state averages. The one notable exception were the rates for before and after school programs, where rates in the Southern region were comparable to those in the Northern and Central parts of the state.

**Please Note: The current market rate survey is currently under development. A summary of the results of the survey will be made available upon completion of the analysis of responses received.**

- Additional facts that the Lead Agency relies on to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access include: (§98.43(d))

Payment rates reflected in **Attachments A and A1** are the maximum reimbursement rates for the full range of providers in New Jersey. DFD, through the CCR&Rs, ensures that parents have freedom of choice in selecting child care arrangements and are provided with flexibility to choose the location and type of provider that best meets parents' child care needs. Providers must charge consistent rates for subsidized and non-subsidized children.

- If the payment rates do not reflect individual rates for the full range of providers - center-based, group home, family and in-home care -- explain how the choice of the full range of providers is made available to parents.

New Jersey has no distinct category of group home care. This category is considered as licensed child care centers. In New Jersey, consumers of child care have the maximum choice possible among types of child care options available (including licensed center-based care, pre-school programs, school-age child care, registered family child care providers, approved home care, in-home care, care by relatives and summer camp programs) under contracts between

providers and the DFD for the provision of child care services, or through the child care certificate program.

- At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set? If it varies across categories of care, please describe.

Information pending completion of the current market rate survey.

- Does the State have a tiered reimbursement system (higher rates for child care centers and family child care homes that achieve one or more levels of quality beyond basic licensing requirements)?

Yes. If yes, describe:

No

As stated earlier, as an incentive to increase the quality of child care in New Jersey, the rates the State pays to child care centers, family day care homes and summer camps that have achieved national accreditation are increased by 5 percent over the maximum rates for those centers, registered family child care homes, and summer camps meeting basic licensing requirements.

### **3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care**

- 3.3.1 Complete column (a) and (b) in the matrix below. Complete Column (c) ONLY IF the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI).

			<b>IF APPLICABLE</b>	
<b>Family Size</b>	<b>(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)</b>	<b>*(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]</b>	<b>(c) Income Level, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility</b>	
			<b>** (d) \$/month 250% FPI</b>	<b>(e) % of SMI [Divide (d) by (a), multiply by 100]</b>

1	\$ 3788	\$ 3220	\$ 1994	53 %
2	\$ 4953	\$ 4210	\$ 2673	54 %
3	\$ 6119	\$ 5201	\$ 3352	55 %
4	\$ 7284	\$ 6191	\$ 4031	55 %
5	\$ 8,450	\$ 7183	\$ 4710	56 %

If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, indicate the year used:

**\* Please note that column (b) represents 85% of State Median Income in New Jersey for Federal Fiscal year 2005.**

If applicable, the date on which the eligibility limits detailed in column (b) became or will become effective:

**\*\*Please note that column (d) represents our universal exit level for all families, which is based on 250% of the 2005 Federal Poverty Index which will become effective 7/01/05 .**

- 3.3.2 How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income, for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments? Is the income of all family members included, or is the income of certain family members living in the household excluded? Please describe and/or include information as *Attachment n/a*. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

Income is defined as the source and amount of current gross income earned by adult parent(s) or guardians of the family unit through the receipt of wages, tips, salaries or commissions from activities as an employee or receipt of income from self-employment.

This would include income that is earned and unearned such as employment part-time and full-time, social security, pensions, retirement, unemployment, workmen’s compensation, public assistance, child support, alimony and any other income required for federal and state tax reporting purposes.

- 3.3.3 Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions or priority rules, for example, income limits that vary in different parts of the State, special eligibility for families receiving TANF, or eligibility that differs for families that include a child with special needs? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

No

A dependent child who is age 19 or younger and defined as a "special needs" individual, in appendix 2, who is physically or mentally incapable of self-care shall be eligible for child care benefits upon verification by the CCR&R or CWA, as appropriate, based on a determination by a physician or a licensed /certified psychologist.

"Transitional child care" (TCC) recipients remain eligible for child care benefits regardless of income, for up to two years after their WFNJ case has closed due to earnings from employment, as long as the parent/applicant remains employed.

3.3.4 Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

No

Not applicable. CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.

In the event that protective child care services are deemed necessary as part of a case plan for a Child Protective Services (CPS) Priority 1 child who is residing in their own home with their own parent(s), the amount of the family's co-payment is determined on the basis of the family's annual gross income, family size, number of children receiving care, and the number of hours of service (full and/or part time) provided to the children. The DYFS case manager has the authority to decrease or waive the co-pay on a case by case basis.

3.3.5 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is 19.

No

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If the child is identified as a “special needs child”. (See appendix 2 for definition of special needs child).

- 3.3.6 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is \_\_\_\_\_.

No

- 3.3.7 Does the State choose to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)

No

- 3.3.8 Does the State choose to provide (**respite**) child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

Yes

No

### **3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families**

- 3.4.1 Describe how the State prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs, (b) children in families with very low incomes, and (c) other. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

**Child Care Services** are provided to Work First New Jersey (WFNJ)/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) participants to the extent such services are necessary to permit a TANF family to accept employment, remain employed, or participate in a WFNJ work activity as delineated at N.J.A.C. 10:90. These services shall be available for WFNJ/TANF eligible dependent children during the recipient's period of eligibility for cash assistance.

**Transitional Child Care (TCC)** benefits provide child care services to families whose eligibility for cash assistance has terminated, providing they are employed at the time of

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application for TCC child care services, for a period of up to 24 consecutive months beginning the first month the family is ineligible for TANF.

**Post Transitional Child Care (Post TCC)** Services have been established for TANF families that have exhausted their 24 months of TCC eligibility but have not yet been reassigned or re-determined to the ARCC (At Risk Child Care) program. As long as they remain eligible for the NJCK ARCC program, families may remain in the Post TCC funding source for up to one year, from October 1 to September 30 (the end of the contract year). At that time those families currently receiving services in the Post TCC program get reassigned or re-determined to the ARCC program.

**The New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK)** program operates with four components: Post Transitional Child Care (PTCC), At-Risk Child Care (ARCC), Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and Children in Protective Services (CPS). These components provide eligible families with necessary child care services. Eligible families access NJCK child care services through the CCR&R in the county where the family resides.

**admissions priorities** – Priority consideration will be given to families, upon admission in the CCDF program, if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Children identified by DYFS in child protective services and under the supervision of DYFS;
2. Children identified as having special needs and/or circumstances;
3. Children in families with incomes at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level; and
4. Children in families eligible under provisions of the CCDF who have an identified need for child care services and who do not fall in the above listed priorities.

An explanation of income eligibility criteria for program entrance priorities follows:

**Priority 1:** A child under the child protective service (CPS) supervision of DYFS and who is identified as eligible to receive subsidized child care services as part of an approved case plan are given priority admission into the program and/or moved to the top of the waiting list.

**Priority 2:** Priority placement consideration for subsidized child care services or service shall be given to a child who is not under the child protective service supervision of DYFS and who has been initially determined eligible on the basis of the annual gross family income for the family size, as indicated in Entrance Tiers A, B, and C below. One parent/applicant in a single parent family or both parents in two parent families shall also meet the following conditions in order for the child to be considered eligible for Priority 2 placement:



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Higher priority placement consideration shall be given to a Priority 2 or 3 child if a child considered for subsidized child care services is identified as having special needs or special circumstances due to a physical, medical, emotional, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition through a written referral from DYFS, DFD, CWA/BSS, legal, medical, or social service agency, emergency shelter, or public school. Children of teen parents who are 19 years of age and below are also considered a special circumstance.

The referral must delineate the medical or social problem or adverse living condition of the family and specify that the child care services are needed to help ameliorate the situation and/or prevent the placement of the child or other family member(s) outside of the family; or that parents need child care services in order to remain in full-time employment or in a full-time training/education program.

1. The parent(s) works full-time, attends a full-time school or training program directed toward employment, or whose combination of work and school/training equals a full-time work/school/training equivalent.
2. One parent/applicant is employed or attends class full time and the co-applicant (or the applicant in a single parent family) is physically or mentally incapacitated and due to the extent of the condition, is unable to care for the child or the ability to provide care for the child is significantly limited and assistance is required.
3. The child is identified by the CWA, BSS, or CCR&R as eligible to receive subsidized child care services or service because both parents (or the only applicant in a single parent family) participate in an approved employment-related activity, as part of the WFNJ program.

Priority 3: Priority placement consideration for subsidized child care services shall be given to a child who is not under the child protective service supervision of DYFS and who has been initially determined eligible on the basis of the annual gross family income for the family size, as indicated in Entrance Tiers A, B, and C below.

Tier A: A child who has been initially determined eligible on the basis of the annual gross family income, adjusted for the family size when the family income is at or below 150 per cent of the current Federal Poverty Index (FPI) guidelines shall be given the highest priority consideration for admission.

Tier B: A child who has been initially determined eligible on the basis of the annual gross family income, adjusted for family size, which must fall between 151

percent and 175 percent of the current FPI, shall be given the next highest priority.

Tier C: A child who has been initially determined eligible on the basis of the annual gross family income adjusted for family size, which must fall between 176 per cent and 200 per cent of current FPI, shall be considered last.

3.4.2 Describe how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

**A. Child care services are provided to Work First New Jersey (WFNJ)/TANF** participants to the extent such services are necessary to permit a TANF family to accept employment, remain employed, or participate in a WFNJ work activity. These services shall be available for WFNJ/TANF eligible dependent children during the recipient's period of eligibility for cash assistance.

- Families eligible for TANF cash benefits and participating in the WFNJ program are eligible for child care services if the family is receiving TANF and participating family members are in an approved WFNJ work activity as required in the Work First New Jersey Manual (N.J.A.C. 10:90).
- Families receiving TANF cash assistance and employed may also be eligible to receive WFNJ child care services. These families are required to pay a co-pay towards the cost of child care based on earned income.

Eligible participants are referred to the CCR&R by assigned staff from their local CWA/BSS or One Stop Center. The CCR&R provides counseling regarding the various child care options including:

1. licensed child care centers, including Head Start;
2. pre-kindergarten programs operated by a school district;
3. registered family child care;
4. summer camps;
5. school-age child care;
6. self-arranged child care services (approved home care)

When a regulated type of child care arrangement is selected appropriate staff at the CCR&R provide the names and addresses of providers with vacancies.

