



**CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN
FOR NEW MEXICO
FFY 2008-2009**

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/07 – 9/30/09. 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.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 165 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 06/30/2009)

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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: New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department
Address of Lead Agency: PERA Building, PO Drawer 5160, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: Dorian Dodson, Cabinet Secretary
Phone Number: 505-827-7602
Fax Number: 505-827-4053
E-Mail Address: dorian.dodson@state.nm.us
Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.cyfd.org

1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name of the State Child Care Contact (CCDF): Mohammed Hussien
Title of State Child Care Contact: Child Care Services Bureau Chief
Address: PO Drawer 5160, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Phone Number: 505-476-0453
Fax Number: 505-827-7361
E-Mail Address: mohammed.hussien@state.nm.us
Phone Number for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any): 800-832-1321
Web Address for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any): www.newmexicokids.org

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, 2007 through September 30, 2008. (§98.13(a))

CCDF: \$ 37,630,814
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: \$ 32,219,300
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: \$0
State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: \$ 2,895,259
State Matching Funds: \$4,308,974
Total Funds Available: \$ 77,054,347

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): \$2,096,989_ (5%). (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.
- No. If no, use the table below to **identify** the name and type of agency that delivers services and activities. (If the Lead Agency performs the task, mark “n/a” in the box under “Agency.” If more than one agency performs the task, identify all agencies in the box under “Agency,” and **indicate** in the box to the right whether each is a non-government entity.)

Service/Activity	Agency	Non-Government Entity (see Guidance for definition)	
Determines individual eligibility:			
a) TANF families		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
b) Non-TANF families		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Assists parents in locating care		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Makes the provider payment		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Quality activities		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If the Lead Agency uses outside agencies to deliver services and activities, **describe** how the Lead Agency maintains overall control.

1.6 Use of Private Donated Funds

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

- Yes. If yes, are those funds:
- Donated directly to the State?

Donated to a separate entity or entities designated to receive private donated funds?

How many entities are designated to receive private donated fund? _____

Provide information below for each entity:

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Type:

No.

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

1.7.1 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 percentage of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 20%.)

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.

1.7.2 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

(__%) Estimated percentage of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 30%.)

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.

1.7.3 If the State answered yes to 1.7.1 or 1.7.2, the following **describes** State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))

1.8 Improper Payments

1.8.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?

Please refer to Attachment 3.1.1, Child Care Assistance Regulations, section 8.15.2.7 and 8.15.2.19. Improper payments are defined as an overpayment or an underpayment, as follows:

“Overpayment’ means a payment of child care assistance benefits received by a client or provider for which they are ineligible based on incomplete or inaccurate information provided by either the client or the provider, or agency error.”

“Underpayment’ means a payment made by the department for services provided which did not fully reimburse the client or provider.”

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

Yes, and these strategies are:

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

Yes, and these strategies are:

A complete audit is done monthly on all payments to identify possible duplicate payments, as well as exceptional payments (for instance, payments that may be unusually large). When duplicate payments are identified through this process they are cancelled prior to the provider payment being issued therefore eliminating an overpayment. The Department uses a series of reports to assist in the identification of improper payments and has added service delivery system modifications to assist field staff in preventing overpayments.

Clients are required to re-certify at least every 6 months, allowing the field staff further opportunities to identify improper payments, consequently leading to further opportunities to correct those payments.

The Lead Agency maintains a contract with a collection agency to assist in the collection of parent and provider overpayments. Payments to this vendor are made on a contingency basis.

In addition, each month a sample of assistance cases undergo a full case review by supervisory staff, to ensure quality and accuracy.

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 meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from 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 service delivery, 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, (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (6) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	Consultation in Development of the Plan	Coordination with Service Delivery
Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
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"/> *

NEW MEXICO STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

	Consultation in Development of the Plan	Coordination with Service Delivery
Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for		
State pre-kindergarten programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head Start programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (See guidance):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

* *Required.*

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

If you have prepared an emergency preparedness plan related to your child care and early childhood development services, attach it as **Attachment 2.1.1**.

Other Federal, State, local, Tribal and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development practices:

The Children, Youth and Families Department consulted extensively with child care providers, child care advocates and the larger early care and education system throughout the last two years. The Department consulted with these agencies and individuals through a variety of ways and venues, including town hall meetings, focus groups with child care providers, meetings with Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs), Regional Early Care and Education Conferences (RECEC) and the Outreach Workers Conferences.

In the months of April and May, 2006, nine Town Hall meetings were held throughout the state in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Roswell, Clovis, Farmington, Gallup, Alamogordo and Las Cruces to receive input on revising the regulations governing child care assistance (8.15.2 NMAC), child care licensing (8.16.2 NMAC) and non-licensed child care (8.17.2 NMAC). The town hall meetings brought licensed and registered home care providers, TTAPs, home sponsoring organizations, and advocates together to discuss and debate child care issues across the spectrum of child care in New Mexico. In addition, CYFD consulted with child care advocates and presented at conferences for child care providers and home

sponsoring organizations. The discussions at the town hall meetings and conferences were focused on the regulations but also included receiving feedback on all child care issues, including compensation, quality of care and monitoring of licensed and registered homes. The Child Care Services Bureau and the Office of Child Development continues to meet extensively with child care providers and TTAPs to discuss the implementation of New Mexico's Look for the Stars program (a quality rating system for licensed homes and centers). The ideas discussed and exchanged at these meetings and conferences were utilized in the development of this state plan.

The purpose of this continual consultation is to keep the child care field and larger early care system aware of the Department's progress on improving the quality of child care, and to receive their input on how to make the child care and early care system work together more effectively. The Department believes that continued dialogue and consultation with these entities results in a more comprehensive state child care plan.

The Department continues to coordinate with the TTAPs in their provision of training and technical assistance to child care providers. The Department continues to distribute the "Parents' Guide to Selecting Quality Child Care," which includes tax information from the New Mexico Human Needs Coordinating Council, as well as information from the Department of Health on the Family Infant Toddler Program and immunizations. CYFD is coordinating efforts with New Mexico State University in continuing the implementation of the In Home Infant Child Care Program. The program provides a mechanism for mothers to stay at home and care for their infant while increasing skills/education in parenting and early childhood development. Additionally, CYFD co-sponsored and participated jointly with private agencies in Dia del Nino (a more detailed description of this event is provided below, under "representatives of local government"). This continuous coordination allows the Department to reach a greater number of children and families throughout the State.

Public Health:

New Mexico's Behavioral Health Collaborative (www.state.nm.us/hsd/bhdwg/) blends an assortment of funding sources and is the result of collaboration of 15 State agencies. The Family Infant Toddler program, IDEA part B, works in coordination with the CYFD Office of Child Development to certify developmental specialists who work with young children, birth to age 3. The Department continues to work with the Department of Health (DOH) Maternal and Child Health Program to coordinate efforts with regard to infant mental health. The most recent product of this coordination is "Improving Developmental Care for Young Children and Their Families in New Mexico," a document created to promote healthy development in children birth to age five and to ensure that no child reaches school with an undetected developmental condition. Expected results include better training for child care providers in infant mental health.

Employment services/workforce development:

The State of New Mexico, Human Services Department contracts for employment and related support services through New Mexico Works contractors. The lead agency

collaborates with the Human Services Department and their contractors to ensure child care is provided to TANF and TANF Transitional clients. Expected results include better access to services for TANF clients and TANF Transitional clients still in need of child care assistance.

Public education:

The State's Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Initiative is funded entirely with State funds and is bringing about a new level of coordination between the State's Children, Youth and Families Department (which administers the Child Care Program) and the State's Public Education Department. The initiative is run by the Pre-K Collaborative, a group composed of representatives of the Governor's Office, the Office of Education Accountability, and the Departments of Children, Youth and Families and Public Education. The purpose of the initiative is to:

- Increase access to voluntary high-quality pre-kindergarten programs
- Provide developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children
- Expand early childhood community capacity
- Support linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum
- Focus on school readiness

TANF:

The State of New Mexico, Human Services Department oversees TANF in New Mexico. The lead agency will coordinate with the Human Services Department to ensure that TANF clients are receiving child care assistance. Expected results include ensuring that all TANF clients needing child care assistance receive support services enabling them to meet TANF work and education requirements.

The State is in the process of designing and developing an Enterprise Eligibility System, the goal of which is to allow clients a "no wrong door" access to state services. The System will allow New Mexicans to access services through a common portal via the internet and to complete applications for multiple programs (including TANF and child care assistance) on-line.

Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State:

Through the Early Childhood Action Network (ECAN), the Lead Agency coordinates activity with a variety of entities, including representatives from tribal organizations. Representation from the Acoma, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Mescalero, San Felipe, San Juan, Santo Domingo and Zuni pueblos participate regularly in the Head Start Collaboration meetings. Tribal organizations also participated in the ECIAT (Early Childhood Interagency Action Team) meetings. Additionally, Tribal representation was invited to the State Pre-K initiative planning meetings.

The Child Care Services Bureau is currently coordinating with the Navajo Nation with regard to a child care center that is receiving funds from the State’s child care assistance program as well as the Navajo Nation.

Representatives of local government:

Local government and tribal organizations were encouraged to attend town hall meetings and the public hearing regarding revisions to the Child Care Assistance, Child Care Licensing and Registered Home Provider regulations. Further details regarding the town hall meetings and public hearing are provided above (under “Other Federal, State, local, Tribal and private agencies providing early childhood development practices”).

CYFD co-sponsored and participated jointly with representatives from the city of Albuquerque, as well as private agencies, in the Dia del Nino event (April 2006 and 2007). Over 3,000 families attended the event, which raised awareness of literacy, as well as other early childhood issues.

State/Tribal agencies responsible for:

State pre-kindergarten (and child development) programs:

Currently, CYFD has contracted with 22 programs to provide state funded pre-kindergarten services to children birth to age 5. CYFD provides state general funds for pre-kindergarten programs. This funding is separate from the Pre-K initiative, enacted by the 2005 legislature. For FY08 the target population will be infants, toddlers and three year olds. New programs have been identified for FY08 through the competitive process. Thirteen programs were awarded contracts for the period beginning July 1, 2007.

Under the Pre-K initiative, both public and private child care providers were part of the Early Childhood Interagency Action Team (ECIAT), involved in the planning of the Pre-K initiative. CYFD continues to coordinate with these programs as the Pre-K initiative is implemented. CYFD is currently funding 24 programs in 20 communities to provide half-day Pre-K services to eligible four-year-olds. Programs must adhere to the New Mexico PreK Program Standards and must have 66% of the children participating living within the attendance zone of a Title 1 Elementary School. Further details regarding the Pre-K initiative are provided above, under “Public Education.”

Head Start programs:

The Department utilized the Head Start Collaboration project to further collaborative efforts between Head Start grantees and child care providers. The first step in this project was to bring department staff and Head Start grantees together to gain a common understanding of the Head Start system and mandate, and to brainstorm on ideas for collaboration at the local level. This effort will continue, and the next step planned is to provide a forum for Head Start grantees to learn more about the child care assistance program, and how to work with their local child care providers as partners in a local early

care system. CYFD continues to fund Head Start grantees to expand their services for the provision of full day, full year child care services.

The Head Start Collaboration Office will arrange regional focus groups during the summer of 2007 to gather input from stakeholders on a variety of early childhood services, including child care and early learning.

CYFD continues to fund Head Start grantees to expand their services for the provision of full day, full year child care services.

The lead agency oversees the Head Start Collaboration Program, which ensures that Head Start grantees collaborate with child care providers in the State of New Mexico. An expected result is that Head Start and child care providers will work together to ensure families receive full day, full year services.

Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs:

The lead agency utilizes block grant funds to contract for services for children with disabilities. We also work collaboratively with Head Start grantees that serve children with disabilities. Our expected result is that child care providers receive training on how to better serve children with disabilities. Two lead agency staff are members of and participate on a New Mexico transition team comprised of the Department of Health and Public Education Department, with the purpose of making a seamless transition from the Family Infant Toddler Program (Part B) to Part C for children and families.

The Department received an appropriation in the 2007 legislative session for Inclusive Child Care Specialists to work through the Training and Technical Assistance Programs as well as money to go toward a special needs differential.

Other:

Through the Early Childhood Action Network (www.earlychildhoodnm.com), the State gains valuable input from a wide variety of stakeholders, including child care advocacy groups, private child care providers, Native American tribes, academicians, other State agencies, local governments, legislators and the business community. The group has produced a number of important documents, including a “Report Card on the Well-Being of New Mexico’s Children – Birth to Five” and “Improving Developmental Care for Young Children and Their Families.” The group also has performed a comprehensive inventory of all programs that serve children birth to five funded through the government. The work of this group helps to guide programmatic decisions by highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the State’s early childhood development system.

The Child Care Services Bureau’s local offices hold regular community collaboration meetings with the local TANF agencies, NM Works contractors, tribal and/or military child care regulators, Child and Adult Care Food Program monitors and TTAP representatives. The expected result of these meetings is to develop strategies to remove barriers related to

access to child care, to enhance training of child care providers and to generally improve the quality of child care.