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If the parent selects approved home care appropriate staff at the CCR&R request a CARI background check of the potential provider and all residents over 14 years of age in the location where the child care will take place, and conducts a health and safety inspection of all the home. Arrangements are then agreed upon and verified by the participant, the CCR&R and the provider.

**B. Transitional Child Care (TCC)** benefits provide child care services to families whose eligibility for cash assistance has terminated for earned income.

- The family must have received cash assistance in the last month preceding the first month of ineligibility.
- The family requests TCC benefits and provides the information necessary for determining eligibility and co-payment, including verification of effective dates of employment and amounts of earnings. The eligible participants may be referred to the CCR&R by the CWA/BSS or may contact the CCR&R directly.
- The participant signs an agreement covering the benefit period during which the child care is to be provided. (Currently this period is up to 24 months).
- Continued eligibility shall be re-determined after 12 months of eligibility.

Eligible participants are referred to the CCR&R by assigned staff from their local CWA/BSS where they receive counseling regarding the various child care options including:

1. licensed child care centers,
2. Head Start programs,
3. pre-kindergarten programs operated by a school district,
4. registered family child care,
5. Summer camps,
6. School age child care,
7. Self-arranged child care services (approved home care).

When a regulated type of child care arrangement is selected, appropriate staff at the CCR&R provide the names and addresses of providers with vacancies. The CCR&R shall conduct a life/safety inspection of all potential self-arranged care home sites. Arrangements are then agreed upon and verified by the participant, the CCR&R and the provider.

**C. Post Transitional Child Care (Post TCC) Services** - A program called Post TCC has been established for TANF families who have exhausted their 24

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months of TCC eligibility and are eligible for NJCK child care supports, but have not yet moved into the NJCK program. All eligible families are reassigned to the Post TCC program for up to one year, until September 30, in the contract year they are assigned to the Post TCC program. Effective October 1, the beginning of the new contract year, those families currently receiving services in the Post TCC program will get reassigned or re-determined to the At Risk Child Care (ARCC) program. They are then replaced by those families whose TCC benefits are about to end.

**D. At Risk Child Care(\*)** – Families shall be in need of child care services in order to remain employed full time or to accept full-time employment and shall be eligible to apply for these benefits.

- For program entrance, low income families are defined for purposes of this program as families whose gross annual income for the family size is at or below 200 percent of the FPI published in the Federal Register.
  
- Families shall be ranked according to income. Highest ranking shall be given to those families at the lower end of the income spectrum.
  
- Those at or below 150 percent of the FPL shall be given highest priority.
  
- Those at 175 percent shall be given next highest priority.
  
- The family must be at-risk of becoming eligible for TANF, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:15-5.2.
  
- Families shall make the required co-payments in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:15-9.
  
- The applicant is eligible for child care services during the period the applicant is employed full-time. Eligibility shall terminate if the applicant terminates full-time employment, the applicant's wages exceed eligibility levels or the applicant otherwise ceases to meet eligibility criteria.

(\*) An exception to the program entrance level is made for those families in which the parent is a former WFNJ/TANF recipient and has completed his/her 24 months of extended TCC. A family whose gross annual income is greater than 200 percent of the FPI, but less than 250 percent of the FPI is eligible to receive a regular New Jersey Cares for Kids (NJCK) child care subsidy if funds are available or if funds are not available placed on the appropriate waiting list.

Families must comply with all other NJCK program requirements, such as being employed full time and paying the required co-payment.

3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency maintain a waiting list?

- Yes. If yes, for what populations? Is the waiting list maintained at the State level? Are certain populations given priority for services, and if so, which populations? What methods are employed to keep the list current?
- No. If no, does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?
- Yes
- No

If, at the time of the initial application to receive a child care subsidy or at the time of re-determination, no program funds are available for the specific program for which the family is eligible, then the children are placed on a waiting list. Children will be placed on the waiting list for the program component for which they are eligible based on specific eligibility and entrance income criteria and highest priority codes by CARES.

The CCR&R maintains a waiting list by funding source and priority code for each family who applies and is eligible for services, but for whom no funding is available. The automated waiting list is kept according to the date on which the family is determined eligible to receive a subsidy from the program and in priority order in accordance with the priority rules indicated above.

In order to place a family on the waiting list in CARES, the original application date and certification date and income information must be entered into the eligibility module and the case must be approved. The system ranks a child by income and priority.

The CCR&R shall review the waiting list and evaluate the families placed on the waiting list in this order, when resources become available for one or more children in a family.

Are there other ways that the Lead Agency addresses situations in which funding is not sufficient to serve all families that are technically eligible under State policies? If so, describe.

**Post Transitional Child Care (Post TCC) Services** – As described earlier, a program called Post TCC has been established for TANF families who have exhausted their 24 months of TCC eligibility and are eligible for NJCK child care supports, but have not yet moved into the NJCK program. All eligible families who have not yet been reassigned to the NJCK program, but have exhausted their 24 months of TCC are reassigned to the Post TCC program for up to one

year, until September 30, in the contract year they are assigned to the Post TCC program . Effective October 1, the beginning of the new contract year, those families currently receiving services in the Post TCC program get reassigned or re-determined to the At Risk Child Care (ARCC) program. They are then replaced by those families whose TCC benefits are about to end.

### **3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services**

3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided as Attachment C.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of 7/01/04.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

Yes, and the following describes any additional factors that will be used:

No

A co-payment (sliding fee) scale established by the DHS provides for some level of contribution by most parents/applicants receiving child care services. The co-payment scale considers the following: family income, family size, hours of care needed and number of children in care.

3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

Yes

No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) are provided as Attachment     .

3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: \$ 16,090.

The Lead Agency must elect ONE of these options:

ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.

ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.

- SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The following describes these families:

Families eligible to receive child care services from DHS administered programs pay a fee toward the cost of child care services, except as explained below. This fee is termed a co-payment.

Co-payments:

- May not be assessed to active WFNJ/TANF participants receiving a full assistance grant.
- May be reduced or waived by a DYFS Case Manager on a case-by-case basis if it has been determined that payment of the full co-payment amount will cause undue hardship to a CPS family or place the child, the siblings or the protective service treatment plan in jeopardy.

Additionally, if two or more children in a family are in a full-time subsidized child care arrangement, the co-payment is the sum total assessed for the first child in full-time care plus the co-payment for a sibling which is assessed at seventy-five per cent (75%) of the full-time co-payment. No additional co-payment is assessed for the third or subsequent children in a family receiving child care.

3.5.4 Does the Lead Agency have a policy that prohibits a child care provider from charging families any unsubsidized portion of the provider's normal fees (in addition to the contributions discussed in 3.5.1)? (§98.43(b)(3))

Yes. Please describe:

No.

Center Based Contract (CBC) child care centers cannot charge subsidy recipients rates higher than the maximum reimbursement rates allowed by DHS.

Please note - It is the policy of DFD that consumers of child care services should have the maximum choice possible among the types of child care options available (e.g. licensed child care centers, pre-kindergarten programs operated by a school district, registered family child care providers, in-home care, approved homes, school-age child care and summer camps), to determine the provider that best meets the family's needs. Based on the parent/applicant's choice of child care, the parent/applicant is responsible for

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normal child care provider costs in excess of the maximum allowable payment for which the applicant is eligible.

3.5.5 The following is an explanation of how the copayments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) are affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

Participants who are employed and enrolled in WFNJ shall be required to contribute toward the cost of child care services provided on their behalf. This fee shall be based on earned income only.

Participants who are eligible to receive TCC benefits are also required to contribute toward the cost of child care services. Once the co-payment is determined for TCC, it will remain unchanged for the duration of the first 12 month eligibility period, unless there is a change in family size, a reduction in gross family income or a change in the time period of care from full-time to part-time. After the first 12 month eligibility period, at the time of re-determination for continued TCC benefits the assessed co-payment may change if there is a change in family size, the gross income changes (increases or decreases), or the time period of care changes from full-time to part-time or vice versa.

Family size consists of the parent/applicant, the parent/applicant's spouse and all children for whom the parent/applicant is a legal guardian. Family size may also include dependent children who are over the age of 18 or other adults who are not legally responsible for the children but who are dependent upon the parent/applicant if the parent/applicant so chooses to include these family members in the application for child care services.

The average co-payment for a family of three with annual income of \$16,090 (100% of the Federal Poverty Index) for full-time child care is approximately \$71.00 per month which represents 5.2% of gross family income.

For all DFD voucher (certificate) payments, the number of hours child care services are being provided to the child is as follows:

- Full-time care is defined as care for 30 hours or more per week for co-payment purposes.
- Part-time care is defined as care for less than 30 hours per week for co-payment purposes.
- In no case may the co-payment exceed the cost of care.

Once the co-payment is determined, it shall remain unchanged for the duration of the eligibility period (up to 12 months), unless there is a change in family size,



gross family income, or a change in care from full-time to part-time or vice versa. In DFD voucher programs, the participant must notify the CCR&R of any changes relating to family size, income, work status, home address or training/educational program attendance.

In the NJCK and TCC, an exception is made in the case of co-payment for school-age children. The CCR&R determines a part-time co-payment for all school-age children, unless the school-age child is in full-time child care for the entire period of the 12 month agreement. Only in this instance shall the co-payment be based on the full-time arrangement.

CBCs determine a part-time co-payment for school-age children for the months September through June, then determine a full-time co-payment for the months July and August if the child remains in full-time care or attends a summer camp program.

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**PART 4**  
**PROCESSES WITH PARENTS****4.1 Application Process**

The following describes the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). If the process varies for families based on eligibility category, for instance, TANF versus non-TANF, please describe. The description should include:

- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options
- Where/how applications are made
- Who makes the eligibility determination
- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4
- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

DHS has made funding available for child care services through a comprehensive child care certificate (voucher) program which parents may use with eligible child care providers selected by the parent(s). Program announcements are made available by the local county CCR&R.

Appropriate staff of the CWAs determine the eligibility of Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) participants and children for WFNJ child care services, and also determine the initial eligibility for Transitional Child Care (TCC) benefits. CWA staff refer all eligible participants with appropriate income and work activity information to the CCR&R for child care services. The CCR&R determines the co-pay based on the family's annual gross income, family size and number of hours of child care needed.