CYFD has developed and implemented a process for increased monitoring and complaint investigation of registered home providers, especially those who do not participate in the food program. CYFD has contracted with licensed private investigators to assist department staff in conducting complaint investigations of both licensed and registered child care providers. In addition, CYFD has developed the means to expand the monitoring of registered child care home providers who are not participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

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 programs. **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area. **Note: Check only ONE.**

- 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 2.1.2.**
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented.
The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- Other (describe):**

A plan for coordination across early childhood programs is currently in the planning stage. As is detailed below, the Department is working through the Children's Cabinet and the Early Childhood Action Team, and is also collaborating with other state agencies, to work toward the alignment of program standards across all early care and education programs, including child care programs, Head Start programs, pre-school programs and kindergarten for a seamless continuum of quality early care and education programs statewide. The Department has developed Pre-Kindergarten Learning Outcomes in conjunction with the Public Education Department (a more thorough description of which is provided in section 5.2), and it is anticipated that the early learning concepts contained in the Outcomes will be integrated into the plan.

Describe the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

Since the submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan, changes in emphasis and state administration have resulted in a major focus being given to link, coordinate and improve early care and education programs for four-year-olds. This is especially true for Head

Start, public school programs for 3 to 4 year olds with delays, and community-based child care. In addition, there are two major groups that continue to focus on improving coordination across all systems serving young children. These include the following:

1) The Department continues to work in close collaboration with the New Mexico Department of Health’s State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Project, which is funded by the Federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau. This project is doing strategic planning to promote systems that address access to comprehensive pediatric services and medical homes, the social-emotional development of young children, early care and education, parenting education and family support. A group designated as the Early Childhood Action Network (ECAN) has been appointed to guide and assist in the work of the New Mexico Department of Health’s State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Project. Further details regarding ECAN are provided in section 2.1.1. (State/Tribal agencies responsible for “public education,” “public health,” and “other.”)

2) The Department works closely with New Mexico Children’s Cabinet in the Lieutenant Governor’s Office on issues related to early care and education. Members of the Children’s Cabinet include the Cabinet Secretaries of the Department of Health, Children, Youth and Families Department, the Human Services Department (the TANF agency), the Department of Labor, the Department of Economic Development, the Public Education Department, Aging and Long Term Care, Department of Corrections, Department of Public Safety, Department of Finance and Administration, and the Department of Cultural Affairs. This leadership team ensures that collaboration, communication and direction are given to integrating children’s services statewide.

The Department has shifted the overall focus to prevention. One priority is an integrated program of children’s mental health. Early care is key in this effort because we are positioned to train providers in developmentally appropriate practices that will result in positive children’s mental health. We work in collaboration with the state director of children’s mental health who is located in our agency. Early care is considered in the three major initiatives being implemented in this arena.

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.

The Children’s Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that coordination occurs. This group holds monthly meetings to ensure open and ongoing communication concerning all program areas that affect the health and education of young children and youth. The mission of the Children’s Cabinet is to ensure that state government at every level is meeting the health, education and growth needs of New Mexico’s children. The Cabinet was specifically created to oversee and coordinate cross-departmental efforts that include, but are not limited to:

- **Promoting and establishing comprehensive policies that impact children and youth**
- **Assessing and maximizing resource allocation**

- **Removing administrative barriers to obtaining departmental services and assistance**
- **Tracking New Mexico indicators concerning child and youth well-being**
- **Encouraging partnerships that elevate the conversations, expertise, research, and action regarding New Mexico's Children and Youth**

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.

Governor Richardson has set the following standards for the Children's Cabinet:

- **Literacy of all New Mexico Children by the end of third grade**
- **Increase the availability of health insurance for New Mexico children**
- **Strive to ensure all New Mexico children receive proper immunizations**
- **Strive to increase availability of childcare to parents working their way off welfare**
- **Remove the administrative barriers to obtaining public assistance**
- **Track indicators concerning children and their health, education, safety and economic growth**

During its first year, the Cabinet succeeded in forming a Youth Alliance to advise the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Legislature on policy issues that matter to young people, developing "Done by One" campaign designed to encourage early immunizations, allocated federal tax relief money to child care assistance, passed an education reform agenda, and created a Rural Schools Division.

In addition, the Department has developed and implemented Pre-Kindergarten Learning Outcomes for children in early care and education programs. The outcomes link kindergarten standards for children and are designed to improve the school readiness of New Mexico children. The Department works with the Public Education Department to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of preschool program criteria. These programs contain a strong parental involvement component, a staff development component, and address the total developmental needs of the child and the family.

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

The Department's program coordination plan is ambitious, and will require several years for full implementation. It is the intent of this plan to provide a framework for future efforts, and we anticipate that changes and modifications will be made to the plan as the funding and evaluation of current efforts informs the process.

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: 5/31/07

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing: notice in the New Mexico Register and Albuquerque Journal

Date(s) of public hearing(s): 6/20/07

Hearing site(s): PERA Building, Santa Fe, NM

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s): posted on www.NewMexicoKids.org

A brief summary of the public comments from this process is included as **Attachment 2.2.**

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

Does the Lead Agency conduct or plan to conduct activities to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs?

Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the results or expected results.

No.

The Children, Youth, and Families Department is focused on developing and maintaining private-public partnerships. CYFD is an active participant on an Interagency Team (Department of Health, Human Services Department, Public Education Department, Aging and Long Term Services Department and New Mexico Department of Transportation) working on identifying opportunities to pool resources and to identify gaps in service regarding nutrition education efforts across the state. We are also actively involved in developing the New Mexico State Nutrition Action Plan (SNAP). In addition, as one of the departments that administers USDA Child Nutrition Programs, CYFD is an active participant in collaborative efforts to educate and train those who care for children in New Mexico on the effects of poor nutrition, food insecurity, hunger and poverty. These efforts include participation in the New Mexico Task Force to End Hunger and participation in the New Mexico Nutrition Partnerships group.

CYFD also partners with the Human Needs Coordinating Council, a non-profit organization, in distributing information on tax credits to parents who are receiving child care assistance. The information is sent out yearly, and is also included in the “Parents’ Guide to Selecting Quality Child Care.” It is expected that the tax flyer will make working parents aware of tax credits that they earned.

In response to requests from the business community, CYFD has implemented a means by which to electronically reimburse child care providers. Though not fully implemented, approximately 440 child care providers per month are being reimbursed electronically.

In addition, the Department supports conferences held by child care associations as part of our public/private partnerships. Expected results of these efforts are increased school readiness for children, more businesses providing child care for their employees and increased attendance at child care association conferences.

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));

All types of providers, except for in-home providers, have child-specific vendor agreements with CYFD based upon parental choice and are paid directly by the State. Upon parental selection of a qualified provider, CYFD enters into a child-specific vendor agreement with the provider based upon the average number of hours a week the parent needs child care services for employment, training or education purposes. CYFD issues a payment certificate directly to the provider based on this agreement.

For In-home providers, the parent becomes the employer and hires the provider. Payments for in-home care are made directly to the parent.

(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

The certificate exists in the form of a contract between the Lead Agency, provider and parent. In order for the certificate to be considered valid the parent must choose a provider in which to enter into an agreement with. Once a provider is chosen by the parent and eligibility determination is complete a certificate/contract can be complete. Once client eligibility has been determined, the parent selects a provider. CYFD gives the parents a handout titled a “Parent’s Guide to Selecting Quality Child Care” and refers clients to the New Mexico Kids Child Care Resource and Referral for assistance choosing a child care provider.

(3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the proportion 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.

Not applicable.

Attach a copy of your eligibility worker’s manual, policy handbook, or other printed guidelines for administering the child care subsidy program as **Attachment 3.1.1**. If these materials are available on the web, the State may

provide the appropriate Web site address in lieu of attaching hard copies to the Plan.

Note: Eligibility worker's manuals, policy handbooks, or other printed guidelines for administering a child care subsidy program will be used for reference purposes only. Documents provided by Lead Agencies pursuant to this section will not be uniformly or comprehensively reviewed and will not be considered part of the Plan. All information required to be part of the Plan must continue to be set forth in the Plan.

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.

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.

3.1.4 Are child care services provided through certificates, grants and/or contracts 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 3.2A**.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of **August 15, 2007**.

Provide 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:
September 2007 . (§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 3.2B**. At a minimum, this summary should include a description of the sample population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings (**See Guidance for additional information.**)
- Does the Lead Agency use its **current** Market Rate Survey (a survey completed within the allowable time period –10/1/05 -9/30/07) to set payment rates?

Yes.

No.

At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set? If you do not use your current Market Rate Survey to set your rate ceilings or your percentile varies across categories of care (e.g., type of setting, region, age of children), describe and provide the range of variation in relation to your current survey. (**See Guidance for additional information.**)

The State’s base reimbursement rate varies across age and geographic categories, as well as type of child care. Across all metro and rural and across all Star levels, the State reimburses at approximately 5% below the mean market rate.

- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full range of providers based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., describe the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

Subsidy children have access to all levels of regulated care throughout New Mexico, including licensed centers, licensed family homes, licensed group homes and registered homes. The New Mexico Kids Child Care Resource and Referral is available to assist parents in locating the type of child care that best meets their needs. As of May 2007 there were 22,121 children in subsidized care. Of these children, 61.46% were in licensed centers, 8.39% were in licensed homes and 30.15% were in registered homes.

Licensed child care providers generally receive higher reimbursement rates than registered providers. As documented in Section 6 and in attachment 6.1, licensed child care providers have more administrative, personnel, services, health and safety, and training requirements.

- Does the Lead Agency consider any additional facts to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access? (§98.43(d))
 Yes. If, yes, **describe**.

In addition to type of care, age and geographic categories, rates are based on quality, which is reflected in a tiered reimbursement system. The differential rate paid to licensed child care providers with 2 through 5 Star licenses was increased in August 2006 and again in August 2007, thus raising the rates for Star 2 through 5 providers to, respectively, \$45, \$70, \$104.50, and \$132. These higher rates help to ensure that providers meeting higher quality levels accept subsidized children. Infant, toddler and after school rates are higher to encourage providers to increase capacity for these age groups to meet the demand for them. Please refer to Attachment 3.2A, Child Care Assistance regulations, Section 8.15.2.17(K) (payment rates).

- No.
- 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**:

The Department pays a higher differential rate to providers who are nationally accredited. In addition, participation in New Mexico's Reach for the Stars program, a 5-level quality rating system for licensed homes and centers, allows for higher reimbursement rates to providers. In order to receive child care assistance funds, all licensed programs must be operating at level 1 (basic licensure). Reimbursement rates increase incrementally beginning at level 2 and continuing through level 5 (accreditation). Part of the focus of the tiered reimbursement system is to provide an incentive to providers to increase the quality of child care. (See Attachment 3.2A, Child Care Assistance regulations, Section 8.15.2.17(K) (payment rates)).

No.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

3.3.1 Age Eligibility

NEW MEXICO STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

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 18.
- No.

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 18.
- No.

3.3.2 Income Eligibility

Complete columns (a) and (b) in the matrix below. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			Income Level, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
			(c) \$/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (d) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	\$2,718.33	\$2,310.58	N/A	N/A
2	\$3,106.67	\$2,640.67	\$1,882.38	60.59%
3	\$3,495.00	\$2,970.75	\$2,360.88	67.55%
4	\$3,883.33	\$3,300.83	\$2,839.38	73.12%
5	\$4,194.00	\$3,564.90	\$3,317.88	79.11%

Reference: US Department of Housing and Urban Development; Estimated Median Family Incomes for Fiscal Year 2007; Issued March 19, 2007.
Available at: <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il/il07/Medians2007.pdf>.
Please refer to attachment 3.3.2A.

Please note: In any given month, a relatively small number of families whose income falls above 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) receive child care subsidies; these subsidies are paid for with 100% State dollars (non-matching). The families who fall within this category are identified and tracked through FACTS (The Agency’s data collection system). This system tracks the total expenditures for these families and we can validate these expenditures with state dollars.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Describe and/or include information as **Attachment 3.3.2**. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

Please refer to Attachment 3.3.2, Child Care Assistance Regulations, section 8.15.2.11.

- 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)?

Yes. If yes, **describe** what type of income is deducted or excluded from total family income.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is excluded. Please refer to attachment 3.3.2, section 8.15.2.11(F).

No.

- Is the income of all family members included?

Yes.

No. If no, **describe** whose income is excluded for purposes of eligibility determination.

Please refer to attachment 3.3.2, Section 8.15.2.11 A, B, C, and D:

A. The household: The household includes biological parents, stepparents, and legal guardians living in the household, thereby constituting an economic unit, and any dependents of the aforementioned who are under 18 years of age. Grandparents will be considered household members only if they are legal guardians of the children, are providing for the physical and emotional needs of the children, and/or are applying for

child care benefits on behalf of the children.