The CCR&R assists the parent/applicant with exploring the types of child care arrangements authorized for payment through the child care service programs and provides the parent/applicant the opportunity to choose her or his child care arrangement from available options.

The CCR&R determines and/or verifies the eligibility of families and the availability of child care for all DHS administered child care service programs except those child care agencies/providers contracted directly with DFD to

provide child care slots. In these cases the Center Based Contract (CBC) centers determine and/or verify the eligibility of the families.

The CCR&R establishes written agreements for services between the CCR&R, the parent/applicant, and the provider regarding agreed upon child care arrangements, co-payment responsibilities, service eligibility period and the submission of vouchers for payment of service.

Parents who are receiving a child care subsidy are required to reapply for continued eligibility with the CCR&R or CBC on an annual basis or as changes in the family's circumstances occur.

#### **4.2 Records of Parental Complaints**

The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))

In keeping with provisions of the New Jersey State Child Care Center Licensing Law (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-1 to 15), and the Family Day Care Provider Registration Act of 1987 (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-16 et seq.), the following information applies to parental complaints:

Whenever the DHS Office of Licensing (OOL) receives a report questioning the licensing status of a program, center or sponsoring organization, alleging that a licensed center is violating provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122); or the compliance of a sponsoring organization or provider with the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration (N.J.A.C. 10:126), the DHS OOL ensures that the allegation is promptly investigated to determine whether the complaint is substantiated. Licensing staff may interview both staff members and children.

After the report of the investigation has been completed, the DHS OOL notifies the center, sponsor and/or provider in writing of the results of the investigation, pursuant to the State Public Records Law, N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., except for any information not permitted to be disclosed pursuant to the State Child Abuse and Neglect Law, N.J.S.A 9:6-8.10a.

Whenever the DHS OOL, or DYFS Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit or District Offices, conducts complaint investigations, the center, sponsoring organization and/or provider must cooperate with all Division investigators.

Files maintained by DHS OOL are public records and shall be readily accessible for examination by any person, under the direction and supervision of OOL personnel, except when public access to records is restricted, in accordance with the State Public Records Law or other applicable statutes.

Parents are entitled to review the center's or sponsoring organization's copy of the Inspection/Violation Reports regarding a particular center, sponsoring organization or provider which are issued after every State licensing inspection. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, parents are also entitled to review the DHS OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center, sponsoring organization or provider during the current licensing period.

Child care centers and sponsoring organizations must arrange a convenient opportunity for parents to review any of the above information upon request of the parent.

If any parent suspects that a center, sponsoring organization or provider may be in violation of licensing requirements, they may report them directly to the DHS OOL at (609) 987-2027 (North) or (609) 987-2013 (South). This may be done anonymously.

In keeping with New Jersey's child care licensing and family child care registration requirements, all licensed providers of child care and sponsoring organizations must notify all parents of children enrolled for care of the above requirements, in writing, through an "Information to Parents Statement". CCR&Rs assist families with reporting suspected abuse, neglect and licensing violations.

### **4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings**

The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

DHS supports parents' unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of child care operation, or whenever children are in the care of such providers.

The Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C.10:122) and the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration (N.J.A.C. 10:126),

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specify that as a licensing requirement and as a condition of becoming registered as a Family Child Care Home: **parents of enrolled children have the opportunity to visit the center or home at any time when enrolled children are present without having to secure the prior approval of the provider.** Centers and/or Family Child Care Sponsoring Organizations must provide a written "Information To Parents Statement" that specifically includes unlimited access to the center or home during normal hours of operation.

#### **4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care**

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: DFD.

- **"appropriate child care"** means the child care provider is open for the hours and days the parent would need child care in order to comply with work requirements and the provider is able and willing to provide child care services including any special needs of the child(ren) and meets DHS requirements.
- **"reasonable distance"** means the child care provider is located within a distance that is en route from the parent's home and work activity and that the parent can get the child to care and then to their activity within 90 minutes.
- **"unsuitability of informal child care"** informal child care is defined as "Approved Home caregivers in New Jersey". It is unsuitable if the provider cannot meet the minimum requirements as defined by the DFD. The minimum requirements for approval of the home are satisfactory results of a Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background check by all household members 14 years of age and older, a satisfactory health

and safety inspection of the home using the “Self-Arranged Care Inspection and Interview Checklist”, and a standard interview with the provider and family members.

- "**affordable child care arrangements**": are those which do not exceed the DHS maximum child care reimbursement rates. In addition, parent co-payment fees shall not exceed the DHS co-payment schedule for subsidized child care services.

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**PART 5**  
**ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF**  
**CHILD CARE**

**5.1 Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides**

5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; and describes the expected results of the activities.

Infants and toddlers:

**Child Care Health Consultants:**

- Awards were made to CCR&Rs in the 21 counties to have registered nurses assess health care services in each county for children currently receiving child care;
- Provides for technical assistance and training to child care providers to enhance and improve the quality of health related child care services offered.
- Conduct training programs such as CPR or First Aid; and
- Develop linkages for bringing the health care community together to provide services to child care providers;

**First Steps Training Initiative:**

- The First Steps Infant/Toddler Development Initiative is designed to create a statewide training and technical assistance system for child care providers serving children birth to 3;
- Consultant-trainers conduct site visits to infant/toddler child care centers and family child care providers to provide care givers consultation and observation; and
- An Evaluation component assesses the impact of consultant-trainers on the environment using ITERS.

Please note: This initiative is currently under consideration for contract modification.

**Warm Line:**

- The Child Care Warm Line is a statewide health information and referral service established to promote the healthy development of New Jersey's infants and young children in child care settings;
- It is available to child care centers and family child care providers who may call a special 800# with health related questions or problems (1-800-713-9006);
- The Warm Line is operated by Programs for Parents of Essex County;

- Registered nurses receive calls, respond and/or refer to community resources when necessary; and
- Information provided is limited to conditions not requiring a physician.

**Approved Home Initiative:**

- Focuses on providers whose first language is not English and providers with infants;
- Being conducted on a statewide basis to improve quality services to children in approved homes;
- Working with approved home providers to provide on-site training and technical assistance, including promoting early literacy, and supplying books and safety equipment.

Resource and referral services:

**Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs):**

- CCR&Rs formerly known as Unified Child Care Agencies (UCCAs) in New Jersey have a rich history of providing child care services such as: training, resource development and advocacy in their local communities for many years.
- The CCR&Rs in each county provide information and counseling to parents about available child care options, how to evaluate the child care environment and assist parents in making informed decisions regarding selecting the type of child care services which would be best for them;
- Provide parents with referrals to child care providers appropriate to their expressed needs;
- Coordinate and assist in the development of child care slots and/or resources within the county to increase the availability of various types of child care arrangements;
- Disseminate child care information regularly to child care provider agencies, human service agencies, and other interested organizations in the geographic area;
- Increase the supply of child care available to parents through concentrated resource development efforts to recruit needed child care providers; and
- Maintain an up-to-date registry of available child care resources in each county.



School-age child care:

**State-Wide Collaboration for Program Enhancement:**

- Supports the development and expansion of School-age Child Care (SACC);
- Provides for training and technical assistance to new and existing SACC programs and centers;
- Maintains a web site for SACC information sharing;
- Provides mini grants to SACC programs interested in improving quality and moving toward accreditation; and
- Improves the ability of Family Friendly Centers and child care programs to collaborate through the provision of activities/services for school-age children outside of school, many of which are community and school district collaborations.

**Special Projects Manager in the Office of Early Care and Education:**

- Monitors the School-age and New Jersey Inclusive Child Care Project Grants;
- Facilitate collaboration at local, state and national levels through community building, interagency coordination and public/private partnerships in the areas of inclusion and out of school time programs.

5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds):

\$ 14.1 million ( 4 %)

5.1.3 Check either "Yes" or "No" for each activity listed to indicate the activities the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

	Yes	No
• Comprehensive consumer education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements
- Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance
- Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers
- Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development
- Activities to promote inclusive child care
- Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children
- Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))

5.1.4 Describe each activity that is checked "Yes" above, identify the entity(ies) providing the activity, and describe the expected results of the activity.

comprehensive consumer education:

**Parenting Education Campaign:**

- Supports the CCR&R's efforts to increase public awareness;
- Promotes availability of child care services in each county;
- Provides for Yellow pages ads, billboards, and other advertising in the media; and
- A statewide Parent Consumer Education campaign has resulted in PSA's, advertisements in newspapers and periodicals and a brochure on choosing quality child care.

grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards:

**Lead Testing:**

- Funds to reimburse vendors who perform testing and risk assessment for lead in child care centers.

**The Bright Beginnings Child Care Facilities Loan Fund:**

- 
- Used to establish a revolving loan fund program;
  - Provides low-interest loans to eligible for-profit and non-profit child care programs;
  - Funds may be used to finance and/or guarantee low-interest, short and long-term loans to support the renovation costs for new or existing programs, associated with expanding or renovating licensed child care centers.

improving the monitoring of compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements:

**Family Child Care (FCC) Registration:**

- Funds enable CCR&Rs to register/renew the Family Child Care providers' registration.
- CCR&R staff visit providers to ensure regulatory standards for registered FCC providers are adhered to and maintained as specified in the Manual of Requirements for Registered Family Child Care Providers, NJAC10:126. .

**DHS Office of Licensing:**

- Supports the salaries of inspectors who inspect child care centers annually;
- Ensures the facilities conform to child care program and health/safety regulations as specified in the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers, NJAC 10:122.

**Child Abuse Record Investigation (CARI) Checks for CWEP Participants and Registered Family Child Care Providers:**

- CARI background checks are performed for all potential child care center employees and all potential registered family child care providers, their assistants, substitute providers, alternate providers and all members of the provider's household 14 years of age and older;
- A position is funded in DYFS to investigate TANF/CWEP clients working in a child care center in an approved activity under the WFNJ program.

**Child Abuse Record Investigation (CARI) Checks for Approved Home/In-Home Providers:**

- CARI background checks are performed annually for all potential Approved home/In-home providers and all those over 14 years of age living in the home;
- Three positions are funded to conduct and process the CARI background checks in the OOL.
- CARI background check law for Approved home/In-home providers went into effect April 1, 2004.
- All CCR&Rs are funded to process CARI background checks and conduct a health and safety inspection of the home as required.