B. Allowed exclusions from the household: Excluded from the household for co-pay calculation purposes are grandparents or legal guardians who have taken custody/guardianship of children due to circumstances such as death of biological parents or other documented circumstances such as mental or physical incapacity of biological parents to care for the child or children. Grandparents and/or legal guardians in this situation are required to qualify for child care assistance as per Subsection D below and, upon qualification, have the required co-pay waived.

C. Adult dependent children: Eighteen (18) year old dependent children must be attending school to be counted in the household. Incidental money earned by dependent children is not to be counted as household income.

D. Household income: Income eligibility for benefits is determined by the number of members in the household and the total countable earned and unearned income.

3.3.3 Eligibility Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

Does the State choose to provide child care to children in protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

Yes.

No.

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.

No.

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

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.

3.3.4 Additional Eligibility Conditions

Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

- Yes, and the additional eligibility conditions are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)
- No.

3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families

3.4.1 Complete the table below regarding eligibility conditions and priority rules. For columns (a) through (d), check box if reply is “Yes”. Leave blank if “No”. Complete column (e) if you check column (d).

Eligibility Category	(a) Guarantee subsidy eligibility	(b) Give priority over other CCDF- eligible families	(c) Same priority as other CCDF- eligible families	(d) Is there a time limit on guarantee or priority?	(e) How long is time limit?
Children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Children in families with very low incomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families transitioning from TANF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families at risk of becoming dependent on TANF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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

Refer to Attachment 3.1.1, Section 8.15.2.9, Priorities for Assistance. Also, existing clients within the Priority 4 category, whose child care case opened prior to November 1, 2001, are allowed to continue receiving child care assistance with income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. If their case closes and they re-apply, they must meet all current eligibility guidelines.

- 3.4.3 **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))

Clients who are receiving TANF benefits are considered Priority One for Child Care Assistance. Clients who are transitioning off TANF are considered Priority Two and are eligible for child care assistance for a consecutive 12-month period following their TANF case closure due to increased earnings or loss of earned income deductions or disregards. Priority Two clients do not have to meet income eligibility requirements during their 12-month period of eligibility. Families that are at risk of becoming dependent on TANF are Priority One B. (Please refer to Attachment 3.1.1, Child Care Assistance regulations, Section 8.15.2.9.)

- 3.4.4 Has the Lead Agency established additional priority rules that are not reflected in the table completed for Section 3.4.1? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

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

No.

- 3.4.5 Does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?

Yes.

No.

- 3.4.6 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.

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 3.5.1**.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of _____.

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.

- 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 3.5.2**.

- 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: **\$ 2,360.88 (at 165% FPL)**.

3.5.4

The Lead Agency must **select 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:

As per Section 8.15.2.13 NMAC, co-payments are paid by all clients receiving child care assistance benefits, except for Child Protective Services.

As per Section 8.15.2.11(B) NMAC, grandparents or legal guardians who have taken

custody/guardianship of children due to the death or permanent incapacity of the parent are required to qualify for child care assistance and, upon qualification, have the required co-pay waived.

3.5.4 Does the State allow providers to charge parents the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate?

Yes.

No.

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))

The current co-payment schedule was first adopted in July of 1998 and is updated annually based on the Federal Poverty Level changes. The co-payment amount is calculated based on the eligible family's gross income and does not rise over 8.5% for families with one child in full-time care. However, as each additional child is added to the program, the family's co-payment increases by ½ of that for the previous child. According to our March 2007 ACF-801 Data Viewer Report, 89.5% of our families have a co-pay of 8% or less of their gross monthly income, 97.9% of our families have a co-pay of 12% or less of their gross monthly income, and only 2.1% of our families have a co-pay above 12% of their gross monthly income.

PART 4
PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice

4.1.1 **Describe** 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)). At minimum, 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
- What documentation parents must provide
- 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

The State of New Mexico’s Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) funds 8 Training and Technical Assistance Programs in different regions throughout the state to provide child care referral services to all parents, regardless of eligibility status.

TANF and E&T Parents:

When the Human Services Department (HSD) determines that a client is eligible for TANF or E&T, the HSD caseworker informs the client that they are eligible for child care assistance through the Children, Youth and Families Department and refers them to the nearest CYFD Child Care Assistance Office. There are permanent and itinerant child care offices located throughout the State of New Mexico. CYFD child care staff have access to the HSD system and can verify eligibility of clients. Arrangements are made with the clients, as described above, to choose a provider from the full range of provider types. Services are provided as long as the parents are eligible for TANF or E&T and as long as they have at least one child under the age of 13 and comply with the Child Care Assistance program requirements. Co-payments for TANF and E&T clients are determined at the initial intake and re-determined at re-certification. Clients are informed of the exception of individual penalties through their TANF caseworker. CYFD has policy in place that addresses the participation exemption for TANF clients who are unable to locate child care 8.15.2.9(A). Clients re-certify every 6 months, regardless of whether they are accessing additional services (e.g. Head Start). If a child is accessing Head Start for 2 hours per day, this time is not counted toward their need for care. CYFD has increased eligibility to 165% FPL, allowing more families to access child care assistance for a longer period of time.

Parents Transitioning Off TANF:

If a parent's TANF case is closed due to increased earnings, the parent is informed by their HSD caseworker of their continued eligibility for child care from CYFD through the Transitional Program. If the parent is not already receiving child care services from CYFD, they are referred to CYFD to make these arrangements. If they are already receiving child care services from CYFD, their case status, but not the services, is changed to reflect this category of care. TANF clients are eligible for transitional child care for one year after their TANF case is closed. Co-payments for parents transitioning off TANF is determined at the initial intake and re-determined at re-certification. Clients re-certify every 6 months, regardless of whether they are accessing additional services (e.g. Head Start). If a child is accessing Head Start for 2 hours per day, this time is not counted toward their need for care. CYFD has increased eligibility to 165% FPL, allowing more families to access child care assistance for a longer period of time.

Income Eligible Parents:

Applicants bring in all paperwork to determine eligibility (including proof of income) directly to the CYFD child care offices. The CYFD child care worker determines eligibility. Once eligibility is determined, the provider selection process is the same as described in 3.6 above. Co-payment for Income Eligible clients is determined at the initial intake and re-determined at re-certification. Clients re-certify every 6 months, regardless of whether they are accessing additional services (e.g. Head Start). If a child is accessing Head Start for 2 hours per day, this time is not counted toward their need for care. CYFD has increased eligibility to 165% FPL, allowing more families to access child care assistance for a longer period of time.

Child Protective Services Clients:

The CYFD Protective Services Division social workers make arrangements for the clients as needed. Services continue for as long as considered necessary by the case social worker.

The standard length of re-certification for child care assistance is six months.

Recently, the Department increased the eligibility level to 165% of the Federal Poverty Level, thus making more families eligible for the program.

Field offices allow alternative high schools to bring their GRADS students in a group to the office to submit their applications and required paperwork.

Attach a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program. If the application is available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (application must still be attached to Plan): (**Application attached as Attachment 4.1.1**)

4.1.2 Is the application process different for families receiving TANF?

Yes. If yes, **describe** how the process is different:

No.

- 4.1.3 The following is a detailed description of how the State ensures parental choice by making sure that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

Parents are given a “Parents’ Guide to Selecting Quality Child Care” when they meet with their caseworker. The caseworker discusses parents’ child care options, using the guide as a reference. The guide provides detailed information on child care options, including licensed centers, licensed homes, registered homes, Head Start, after school care and summer programs. Information on faith based child care providers is not specifically offered in the guide. The Lead Agency refers parents to the New Mexico Kids Child Care Resource and Referral, which provides parents with a list of child care providers that matches their articulated needs and preferences.

- 4.1.4 Does the State conduct activities aimed at families with limited English proficiency to promote access to child care subsidies and reduce barriers to receiving subsidies and accessing child care services?

Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities, including how the State overcomes language barriers with families and providers.

All Child Care Assistance offices have signs posted stating (in English and Spanish) that if the client needs an interpreter, one will be provided at no cost. There are cards available that read “I speak Spanish and would like an interpreter” (in English and Spanish) available for Spanish-speaking clients to give to the appropriate CYFD staff. Staff are paid a differential for speaking additional language and being able to interpret. The Department is in the process of translating all forms that the client receives into Spanish and is also in the process of contracting with a language line service, which will allow caseworkers to access an interpreter in any language. In addition, the FACTS database contains a required field for the caseworker to select a client’s preferred language and indicate whether the client needs a translator, thus enabling the Department to track language service needs.

No.

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))

All offices in the state have posted information on how to request public information and staff know where to refer clients with these requests. Any request for information about a facility from the public is only to be responded to by setting forth the number of substantiated complaints, or pending complaint investigations, involving the facility. Documentation relating to substantiated complaints against a facility will be kept in a separate file from the provider's licensing file, but will be kept available for review by the public pursuant to an Inspection of Public Records Request. In response to a general request from the public about a facility, the response will only include the number of substantiated complaints against the facility and a general description of the occurrences that led to each complaint and substantiation. The person setting forth the general description of the occurrence will be sure not to divulge the name of the reporting person(s) or the name of the victim(s). If the person requesting the information wishes to view the actual information contained in the report pursuant to the Inspection of Public Records Act, the person providing the records for review will copy the records, redact any information identifying the reporting person or the victim, and then allow the inspection of the redacted documents.

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))

The child care provider participation agreement specifically states that parents/guardians or foster parents may visit their child/children and that the provider and their staff will be available to discuss issues or concerns during the regular business day. The provider is required to sign an agreement for each subsidized child. Training reinforces this parental right, both for the parents and the providers.

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: **The New Mexico Human Services Department**.

- "appropriate child care":

Child care provided by a facility or an individual that is licensed or registered with CYFD, provides care and supervision to a child, meets the health and safety standards established by CYFD, is able to address the special needs of a child, provides care that meets the child's age and development, and is available during the recipients hours of work, education or training.

- "reasonable distance":

Travel to a facility located in the community or surrounding community in which the TANF recipient resides, which takes into account parental or caretaker choice and availability of transportation.

- "unsuitability of informal child care":

Informal child care shall be deemed to be unsuitable when CYFD has determined that the care and supervision does not meet the minimum health and safety standards established by CYFD.

- "affordable child care arrangements":

Those arrangements that are subsidized by CYFD, or those arrangements which are not subsidized and are made directly with a facility or an individual by the parent or caretaker, taking into account parental or caretaker choice.

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; describes the expected results of the activities and, if the activities have been ongoing, the actual results of the activities. **For the infant and toddler earmark, the State must note in its description of the activities, what is the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds (not to exceed 36 months).**

Infants and toddlers:

Quality earmarks for infants and toddlers fund the higher reimbursement rates that are paid for this age group. The lower staff ratios required to serve infants and toddlers as well as the additional training hours required to serve this age group justifies these higher rates. In addition, accredited programs are paid an additional \$120 per month per child, with the expected result of encouraging and supporting the expansion of quality child care services for infants and toddlers.

Providers caring for infants and toddlers may participate in AIM HIGH, the quality improvement program implemented by CYFD now in its sixth year of operation. In AIM HIGH, providers are encouraged to work toward program accreditation, including care for infants and toddlers. Specific individualized technical assistance is provided along with financial incentives for program improvement. Again, the expected result is more capacity for serving infants and toddlers. The maximum age of a child who may be served with earmarked funds is 23 months.

Resource and referral services:

The Department has transitioned from a regional referral to a centralized referral database, New Mexico Kids Child Care Resource and Referral. New Mexico Kids CCR&R is a statewide service dedicated to helping families find child care, supporting families as decision makers, and offering technical support related to children and childcare to families and child care providers. New Mexico Kids CCR&R maintains a statewide database of child care providers that are licensed or registered by the state of New Mexico. Child care providers share the information that is included in the database and that information is used to help refer families to providers that might meet the needs of their children. Child care providers and their information appear on this list on a voluntary basis. Further information on resource and referral services can be found on the internet at <http://www.newmexicokids.org>.

The TTAPs work in conjunction with Child Care Assistance workers to conduct provider orientations with new child care providers throughout the state. The training and technical assistance programs offer trainings to providers statewide in both English and Spanish including a 45-Hour Entry Level Course. They also carry out the Department's AIM HIGH project as described above and provide technical assistance upon request. The expected results of this activity include: resource and referral services for families and technical support related to children and child care for families and child care providers.

School-age child care:

Quality earmarks for school-age child care fund the higher reimbursement rates that are paid for this age group. These higher rates are justified by an increased training requirement for serving this age group as well as the increasing parental need for this type of care. The expected result is an increase in provider capacity for serving school-age children.

- 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) during the 1-year period: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008:

\$1,401,195 (4%)

- 5.1.3 **Check** each activity 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))

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FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

Activity	Check if undertaking/will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if this entity is a non-governmental entity?
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to promote inclusive child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that increase parental choice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other activities that improve the quality of child care (describe below).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Check if undertaking/will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if this entity is a non-governmental entity?
Other activities that improve the availability of child care (describe below).	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
(\$98.51(a)(1) and (2))			

5.1.4 For each activity checked, **describe** the expected results of the activity. If you have conducted an evaluation of this activity, **describe the results**. If you have not conducted an evaluation, **describe** how you will evaluate the activities.