**Criminal History Record Information (CHRI):**

- CHRI Law became effective 1/26/01;
- Provides consistency in the level of protection for all children in child care centers;
- Ensures that providers with certain criminal convictions will not be able to work with children;
- Provided at no cost to child care providers and staff;
- All child care center staff are required to be finger printed (once), using an electronic technique known as “live scan”, which includes State/Federal criminal history checks; and
- CHRI’s are a requirement for all licensed child care centers as a part of their licensing renewal process.

professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance:

**NJ Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education:**

- Kean University is the grantee;
- The Professional Development Center is continuing to implement a comprehensive statewide system for professional development opportunities, including articulation, accreditation and scholarships for credentialing early care and education staff.

**Child Care Training Opportunities:**

- Offers training opportunities and workshops for all child care centers, and registered family child care providers in the State, including Head Start agencies.

**New Jersey Inclusive Child Care Project:**

- Training and Technical Assistance for child care centers and Registered Family Child Care Providers that are interested in caring for, or are providing care for Children with Special Needs;
- Strives to increase the quality and quantity of child care providers that offer early care and education for children with special needs;
- Provides workshops for CCR&Rs, parents or providers on topics such as Inclusion Awareness, Legal Aspects of Inclusion, and Child Development and Behavior;
- On-site consultation is available including 15 hours of observation, training and IEP review, to assist in facilitation of services; and
- Information on services and resources is made available to all who request it, including the development and dissemination of a comprehensive informational CD entitled “Resources for Including Children with Special Needs In Child Care”, published by the DHS Office of Early Care and Education.

**Special Needs Educational Outreach Program**

-The Latino population in New Jersey has increased by great proportions and realizing that the English language poses a barrier for this population to obtain information or find much needed services for their children. The Hispanic Directors Association of New Jersey (HDANJ) is funded to implement the Special Needs Educational Outreach Program. Through outreach activities the HDANJ educates Latino families about developmental delays and how to access services through community resources available to support children with special needs.

**Special Needs Family Child Care Network:**

- The Children's Home Society is operating in collaboration with the Ocean County Board of Health to develop and expand the Special Needs Network;
- Recruit Family Child Care providers to become members of the Special Needs Network;
- Provides free training to Family Child Care providers interested in special needs on topics such as:
  - Awareness of Inclusion & Red Flag Behaviors,
  - Overview of Developmental Disabilities,
  - ABC's of Asthma,
  - CPR & First Aid,
  - How to Promote Language Development.
- Providers receive assistance in obtaining National Accreditation (65 hours of training and Child Development Associate (CDA, 120 hours of training).

**Abbott Scholarship Program:**

-Provides \$5,000 annually to teachers working in child care centers that contract with Abbott Districts and working towards a BA degree and/or a P3 Certificate. Participants also receive a \$50 stipend per semester for books.

**Substitute Initiative:**

-Provides funds for licensed child care centers contracting with Abbott School Districts for reimbursement for hiring substitutes, while staff is pursuing Early Childhood Credentials.

**Abbott Health Services Program:**

- Provides funding to CCR&Rs to provide nursing services to child care centers contracting with Abbott Districts; and
- Services include the coordination of health screenings, such as, vision, hearing, tracking of immunizations, health education for staff, parents and children.

**Abbott Family Worker Supervision and Training:**

- 
- The project funds social workers at existing DHS Social Services contracted agencies to provide Training and Supervision to over 460 Family Workers;
  - The family workers work with families whose children are in Abbott contracted child care centers.

**Abbott Support Services:**

- CCR&Rs are funded to provide technical assistance and to facilitate coordination with child care centers contracting and/or seeking collaboration with Abbott School Districts, New Jersey's Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) and Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) school districts;
- Modify voucher payments for children receiving subsidies and who attend Abbott Programs; and
- Other activities include, workshops, conferences, monthly meetings and collaboration efforts and activities.

5.1.5 Is any entity identified in sections 5.1.1 or 5.1.4 a non-governmental entity?

Yes, the following entities named in this part are non-governmental:

Name:

Type:

No.

- 14 of the CCR&Rs mentioned in 5.1.1 that have child care health consultants working for them are non-governmental non-profit community based agencies and 2 are units of local government.
- The WARM Line, mentioned in 5.1.1, is operated by Programs for Parents, a non-profit CCR&R in Essex County.
- The vendor hired to perform testing and risk assessment for lead paint in child care centers is ALC Environmental, Inc., a private for profit corporation.
- Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), providing training and technical assistance for child care centers and family child care providers for Children with special needs.
- NJ School Age Child Care Coalition providing state-wide collaboration for program enhancement.
- Hispanic Directors Association (HDANJ), the community organization contracted to implement the Special Needs Educational Outreach Program and through their

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STATE PLAN FOR  
NJ DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CCDF SERVICES  
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involvement in the Economic Impact Study of New Jersey funds have been provided to support the study.

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**5.2 Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development**

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, each Lead Agency is asked to assess its State's progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts and a plan for the education and training of child care providers. The third component of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, planning for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams, was addressed in Section 2.1.2.

5.2.1 **Status of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) regarding language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts for three to five year-olds.

- Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: \_\_\_\_\_
- Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_
- Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as Attachment (See web site address below)
- Revising.** A State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in developing voluntary guidelines for early learning since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

In cooperation with DHS, community based child care centers and local CCR&Rs; the Department of Education developed and published the *Early Childhood Program Expectations: Standards of Quality* [(now called *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*)] as guidance to the adults working with young children.



In July, 2004, the State Board of Education adopted these revised *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*. For districts receiving State aid to provide preschool programs, the Standards are requirements for good practice as regulated by N.J.A.C. 6a:8 and N.J.A.C. 6a:10A. For districts not receiving State aid for preschool provision but have or are affiliated with preschool programs, the Standards are guidelines for good practice.

Currently, providers who are receiving payment through DHS contracts or vouchers are not required to comply with the guidelines. However, a planning process will be implemented to explore the feasibility of adopting the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* for use in center-based programs serving infants/toddlers, preschoolers and children in school-age care, and in family child care networks.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards?

  

Yes. If yes, describe.

No.

*The Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* sets a standard for preschool learning outcomes and serves as a benchmark for determining how effectively the classroom curriculum is being implemented. In other words, the curriculum is the vehicle for meeting the learning outcomes described here. The term "standards" as it applies to the field of early childhood education, is described in *Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success*, the joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE), approved in November, 2003 and endorsed by the Council of Chief State School Officers in April, 2003. The position statement uses the term "early learning standards" to describe expectations for the learning and development of young children. (p.1) The terms are used interchangeably.

#### Linking the Expectations to the Classroom Curriculum

As with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* presents standards for all districts in the state. It is to be used as follows:

- A resource for ensuring appropriate implementation of the curriculum being used in the classroom;
- A guide for instructional planning and teaching;
- A framework for ongoing professional development opportunities; and

- A framework for development of a comprehensive early childhood education assessment system.

*The Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* document is being used as a foundation to build upon in creating developmentally appropriate learning environments. It is intended that the implementation of the expectations/standards will support and prepare young children to meet New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) when they enter kindergarten. In the introduction of the CCCS, it is stated that the core standards "are not meant to serve as a statewide curriculum guide. They define the results expected but do not limit district strategies for how to ensure that their students achieve these expectations." Similarly, the early childhood expectations/standards are not to be seen as a curriculum guide or to limit implementation of developmentally appropriate curricula that will meet the individual needs of children in their communities. The expectations/standards present developmentally appropriate practices that are included in early childhood curricula.

Please attach a copy of the guidelines. If the guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address:

[www.nj.gov.njded/ece/expectations/](http://www.nj.gov.njded/ece/expectations/)

**5.2.2 Domains of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** Do the guidelines address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

- Yes  
 No

For the purpose of the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*, developmentally appropriate expectations for three- and four-year-old children are defined as research-based practices that serve to enhance the development of the whole child. These expectations are standards of quality that define the criteria for the development of quality early childhood education programs in New Jersey. They encompass the attitudes, dispositions, knowledge, and skills in all developmental domains (cognitive, language, social, emotional and physical) with respect for individual, family, cultural, and socioeconomic variations.

These expectations/standards provide preschool children with educationally appropriate experiences that serve as the foundation for the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Adherents of *interactive or constructivist* curriculum view learning as an active exchange between the child and his/her environment, one key element of which

is the teacher. In this model teachers initiate activities designed to foster children's reasoning and problem-solving abilities, and they then interact with children during child-designed activities to add new ideas or enhance learning. Peer-to-peer interaction is also viewed as essential to the learning process (Frede, 1997). The interactive or constructivist approach meets the court order for high quality based on effective research.

The *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* understand that literacy learning has a profound and lasting effect on the social and academic lives of children. Their future educational opportunities and career choices are directly related to literacy ability. Since early childhood is the period when language develops most rapidly, it is imperative that young children be provided with a variety of developmentally appropriate literacy and language experiences throughout each day and that the classroom environment is rich with language and print. Children should be provided with environments that encourage literacy exploration, and their emergent reading and writing behaviors should be valued, encouraged and fostered by their teachers.

Young children experience mathematics naturally and spontaneously as they explore, interact and try to make sense of their world. Young children in a high-quality preschool classroom are introduced to and actively engage in key mathematical concepts, language and processes. Teachers observe each child as they make choices and play in a supportive learning environment. Teachers integrate math into all aspects of the daily routines through individual and small-group choices and transitions, and also allot time for in-depth, planned, small-group experiences that include interaction, problem-solving and reflection.

Do the guidelines address domains not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart*, such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, creative arts, or other domains?

- Yes. If yes, describe.  
 No

Included in the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* is the child's development in the four domains - **social, physical, cognitive and emotional** – which are being supported, sustained, extended and enhanced primarily through activities which promote purposeful play.

**Social/Emotional** growth and learning through interactions with others and is interconnected with physical and cognitive domains. Social relationships between adults and children exert a powerful positive

influence on children's development. A high-quality preschool program requires a permanent, well-trained teaching staff, who work in partnership with children's families. These teachers provide an environment for children that is safe, secure, accessible, organized, comfortable, predictable and consistent. In this environment, children are carefully observed as they move through the preschool day in order to systematically assist them in developing social competence and confidence.

**Health, safety and physical education** in the preschool classroom encourage children to think, experience, explore and make connections to enhance each child's sense of control and competence as a learner at the child's developmental level. Through daily indoor and outdoor activities, play, and planned and spontaneous interactions, the teacher will provide a wide range of concrete, developmentally appropriate experiences that assist in the healthy development of each child.

For children, the critical component of the **creative arts** is the process rather than the end result or product. Children develop independence, self-motivation and self-expression through concrete, hands-on, individualized learning in environments that stimulate creativity through music, dramatic play, dance and the visual arts. In many instances, creative arts in the preschool classroom are inextricably linked to other curriculum areas. When integrated in a developmentally appropriate way, creative arts promote curiosity, problem-solving abilities, verbal and nonverbal expression and can be used as a strategy for learning about different cultures and content areas.

Young children have informal experience with **science** before they enter preschool. They have been using their senses to explore the environment and make sense of their world. Young children in a high-quality preschool classroom continue to construct knowledge while exploring their interesting indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Teachers in a high-quality classroom use their knowledge of child development and experience to interact, encourage, use scientific language, extend and reinforce concepts as these experiences occur. Science in preschool will be integrated with other content areas into the day. Teachers plan to introduce materials, techniques and technology that allow for reflecting, making connections, recording and representing.

**Social Studies, Family and Life Skills** in the preschool classroom begins with cultivating children's understanding of themselves and their place in the family and moves to an understanding of social systems in ever-widening circles: family, classroom community, neighborhood, and the

world. Through learning experiences and play, teachers provide a wide range of concrete, developmentally appropriate activities and field trips that provide opportunities to explore and celebrate similarities and differences among children, lifestyles and cultures.

The diverse nature of our society necessitates that children develop an understanding of **world languages** other than their own. Teachers should understand that all languages are learned in context as children interact with and explore their world. Teachers should plan for opportunities to extend children's language throughout the day and across all content areas.

Have guidelines been developed for children in age groups not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (children other than those aged three to five)?

- Yes. If yes, describe.  
 No

**5.2.3 Implementation of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** Describe the process the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines. How are (or will) community, cultural, linguistic and individual variations, as well as the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation? Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as Attachment \*(See web-site address below)

In February 2003 the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education published the *Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines*. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance from the Department of Education to enable Abbott school districts to fully execute the order imposed by the New Jersey Supreme Court. These guidelines help Abbott school districts plan, develop, and realize high-quality preschool programs for three-and four-year old children. The guidelines are derived from research wherever possible, and on expert opinion where research is not available. In general, the guidelines provide recommendations and not mandates in an effort to accommodate local conditions, contexts and needs. The Three-Year Operational Plans are based on these guidelines and aimed toward meeting the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*.

\*The Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines are on-line at the following website:

<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/ece/abbott/guidelines/guidelines.htm>.

To achieve implementation of the guidelines, a collaborative effort continues to be required from community based licensed child care centers, school districts, Head Start agencies, and representatives of Department of Education, Department of Human Services and/or the Administration for Children and Families regional office. These parties continue to work together to develop implementation strategy that lead to the full implementation of Abbott standards. The following efforts continue to facilitate the process:

- Set specific enrollment benchmarks to reach full enrollment, including any facilities expansion or renovations;
- Coordinate with the district in the development of a professional development plan;
- Describe how to incorporate the Abbott master teacher and curriculum expectations in the Head Start Program;
- Detail how the district, community based licensed child care centers and Head Start program work together to provide parent/family involvement opportunities and determine the specific duties of the family worker;
- Provide a detailed budget that indicates the nature of the services that Abbott-eligible children receive; and
- Assist early care and education providers with development of their budgets.

Specifically, DHS determined the feasibility of combining multiple funding streams to develop a DOE/DHS cost sharing approach, which would generate increased revenue to community-based contracted child care provider agencies. Payment mechanisms were established using contracts established by licensed child care centers with Abbott School Districts for six hours of education provided per day and contracts administered by DFD for four hours of wraparound child care services provided per day.

In order to facilitate implementation in the Abbott Districts DHS, DOE and DFD regularly held regional forums for all Abbott contracted provider agencies, as part of an on-going process. The forums served to apprise caregivers of current information on program design, operation, and best practices, as well as changes in regulations, policies and reporting procedures. Attendees from community-based child care agencies were provided with the opportunity to meet with and ask questions of officials from the Departments of Education, Human Services, Higher Education, Health and Agriculture. A wide range of issues and concerns were covered including teacher certification, family worker training, parent involvement, health care services, and participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

- 5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** As applicable, describe the State's plan for **assessing** the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines. Written reports of these efforts are included as Attachment n/a

Research has demonstrated that the impact of the investments made in the Abbott Preschool Program have yielded positive results in terms of:

- Meeting the educational and developmental needs of three- and four-year-old children; and
- The benefits and need for highly trained and qualified teaching staff who have achieved the certification requirements for P-3.

The *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* acknowledges the importance of documentation and assessment. Assessment of young children is an ongoing process which includes identifying, collecting, describing, interpreting, and applying classroom-based evidence of early learning in order to make informed instructive decisions. This evidence may include records of children's conversations, their drawings, and constructions, as well as photographs of and anecdotal notes describing their behaviors.

Documentation, a preliminary stage in the assessment process, focuses on identifying, collecting, and describing the evidence of learning in an objective, nonjudgmental manner. Beyond documentation, the evidence must be connected back to the learning goals, and based on these findings, new curriculum strategies may be designed and new questions about the child's learning may be posed. The documentation/assessment process can also help young children to perceive learning to be important and worthwhile, as they see their teachers actively engaged in documenting their learning.

Please refer to the following web site for the report entitled "A Rising Tide, Classroom Quality and Language Skills in the Abbott Preschool Program, *Year Two Preliminary Update 2003-2004 Early Learning Improvement Consortium*":

[www.nj.gov/njded/ece/tide.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/njded/ece/tide.pdf)

**Developmental screening measures** are administered to each child individually and are to be used to identify children who may demonstrate developmental delay with language or motor skills or, problems with vision or hearing. In such cases, the results of the screening measures are used to determine whether a child needs further comprehensive diagnostic assessment. Developmental screenings are viewed as just one component in a comprehensive childhood education assessment system.

When a parent or teacher has a concern about a child's development and suspects a potential disability the parent or teacher may submit a written request for a special education evaluation to the district's child study team. The parent, preschool teacher, and the child study team meet to determine the need for evaluation, and if an evaluation is warranted, discuss the assessments to be completed. After completion of the evaluation and a determination of eligibility is made, an Individual Education Program

(IEP) is developed for the child by the IEP team. The team determines modifications, interventions, support and supplementary services necessary to support the child. To the maximum extent appropriate, preschoolers with disabilities receive their early childhood education with their non-disabled peers.

**Portfolio assessment** is the systematic and intentional collection of significant samples of children's work. The teacher comments on how the work samples and records of language serve as evidence of the child's movement toward established learning goals. The portfolio process clearly indicates learning goals and illustrates and documents children's development over a period of time, actively involves children, and review for each child's individual development.

**Parents are encouraged to be partners** in the accurate and sensitive assessment of young children. The following practices encourage parental involvement in child assessment: accentuate the positive, build assessment comments into every day conversations with parents, explain assessment approaches to parents, write about assessment in a newsletter sent home, demonstrate that parents are valued as respected partners in the behavior and progress of children, and support comments with documentation showing what the child has accomplished over a period of time.

**5.2.5 State Plans for Professional Development.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education.

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (describe):** \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the progress made by the State in a plan for professional development since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.



The quality of a young child's experience in an early care and education program; whether it is a family child care home, school or child care center; depends upon the knowledge and skills of practitioners employed by that program. **The New Jersey Professional Development Center (NJPDC) for Early Care and Education** has been established to improve the availability of, and access to, quality teacher preparation and continuing professional education opportunities.

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include:	Yes	No
A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuum of training and education to form a career path	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A system to track practitioners' training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Credentials – Please state for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors' credential, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each Yes response, reference the page(s) in the plan and briefly describe the Lead Agency's efforts.

For each No response, indicate whether the Lead Agency intends to incorporate these components.

**The New Jersey Professional Development Center (NJPDC) for Early Care and Education:**

- Provides scholarships for training and education, including Child Development Associate (CDA) and Certified Childcare Professional credentials and associate's and bachelor's degrees;
- Maintains a Clearinghouse of training and education opportunities;
- Operates the New Jersey Registry for Childhood Professionals as a statewide database of practitioners; credentials and professional qualifications;
- Recommends professional standards and advises practitioners on career development options.
- Identifies ways to link professional development with increased compensation.

The New Jersey Professional Development Center (NPDCC) for Early Care and Education was established through New Jersey Sows the Seeds for Growth, to implement a comprehensive, statewide system of coordinated and accessible professional development opportunities for early care and education providers, including those working with infants and toddlers, preschool children, kindergartners through third graders, and children up to 13 years in out-of-school time care. This statewide initiative established steps for implementing a system to enhance the preparation and continuing education of each childhood and out-of-school time practitioner. This system ensures that New Jersey's early childhood and school-age programs offer developmentally appropriate learning experiences led by professionals who consistently promote the highest levels of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being in the children they serve.

The NPDCC partnered with the New Jersey Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (NJACCRRRA) to create a professional development system. The NPDCC staff works collaboratively with a Policy Advisory Board composed of representatives of early care and education, out-of-school time care, higher education, government, business and social services. In addition to Board members, the NPDCC works with more than 100 volunteers from the larger community, meeting regularly in Working Groups. The Working Groups developed recommendations on professional standards, improved articulation and resources for services offered through the NPDCC's three offices: Office of Professional Standards and Articulation, Office of Resource Development and Communication, and the Clearinghouse of Instructional Resources.

The NPDCC is based at Kean University and enjoys the support of Kean's Department of Early Childhood and Family Studies, whose faculty advise and conduct research on the impact of programs.

Funding is provided through the New Jersey Department of Human Services and other sources.

*The New Jersey Registry for Childhood Professionals Serving Children Birth Through Age Thirteen* is a statewide system that guides, tracks and recognizes the professional growth and development of individuals working in early care and education, out-of-school time and primary education. It keeps track of professional development achievements by maintaining confidential records for each individual who participates in the system. Participants are approved at one of the seven levels of the NJ Registry, based on their education and experience.