Comprehensive Consumer Education

Consumer education is provided through a variety of venues. The New Mexico Kids Child Care Resource and Referral service and the TTAPs routinely provide information to the general public and to parents seeking child care information on how to choose quality child care. In addition, the Child Care Assistance workers provide information on choosing quality child care as well as referrals to the TTAPs for more extensive information. The “Parents’ Guide to Selecting Quality Child Care” is distributed to parents through child care assistance offices throughout the state and contains information on child care options, choosing quality child care, immunizations, literacy, as well as state and local resources. The TTAPs and the local Child Care Assistance offices work together to conduct provider orientations to new providers. The Child Care Assistance supervisors and workers also meet regularly with community partners such as the TANF workers, the New Mexico Works contractors, Department of Labor representatives, the local TTAPs and Food Program Sponsors to provide ongoing consultation and information on child care assistance issues. Each TTAP program is also required to have a community outreach plan for providing consumer education regarding quality child care issues. New Mexico’s Look for the Stars quality rating system follows the essential elements included in AIM HIGH and is a quality rating system for licensed homes and centers. The Department has seen a steady increase in the number of child care providers meeting these higher quality levels; this increase can be partially attributed to parents’ education about this quality rating system through various media sources. In addition, the newmexicokids.org website contains consumer education information on child care. Expected results include a better informed public on child care issues as well as improved working relationships among local entities involved in child care issues.

Grants or Loans to Providers

Through the AIM HIGH Quality Initiative, which is administered for CYFD by the

TTAPs, child care providers may receive financial assistance for specific needs that are identified through the TTAP assessment process, which includes use of appropriate Environmental Assessments for programs aspiring to achieve higher levels of quality.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® project provides scholarships to child care workers in homes and centers who qualify and are willing to meet the eligibility criteria. Between the summer of 2006 and the spring of 2007, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® project had 180 scholars. The expected result is a better-trained and qualified child care workforce.

Additionally, the Child Care Facility Revolving Loan Fund, created in conjunction with the New Mexico Finance Authority, offers low interest loans to licensed child care providers for infrastructure improvements based on their individualized needs for enhancing the quality of their programs. Funding priority is given, in part, to facilities that intend to use the funds to reach levels 3, 4, and 5 of the Department's Stars Quality Rating System.

Monitoring of Compliance

CYFD Child Care Licensing staff regulate and monitor licensed child care centers and homes for compliance with the Child Care Licensing Regulations and the Background Checks and Employment History Verification Regulations. Licensed facilities are surveyed annually with follow up visits as needed. In addition, child care licensing staff investigate complaints on licensed facilities as well as any entities operating illegally. CYFD has hired private contractors to conduct complaint investigations in order to ensure that all complaints are investigated in a timely manner based on the Child Care Licensing Complaint Protocol.

Registered homes, which may serve up to four (4) non-resident children, are regulated by the Family Nutrition Bureau and the Child Care Services Bureau under the Regulations Governing Registration of Non-Licensed Family Child Care Homes. Registered homes are required to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which entails four visits a year by Food Monitors. Those homes that are exempt from participating in the program are visited twice per year by the CACFP food monitors: the first visit is to renew their registration, and the second visit focuses on child care issues.

Family home care providers who wish to become registered must receive a background check clearance before they can become registered. All child care providers are screened through the Department's Protective Services Division database to ensure that they have no substantiated cases of abuse or neglect. The Department also conducts a Criminal Records Checks using the state and federal database on all providers to screen for disqualifying convictions. In addition, all adults residing in the provider's home must undergo a Criminal Records Check (if caring for non-relative children) or a Protective Services Division screening (if caring for relative children only).

The expected result of improved monitoring of compliance is higher quality and safety in the child care environments.

Professional Development

These activities are discussed in detail in Section 5.2.2. Professional development activities are expected to result in a better-qualified child care workforce, resulting in improved quality child care.

In addition, CYFD is coordinating efforts with New Mexico State University in the implementation of the In Home Infant Child Care Program. The program provides a mechanism for families to stay at home and care for their infant while increasing skills/education in parenting and early childhood development. Parents enrolled in the program participate in the 45-hour course, which provides instruction on early childhood development. Parents are expected to acquire increased understanding of the provision of developmentally appropriate child care, as well as a more thorough understanding of the natural development of their infant.

Improving Salaries and Other Compensation for Child Care Providers

In order to take full advantage of the quality initiatives and professional development investments that have been made, the establishment of a scholarship/compensation initiative has been prioritized and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project has been established. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project is a trademarked initiative that was first established in North Carolina that is now recognized as a national model and is expected to be replicated in at least 26 states within the next five years.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® provides scholarships and other funds such as reimbursement for books and a stipend for mileage to individuals working in participating child-care programs if they are taking coursework leading toward state certification. The participating program (employer) agrees to support the individual by providing release time and a token increase in compensation or bonus each year when the employee has successfully completed a specified amount of coursework. The employee, in return, must agree to continue working in that center for a designated period of time. A formal agreement is signed between the participating program, the employee-participant, and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program explicitly outlining each party's responsibility. Again, the expected result is a better trained child care workforce.

In addition, New Mexico's Look for the Stars program, a 5-level quality rating system for licensed homes and centers, was created. In order to receive child care assistance funds, all licensed programs must be operating at level 1 (basic licensure). Reimbursement rates increase incrementally beginning at level 2 and continuing through level 5 (accreditation). As of August 31, 2006 these reimbursement rates increased by \$20 per Star level as follows: 2-Star at \$45.00 per month per child for full time care above the base reimbursement rate; 3-Star at \$70.00 per month per child for full time care above the base reimbursement rate; 4-Star at \$95.00 per month per child for full time care above the base reimbursement rate; and 5-Star (accredited) at \$120.00 per child per month for full time care above the base reimbursement rate.

Activities in Support of Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Development

These activities are described under Sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3.

Activities to Promote Inclusive Child Care

The Children, Youth and Families Department funded a task force to develop recommendations for inclusive child care. The recommendations range from no cost/low cost to increased support for the training and technical assistance system. In addition, a plan was created for differentiated rates.

The Department received an appropriation in the 2007 legislative session for Inclusive Child Care Specialists to work through the Training and Technical Assistance Programs as well as money to go toward a special needs differential.