The NJ Registry also issues Head Teacher, Group Teacher and School-age Program Supervisor Certificates recognized by the Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing; and the Division of Youth and Family Services. This Certificate meets the requirements set forth in the NJ Manual of Requirements for Licensed Child Care Centers.

The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education Instructor Approval System provides a listing of instructors in Early Care and Education, Out-of-School Time, and Primary Education. These instructors have provided documentation of their qualifications and areas of expertise.

Are the opportunities available:	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Statewide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers (N/A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Describe how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.

The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education has developed the *Core Knowledge and Competency Areas*, Professional Standards for adults working with young children birth through age eight and in out-of school time

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programs. These standards were developed by the Professional Standards Working Committee and have been approved by the Policy Advisory Board.

Core knowledge bases and competencies that adults need in order to work effectively with children, birth through age eight, and in out-of-school-time programs are defined here. Each of the five sections focuses on a core knowledge base, followed by a continuum of seven levels of competencies. The five core knowledge areas are:

- Child Growth and Development
- Curriculum
- Family and Community Relationships
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Professionalism

Although core knowledge sections are presented individually, all sections are intrinsically interrelated and interdependent. Achievements of competency levels in core knowledge areas differ according to variations in individual levels of education and experience. The levels of competencies cover a range from Level I beginning with entry into the profession, to Level VII reflecting advanced knowledge and expertise. The career lattice progression from one level to the next recognizes the value of work experience, increased training, and education.

Depending on staffing configuration, all professional levels may or may not be represented in every site. Each person, regardless of his/her position in an early childhood environment, interacts every day with families and children. Therefore, it is expected that all people working in any environment serving children birth through age eight and out-of-school time have some competency at Level I.

#### Level I

Individual has an entry position into the field, which can be a part-time or full-time position. A person at this level has basic literacy skills and may also hold a high school diploma or GED.

#### Level II

Individual has a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or is a Certified Child Care Professional (CCP), has experience working with children, and has demonstrated the knowledge base and competencies of the prior level.

#### Level III

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Individual has an A.A. or A.A.S. degree or has completed some formal coursework in early childhood education, and has demonstrated the knowledge base and competencies for prior levels.

Level IV

Individual has a B.A. or B.S. degree in education or the P-3 certificate and has demonstrated the knowledge base and competencies for prior levels.

Level V

Individual has a master's degree, a minimum of three years' teaching experience, and has demonstrated the knowledge base and competencies for prior levels.

Level VI

Individual has a master's degree, extensive experience in working with young children, and in supervision of others.

Level VII

Individual has a doctoral degree in Early Childhood Education or a child-related field, a minimum of five years work related experience, and has demonstrated the knowledge base and competencies for prior levels.

Local boards of education and boards of child care centers continue to make professional development a priority and must provide support by allocating necessary resources.

Administrators provide continued curriculum support, resources, materials and opportunities for staff to improve teaching practices. Preschool directors, principals, education supervisors and directors of special education need to actively pursue and provide professional development activities and time for teachers to reflect on and refine practice. They also actively engage themselves in the professional development activities.

Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

- Yes. Describe, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- No. If no, is there any plan to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education?

The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education is charged with establishing a comprehensive, statewide system of professional

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development opportunities for all early care and education practitioners. The following incentives and programs are currently being offered to encourage increased professional development:

- The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education conducts an ongoing scholarship program for individuals who are working toward their Certified Child Care Professional (CCP) credential. Funds to cover the cost of the CCP application fee (up to \$495) are available statewide to eligible candidates.
- The New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education supports training classes for non-credit Child Development Associate (CDA) as well as for credit.
- The NJ Early Childhood Education and Training Reimbursement Program will pay for classes an individual has recently completed toward a CDA or CCP credential, an associate's, bachelor's or master's degree, or early childhood teacher certification. Individuals may be reimbursed for a maximum of nine college credits annually, if they can document a "B" average and are income eligible.
- The NJ Early Childhood Scholarship is available to individuals employed by licensed centers that are contracting with public schools in Abbott Districts. Funds up to \$5000 annually are available to individuals working toward a college-based CDA, an associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree, or early childhood teacher certification or related approved courses. All recipients receive a \$50 book stipend per course.
- The Child Development Associate (CDA) Assessment Fee Scholarship covers the cost of the final step in obtaining a CDA credential. Individuals apply for the money when they are ready to submit documents for assessment and their training is complete.
- The Substitute Initiative Provides funds for licensed child care centers contracting with Abbott School Districts and provides for reimbursement for hiring substitutes, while staff is pursuing Early Childhood Credentials.
- The ASAP project (A Scholarship Accrediting Providers) operates through the NJPDC is currently supporting registered providers working toward National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation.

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**The Accreditation Facilitation Project** was established to increase the statewide availability of and access to high quality early childhood programs by increasing the number of centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The goal is to assist selected community-based child care centers in achieving first-time, national accreditation status by providing both technical support and financial assistance to child care centers throughout the state. Accreditation has been identified as a key to quality early care and education.

The statewide accreditation project is a unique public/private partnership formed by the NJPDC in collaboration with the DHS, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, Lucent Technologies Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, the Johanette Wallerstein Foundation, Bank of America, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, AT&T Family Care Development Fund, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and the Victoria Foundation. The project is also partially sponsored by the following companies through the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care: AT&T, Dow Jones & Company, Inc., Exxon-Mobil, Merck and Company, Merrill Lynch, Novartis Pharmaceutical Corp., and Warner-Lambert Company.

The number of child care centers accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has grown from 133 centers in the year 2000 to 280 centers in 2005, with approximately 459 centers currently involved in the self-study process.

Programs that voluntarily elect and are approved for accreditation are rewarded for their commitment to increased quality by receiving an additional 5 percent subsidy reimbursement rate for child care services. Accreditation involves time, commitment, and engagement of all center staff and parental support. It is a means to systematic, positive and permanent change.

What are the expected **outcomes** of the State's professional development plan and efforts to improve the skills of child care providers? As applicable, how does (or will) the State assess the effectiveness of its plan and efforts? If so, how does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape its professional development plan and training/education for child care providers?

Assessment and evaluation of children, personnel, and programs are necessary to identify strengths and to determine areas needing improvement. Information is gathered through a variety of procedures. Assessment and evaluation of data assist in

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making decisions about future planning, intervention, referrals, and/or teaching strategies. Assessment is conducted over a period of time with respect for confidentiality. All efforts are made to avoid labeling and stereotyping.

Assessment and evaluation of personnel is a collaborative process of setting goals for ongoing development to improve professional practices.

Assessment and evaluation of programs is completed by all stakeholders to ensure goals for children and personnel are being met.

Appropriate action plans are based on findings of assessment and evaluation. The early childhood and school-age professional providing care and education demonstrates differing competencies in assessment and evaluation depending on where they are in the career lattice:

Level I: Aide

- a) Understanding of the assessment process for children, personnel, and programs;
- b) Assisting with maintaining individual child portfolios by filing work samples and other materials and entries as directed;
- c) Contributing to the assessment through sharing experiences and interactions with children;
- d) Participating in action plans for program improvement as directed;
- e) Maintaining confidentiality of information; and
- f) Keeping daily records as directed (diapers, accidents, bites, sunblock, lunch, etc.)

Level II: Assistant Teacher

- a) All of the above;
- b) Assisting with the observation of child behaviors and the gathering of samples for portfolios; and
- c) Assisting with the analysis of children's assessment information.

Level III: Associate Teacher

- a) All of the above;
- b) Observing children and the recording of information;
- c) Collaborating with colleagues on developing format for maintaining childrens' portfolios and processes for gathering portfolio contents; and
- d) Interpreting assessment information on children, seeking input from others and assistance when needed.

Level IV: Classroom Teacher

- a) All of the above;



- b) Assuming the responsibility for initiating process for developing and maintaining child portfolios;
- c) Assisting the administrator in reviewing and interpreting data and in developing action plans based on findings;
- d) Providing appropriate referrals to families as needed;
- e) Contributing to goal setting and professional plans for personnel under direct supervision; and
- f) Assisting the administrator in reviewing program's assessment practices/ procedures and contributing to revisions of processes when needed.

Level V: Master Teacher

- a) All of the above;
- b) Reviewing and interpreting assessment/evaluation data to ensure that children's developmental needs are met, and to identify program areas in need of quality enhancement;
- c) Developing an action plan based on data findings;
- d) Reviewing program's assessment practices/procedures and revise process as necessary; and
- e) Being aware of and understanding assessment tools and processes that may be used in early care and education programs, and acquiring knowledge of their appropriate use, administration and effective interpretation.

Level VI: & VII Leadership

- a) All of the above;
- b) Developing and implementing a system for tracking program's success rate in achieving program mission and goals;
- c) Overseeing performance appraisals and professional growth plans for all personnel; and
- d) Evaluating administrative staff.

The Director's Academy , funded by the DHS, and administered by the NJPDC, provides a 45 hour course (for credit or non-credit) on child care administration for directors of child care centers located in Abbott, ECPA and ELLI school districts and directors working in centers participating in the Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP). The Director's Academy is designed to meet demands created by continued staff development and training, management issues, program plans, facilities improvement and contractual agreements directors encounter daily.

**PART 6**  
**HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS***(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)*

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

**6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

- Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.  
 No. Answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan?  
(§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

- Yes, and the changes are as follows:  
 No

**Staff child/ratios** for toddlers and school-age children have been strengthened in the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers, at N.J.A.C. 10:122-4.3(c). The staff/child ratio for toddlers (ages 18 months to 2 ½ years) was one staff member for every seven children, has been changed to one staff member for every six children. The staff/child ratio for school-age children (six years and older) was one staff member for every 18 children, has been changed to one staff member for every 15 children.

**Group size** limits for infants and toddlers have been strengthened in the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers, at N.J.A.C. 10:122-4.4(a). Group size for infants (under 18 months old) and toddlers (18 months to 2 ½ years old) was a primary caregiver for four infants or seven toddlers has been changed to six toddlers, corresponding to the staff/child ratios above. Provisions for grouping infants in a large room have also been changed. The

old rules permitted more than 20 infants or toddlers in a large room if it is divided by visible barriers into areas for every 20 children. The new rules require visible barriers for up to 12 infants (three groups of four infants each) or 20 toddlers.

**Staff development and training** requirements have been strengthened and expanded at N.J.A.C. 10:122-4.7(a). The old requirements required the director to ensure orientation for newly hired staff within one month of beginning work. The new requirements assign this responsibility to the center in general, rather than to the director, and require orientation to begin upon hiring, and to be completed within two weeks.

New requirements at N.J.A.C. 10:122-4.7(d) add group teachers to the staff required to complete managerial staff development, increase the number of hours from 12 hours to 20 hours of managerial staff development per year and revise the list of topics for managerial staff development. The director, head teacher group teacher and program supervisor are now required to complete either the Directors Academy offered by the Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education, the National Administrator Credential offered by the National Child Care Association, or equivalent staff development in specified subject areas.

At N.J.A.C. 10:122-4.7(e) additional staff development topics for new directors hired after 3/21/05 are specified. These directors are required to complete staff development in understanding licensing regulations and child behavior management within one year.

At N.J.A.C. 10:22-4.7(f) requires staff development to be related to the ages served by each staff member. Staff caring for infants are required to complete staff development related to infants and a staff member who cares for school-age children is required to complete staff development related to school-age children.

At N.J.A.C. 10:22-4.7(f)3 allows that an instructor approved by the Instructor Approval System of the New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education is an acceptable source of training for staff development, in addition to the sources listed.

- 6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunization)

N/A

- Building and physical premises safety

N/A

- Health and safety training

N/A

**6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

N/A

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.
- No. Answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

**(NOTE)** - New Jersey does not have a distinct category of care known as group home providers for child care services.

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- Yes, and the changes are as follows:
- No

N/A

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

N/A

- Building and physical premises safety

N/A

- Health and safety training  
N/A

**6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.  
 No. Answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

All family child care providers paid with CCDF funds are subject to meeting the requirements as specified in the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration (N.J.A.C. 10:126). If the sponsoring organization determines that the provider applicant is in full compliance with all requirements of the Manual of Requirements, the sponsoring organization shall issue a regular Certificate of Registration.

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- Yes, and the changes are as follows:  
 No

Changes have been made to the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Providers at NJAC 10:126-4.2(a) that requires the sponsoring organization to provide eight hours of pre-service training for prospective family child care providers instead of six hours.

Changes have been made to strengthen provider's knowledge of essential areas that affect children's health and safety and the operation of the family child care home at N.J.A.C. 10:126-4.2(b), by adding additional topics for pre-service training. These topics include: child growth (within child development), recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, reducing the risk of Shaken Baby Syndrome, preventing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, administering medication to children, including children with special needs in the family child care home, understanding New Jersey's

family child care registration regulations, and understanding sponsoring organization operations, policies and procedures.

Changes have been made that require the sponsoring organization to offer eight hours of in-service training per year, instead of four hours at N.J.A.C. 10:126-4.2(d). The length of each training session is no longer specified, however a total of eight hours must be offered to providers during the year.

In-service training requirements for providers have been strengthened at N.J.A.C. 10:126-5.7 increasing the number of training hours from six hours to 12 hours during the three-year registration period. A provider is no longer allowed the option to repeat the pre-service training if they did not complete the required in-service training by the time of renewal, as specified at N.J.A.C. 10:126-5.7(e). Providers continue to have several options available to complete the required in-service training hours, including training sessions offered by the sponsoring organization as well as colleges, community agencies and other training resources.

Providers and alternate providers are now required to document upon renewal that their certification in first aid and CPR is current as specified at N.J.A.C. 10:126-5.7(f). First aid/CPR training are now required in addition to, not in lieu of, the required 12 hours of in-service training.

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

N/A

- Building and physical premises safety

N/A

- Health and safety training

N/A

**6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above?

- Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.  
 No. Answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

**Approved Homes:** Child care services provided by a relative (grandparent, aunt, uncle) neighbor or friend to two non-sibling children or all the sibling children of one family up to five children, are recognized under pre-existing State regulations as eligible for public subsidy and reimbursement. In order to receive publicly subsidized child care payments, providers must be either licensed, registered, or approved pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:15 – 10.2.

For approved home providers and in-home providers in New Jersey, N.J.S.A. C. 30:5B-32 requires all prospective approved home/in-home providers and all member's of the prospective provider's household who are at least 14 years of age, to provide written consent for DHS to conduct a Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against any such person. A CARI background check is a significant component of the approval process for approved homes and in-home providers.

If there is no substantiated CARI finding the CCR&R schedules the home/safety site visit and completes the approval process.

These settings are approved for payment following completion of a standard health and safety check list and interview process, and must satisfactorily address the following areas, as outlined in the DFD "Self-Arranged Care Home Inspection and Interview Checklist": physical environment, fire safety, general health, safety and sanitation, appropriate developmental program activities, rest and sleep, food and nutrition, general interview questions and children's immunization records.

6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

- Yes, and the changes are as follows:  
  
 No

6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

Included in the DFD Self-Arranged Care Home Inspection and Interview Checklist is a Declarations page stating the following requirement: the approved caretaker will among other requirements... "request and maintain copies of each child's immunization records and timetable". The Self-Arranged Care Home Inspection and Interview Checklist includes a Child's Immunization record which is to be completed and signed by the parent for each child in care by the caretaker.

- Building and physical premises safety

The DFD Self-arranged Child Care Inspection and Interview Checklist includes specific sections that govern physical environment, fire safety, general health, safety and sanitation, including premises safety.

- Health and safety training

Health and safety training is available to all providers through the local CCR&R or special announced training and/or conference events.

## **6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements**

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A))  
Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.



- Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

## **6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements**

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

In keeping with provisions of the New Jersey State Child Care Center Licensing Law (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-1 to 15), and the Family Day Care Provider Registration Law, (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-16 et seq.):

### **Center Based Providers**

All applicable requirements of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122) must be complied with by all licensed child care centers, unless the rules are specified as "for early childhood programs" or "for school-age child care programs." Responsibility for ensuring that centers comply with the provisions of the laws cited above is delegated to the DHS Office of Licensing. Centers are subject to an annual Life/Safety and Program inspection of 30 specific items, which must be abated within a 2-week period and a full inspection every 3 years at the commencement of the licensing cycle. Centers are also subject to periodic unannounced monitoring inspections. To be eligible for a regular license, a center must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the DHS Office of Licensing that the center complies with all applicable provisions of the Manual of Requirements, the official State licensing regulations.

The Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers includes comprehensive licensing requirements governing: licensing procedures; health; life/safety; program; record keeping; staffing requirements; care of sick children; and transportation requirements. Over 4,100 licensed child care centers are inspected on an annual basis to ensure a high quality of child care in the State of New Jersey.

As part of the initial and renewal licensing requirements, centers must document their compliance with the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code, the Uniform Fire Code, local health codes, and if they serve food, the State Sanitary Code.

The DHS Office of Licensing also responds to all complaints made against centers and follows up to ensure that any violations found during such investigations are corrected by the center.

Under the CCDF certificate program, centers are required to provide proof of licensure by providing their valid license number, which is then verified. This is used for verification against a list of licensed providers supplied by DHS Office of Licensing to CCR&Rs on a regular basis.

### **Registered Family Child Care Homes**

A registered family child care home means a provider registered pursuant to the State Family Day Care Provider Registration Law. Providers who serve three or more non-sibling children (but less than six) must be registered pursuant to the Family Day Care Provider Registration Law to receive payment through DHS child care service programs.

Responsibility for ensuring that a sponsoring organization complies with all applicable provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration (N.J.A.C. 10:126) and the laws cited above, is delegated to the DHS Office of Licensing (OOL). Staff from the Office of Licensing inspect and monitor the sponsoring organizations to determine compliance with applicable provisions of the Manual of Requirements, conduct random inspections of family child care homes to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the manual and provide technical assistance to the sponsoring organizations (CCR&Rs).

Sponsoring organizations annually monitor no less than 20 percent of providers on a random basis; and evaluate and monitor all providers at least once every two years. A certificate of registration is valid for three (3) years and renewable.

To qualify for a regular certificate, a home must meet minimum health, safety and program standards; the provider or applicant and alternate provider shall receive a minimum of 12 hours of pre-service training in child care related topics as specified in the Manual of Requirements; submit a physician's statement(s) for the applicant, the alternate provider and the provider assistant (if any) verifying the applicant, alternate provider and provider assistant are in good health based on a medical examination conducted within six months preceding the submission of the application.

The applicant, alternate provider and provider assistant must submit to the sponsoring organization written proof of a Mantoux tuberculin skin test with five TU (tuberculin units) of PPD tuberculin, conducted within the six months preceding the submission of the application or a chest X-ray if the individual has had a previous positive Mantoux tuberculin test. Two letters of reference for both the applicant and alternate provider must be submitted, and the provider and all individuals residing or working in the home over the age of 14 years must also comply with procedures for a background check against the DYFS Child Abuse Registry Information (CARI) and criminal disclosure as specified in the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration.

The sponsoring organizations also provide on-going technical assistance and training to providers in early childhood development, including health and safety techniques and procedures.

### **Group Home Providers**

New Jersey has no distinct category of group home care. This category will be considered as licensed child care centers.

### **Approved Homes**

Child care services provided by a care giver in the child's own home or for two non-siblings or the sibling children up to five children of one family in a home-based setting are recognized under pre-existing State regulations as eligible for public subsidy and reimbursement. Since 1987, in order to receive publicly subsidized child care payments, these providers must be approved pursuant to the Child Care Services Manual at N.J.A.C. 10:15 – 10.2. These settings are approved for payment following completion of a satisfactory CARI background check for the provider and all individuals residing in the home over the age of 14 years and a satisfactory home health and safety inspection.

The appropriate CCR&R initially verifies that these settings comply with applicable requirements. These settings are approved for payment following completion of a standard health and safety inspection, and must satisfactorily address building safety, fire safety and physical environment questions outlined in the Department's Self – Arranged Care Inspection and Interview Checklist (N.J.A.C. 10:15 – 10.2).

The appropriate CCR&R provides the following information to these providers:

- Environmental sanitation requirements for disinfecting diapering surfaces, sinks and faucets, thermometers, bottles, nipples, and other such equipment;
- Personal hygiene requirements for the provider and children concerning hand washing before eating, preparing food, after diapering and/or toileting and after caring for sick children;
- Requirements for the provider to be free of any illness or medical condition that would prevent them from providing child care services;
- Children's immunization requirements.

### **In-Home Providers**

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In-Home Providers are approved using the same criteria specified in the Approved Homes section above.

### **Summer Camp Programs**

On an annual basis, summer camp programs must meet standards set by local occupancy, building and fire codes and must meet New Jersey Department of Health and the Youth Camp Safety Act of New Jersey (N.J.A.C. 26:12 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 8:25) requirements or be licensed by the DHS Office of Licensing. The appropriate CCR&R verifies that these settings comply with applicable requirements. Such arrangements are for the supervision of six or more children who attend less than 24 hours a day.

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?
  - Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
  - No

Licensed child care centers: are inspected by DHS Licensing personnel unannounced on at least an annual basis for monitoring purposes and at least once every three years for a full licensing renewal inspection. Investigation of complaints may take place at any time on an as needed basis.

Registered Family Child Care Providers: DHS Licensing personnel inspect and monitor the sponsoring organizations to determine compliance with applicable provisions of the Manual of Requirements, conduct random inspections of family child care homes to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the manual and provide technical assistance to the sponsoring organizations (CCR&Rs).

Sponsoring organizations annually monitor no less than 20 percent of providers on a random basis; and evaluate and monitor all providers at least once every two years.

- Are child care providers subject to background checks?
  - Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):

No

**Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Checks**, commonly referred to as fingerprint background checks, for licensed Child Care Centers went into effect January 26, 2001 and were phased in during 2001 as procedures were developed. As a condition of securing a license or Certificate of Life/Safety Approval, the sponsor shall ensure that a CHRI fingerprint background check is completed for himself or herself, and for all staff members at least 18 years of age who are or will be working at the center on a regularly scheduled basis, to determine whether any such person has been convicted of a crime. An electronic fingerprinting system, known as "Live-Scan", is being used to obtain the fingerprints. Each individual's fingerprints are scanned by computer directly from a specially programmed touch screen, which then electronically transmits the prints to the Division of State Police for processing. It will not be necessary for staff to be reprinted in the future. Because of this procedure fingerprints are archived and can be electronically re-submitted to the State Police. Automatic notification is sent by the State Police to DHS in the event that a staff person is convicted of a crime in the future.

All licensed child care centers as a condition of securing a new or renewal license or Certificate of Life/Safety Approval, the sponsor shall provide for himself or herself, and shall obtain from all staff members who are or will be working at the center on a regularly scheduled basis, written consent for DHS OOL to conduct a **Child Abuse Record Information (CARI)** background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse and/or neglect has been substantiated against any such person.

For all registered family child care providers, prior to the issuance or renewal of a Certificate of Registration, the sponsoring organization or provider shall obtain written consent from the applicant or provider, substitute provider, provider assistant and alternate provider, if any, and all member's of the applicant's or provider's household who are at least 14 years of age, for DHS OOL to conduct a **CARI** background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against any such person.

For approved home providers and in-home providers, N.J.S.A. 30:5B-32 the Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background check law requires all prospective approved home/in-home providers and all member's of the prospective provider's household who are at least 14 years of age, to provide written consent for DHS OOL to conduct a **CARI** background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against any such person. A CARI background check is part of the approval process for approved homes and in-home providers.

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? ( Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)
  - Yes, and the following describes the State’s reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):
  - No

A licensed or life/safety approved child care center shall notify DHS Office of Licensing verbally of any injury or illness by the next working day after the center learns of any injury or illness that results in the admittance to a hospital or death of a child, as specified in the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers at N.J.A.C. 10:122.

The director, having knowledge that a child has been injured by a dog, cat or other animal that is kept by or located at the center and when no physician attends such child, shall, within 12 hours of the injury, report the name, age, sex, and address of the child to the local health department.

For registered family child care homes the provider shall report any injury that results in the admittance of a child to a hospital or the death of a child while in the provider’s care, to the sponsoring organization as soon as possible, but no later than the beginning of the sponsoring organization’s next working day. As specified in the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration N.J.A.C. 10:126.

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

N/A

## **6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements**

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

In keeping with applicable provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122) and the Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration (N.J.A.C. 10:126) immunization exemptions are as follows:

- If a child's parent objects to a physical examination, immunization or medical treatment for his or her child on grounds that it interferes with the free exercise of the child's religious rights, the center or family day care home must admit the child, provided that the parent(s) submits to the center or home, upon the child's admission, a signed written statement that the physical examination, immunization or medical treatment interferes with the free exercise of the child's religious rights.
- If immunizations are contraindicated for medical reasons, the center or family child care home may choose to admit the child, provided that the parent submits to the center or home a written statement from a licensed physician attesting to the following:
  1. The reason the immunization is medically contraindicated; and
  2. The specific time period that the immunization is medically contraindicated.

All of the immunization exemptions stated above may be suspended by the DHS Office of Licensing during the existence of a health emergency, as determined by the State Commissioner of Health and Senior Services.

**PART 7**  
**HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES**

*(Only the Territories complete Part 7.)*

**7.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories**  
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

N/A

For all center-based care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

N/A

**7.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers in the Territories**  
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all group home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety



- Health and safety training

**7.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers in the Territories**

(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all family child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

N/A

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

**7.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers in the Territories**

(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all in-home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

N/A

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

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**7.5 Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements**

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives may be exempted from health and safety requirements: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care). (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

N/A

- All relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- Some or all** relative providers are subject to **different** health and safety requirements from those described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 and the following describes those different requirements and the relatives they apply to:

**7.6 Enforcement of Territorial Health and Safety Requirements**

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how Territorial health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

N/A

Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

- Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
- No

Are child care providers subject to background checks?

- Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):
- No

Does the Territory require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? ( Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

- 
- Yes, and the following describes the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):
- No

N/A

Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

### **7.7 Exemptions from Territorial Immunization Requirements**

The Territory assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the Territorial public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

N/A

The Territory exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS**

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 106-554)

The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

## APPENDIX 2 ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must define the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

- *attending* (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable) - A parent will be considered to be attending if they are enrolled in a job training or educational training program, documented through proof of registration.
  
- *in loco parentis* - Means those individuals who are serving as the primary caretaker without legal confirmation for the child(ren) on behalf of whom certificate(s) are requested. These individuals are considered in loco parentis if the parent(s) of the child(ren) are not residing within New Jersey and the child(ren) reside with these individuals on a full time basis. These individuals must meet all other eligibility criteria.
  
- *job training and educational program* –  
Job training program means the following: vocational/occupational training programs in which enrollment is not less than twenty (20) hours per week:
  - A) Classroom skills occupational/vocational; or
  - B) On-the-Job Training, including apprenticeships.  
Educational program means the following educational activities:
  - A) Adult Basic Education – literacy training and remedial education for not less than 20 hours per week;
  - B) GED Training – for individuals who have not completed high school for not less than 20 hours per week;
  - C) English As A Second Language – for individuals with limited English language for not less than 20 hours per week; and
  - D) Post Secondary Education – specialized occupational training programs leading to a specific career objective or a two-year to four-year degree program at an institution of higher education for not less than 12 credit hours per full semester or 6 credit hours per summer or interim session.
  
- *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) - A dependent child who is age 19 or younger and defined as a “special needs” individual; that is, physically or mentally incapable of self-care.

- *protective services* - Child protective services (CPS), shall constitute services on behalf of any child, under age 19, considered at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation; or found to be abused, neglected, exploited or abandoned, as identified by the Department's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) or failure on the part of parents or others responsible for meeting at least the minimum needs of the child, as identified by DYFS. The term, unless otherwise specified, includes services provided to children in out-of-home settings, such as foster care because, as permissible in the interpretation of the Federal regulation, New Jersey does not differentiate between the protective services for families who remain intact and for those children who are in foster placement.
- *residing with* - Residing with means living in the permanent or temporary residence of the eligible parent, legal guardian or person standing in loco parentis. The person or family must be currently residing in the State of New Jersey. There is no prior residency requirement.
- *special needs child* – Is a child that has been identified through a written referral from a county welfare agency; DYFS; legal, medical, or social service agency; emergency shelter; or public school; which indicates that the child has a serious physical, emotional, mental or cognitive condition and child care services are required as part of a treatment plan designed to stabilize, ameliorate the situation and/or prevent the placement of the child outside the home. The child's social or medical diagnosis must be documented as a result of a standardized developmental or psychological test given by a certified professional or physician. Parents must need child care services in order to remain in full-time employment or in a full-time training/education program.
- *very low income* - Very low income for child care services under the CCDF is defined as families with income at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Index, as determined by family size.
- *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) - Parents are considered working, if they are employed, or have a verified commitment of employment which is scheduled to begin within two weeks, receive a wage or salary for their employment, and are working not less than thirty (30) hours per week for "full-time" employment. "Part-time" employment means working less than 30 hours per week.

- Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:
  - *special circumstances* – Refers to a child that is not under DYFS supervision who has been identified through a written referral from a CWA, DYFS, legal, medical, social service agency, emergency shelter, public school or School Based Youth Services Program which indicates that the child is from a family experiencing medical or social problems or adverse living conditions and child care arrangements are required to help ameliorate the situation and/or prevent the placement of the child or other family member(s) outside the home. Children of teen parents are also considered a special circumstance.
  - *foster care* – Services provided under the supervision of DYFS child protective services (CPS) in DYFS approved out-of-home placement designed to provide a substitute family for a child who needs care outside his or her home for a temporary or extended period of time, as part of a CPS case management plan. The DYFS foster care program includes services provided to CPS children in para foster care, children under the guardianship of DYFS and children who have been surrendered to DYFS.
  - *admissions priorities* – Priority consideration will be given to families, upon admission in the CCDF program, if they meet one or more of the following criteria:
    - a) Children identified by DYFS in child protective services and under the supervision of DYFS;
    - b) Children identified as having special needs and/or circumstances;
    - c) Children in families with incomes at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level; and
    - d) Children in families eligible under provisions of the CCDF who have an identified need for child care services and who do not fall in the above listed priorities.
  - *teen parents* – Refers to parents who are age 19 years of age and below upon application of for child care who are eligible to access child care certificates for their children in the CCDF program.
  - *transitional child care (TCC) benefits* – Provide extended subsidized child care for up to two years for those WFNJ participants whose case has been closed due to earnings from employment.



STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES  
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/05 – 9/30/07

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