Healthy Child Care America and Other Health Activities

Health activities include trainings given by CYFD employees at the Regional Early Care and Education Conference (RECEC) (the primary audience at RECEC consists of registered home child care providers), Head Start conferences, and the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children (NMAEYC) conferences. The Lead Agency is also involved in New Mexico Action for Healthy Kids, New Mexico on the Move (promoting physical activity in families), New Mexico Partnerships for Nutrition (focused on nutrition needs of children with special needs), the school health Head to Toe steering committee, and the New Mexico Summer Food Service Program.

Other Quality Activities That Increase Parental Choice, and Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care

The Department provides support for conferences sponsored by child care associations, both public and private. CYFD will continue to provide this type of support with the expected results of building on public/private partnerships and expanding the statewide knowledge and expertise in quality child care. CYFD partners with food CACFP sponsoring agencies and Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs) through the Regional Early Childhood Education Conferences (RECEC), to offer training on quality childcare as well as health, safety, and developmental issues to child care providers.

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 Early Learning Guidelines.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop, implement, or revise research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) for three to five year-olds. **NOTE: Check only one box to best describe the status of your State's three-to-five-year-old guidelines.**

- 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: **July 1, 2008; The state is currently developing Early Learning Outcomes for Three-Year-Olds based upon the Early Learning Outcomes already being implemented.**
- 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 5.2.1.**
- 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 5.2.1.**
- Revising.** The State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in developing, implementing, or revising early learning guidelines since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

The Department has used an inclusive process for developing the State's first version of the early learning guidelines. These are the Early Learning Outcomes for Pre-Kindergarten (These are defined as, "What children should know, be able to do, and the dispositions they should have in order to be successful when entering kindergarten"). CYFD established a standing committee of the Child Development Board to create a detailed plan for

implementation of universal access to pre-kindergarten programs. This was done after the original plan to promote alignment across the four primary systems of early care and education, Head Start, early intervention, state-funded early care and education programs and public school programs was presented to the Legislative Education Study Committee. A new governor, administration and our legislative bodies determined that an initial focus on four-year olds should be the first step in system alignment. This Standing Committee created several ad hoc task forces to accomplish the components of New Mexico’s Early Learning Plan. This state plan has several components:

- **Learning Outcomes:** what children need to know and be able to do in order to be successful when entering Kindergarten.
- **Program Standards:** New Mexico standards for programs serving four-year-olds, based on research/best practices in order for children to achieve expected learning outcomes.
- **Capacity Standards:** Research and analysis of the current workforce capacity and program/system capacity against those required to implement a system of universal access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs for all four-year-olds in New Mexico, based on public-private partnerships.

The resulting plan was approved by the New Mexico Child Development Board on August 30, 2004. New Mexico’s Early Learning Plan was adopted and modified by the Secretaries of Education and CYFD in collaboration with the Governor’s and Lieutenant Governor’s office to be the framework for a Pre-K initiative in New Mexico. This initiative was funded in the amount of \$5,000,000 by the 2005 State Legislature to begin providing pre-school programs in the communities of the State with the highest percentages of the Title I children and the largest percentages of children not meeting adequate and yearly progress in reading and mathematics. This year’s legislature allocated a total of \$17,000,000 and a call for programs is currently underway.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards or other standards (e.g., Head Start Child Outcomes, State Performance Standards)?

Yes. If yes, name standards.
“Best Practices: Essential Elements of Quality.” In addition, the Office of Child Development has been using “Focused Portfolios”®.

No.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with early childhood curricula?

Yes. If yes, describe.

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.1, Early Learning Outcomes.

The Public Education Department has established standards for kindergarten. There are also standards and benchmarks for 3 to 4 year old children published by the Early Childhood Network at the University of New Mexico. The Office of Child Development has published “Best Practices: Essential Elements of Quality.” In addition, the Office of Child Development and the PreK Program have been using “Focused Portfolios”® as an assessment methodology for tracking children’s developmental progress based on the Early Learning Outcomes. All of the products described above are either child outcome standards, research based on current knowledge of child development, and/or follow closely the nationally accepted benchmarks of child development in all the typical domains of social, physical, emotional, fine-motor, and cognitive development.

The Head Start Collaboration Office within the Children, Youth and Families Department serves as the primary convener with other agencies and interested parties regarding the alignment of early care and education programs funded through various departments of state and federal government. As indicated above, the decision was made to focus on programs for four-year-olds initially. The plan is to continue to work toward alignment of all programs serving young children ages birth to five. The result is the development and implementation of early learning guidelines for children in all types of early care and education programs. The guidelines link to kindergarten standards for children and are designed to improve the school readiness of all New Mexico children birth through eight. In this regard, CYFD is also committed to the alignment of program standards across all early care and education programs, including child care programs, to create a seamless continuum of quality early care and education programs statewide. This requires working cooperatively with federal and state agencies to establish interrelated rules and overarching systems of accountability. CYFD, as an active participant on the Children’s Cabinet within the Governor’s Office, recommends policy, rules, and criteria for the improvement and integration of early care and education programs. CYFD itself promulgates policies and rules to support the development of quality early care and education programs while working with other state agencies to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of preschool program criteria.

No.

Have guidelines been developed for children in the following age groups (check if guidelines have been developed):

- Birth to three. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1
- Birth to five. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1 (**guidelines are developed for age 4**)
- Five years or older. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1

Efforts to develop early learning guidelines for children that may differ from those addressed in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (i.e., children birth to three or older than five) may be described here.

If any of your guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (guidelines must still be attached to Plan):

<https://www.newmexicoprek.org/?pageID=35&path=/File/PreK/PreK%20Materials/>

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

Yes

No.

Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-years-old 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.**

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.1, Early Learning Outcomes. The guidelines address the domains included in the K-12 Content Standards (Physical Education and Health Education, Language Arts, Mathematics, Arts, Science, and Social Studies) through the following Pre-Kindergarten Learning Outcome Clusters: Health and Well-Being, Literacy, Numeracy, Aesthetic/Creativity, Scientific Conceptual Understandings, Self, Family and Community, and Approaches to Learning.

No.

5.2.3 **Implementation of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** Indicate the strategies the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines.

Check all that apply:

Disseminating materials to practitioners and families

Developing training curricula

Partnering with other training entities to deliver training

Aligning early learning guidelines with licensing, core competencies, and/or quality rating systems

Other. Please describe: **Multilingual materials for parents based on the Early Learning Outcomes are being developed.**

Indicate the stakeholders that are (or expect to be) actively supporting the implementation of early learning guidelines.	Indicate the programs that mandate or require the use of early learning guidelines.
--	--

	<input type="checkbox"/> Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Head Start	<input type="checkbox"/> Head Start
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe:

How are (or will) cultural, linguistic and individual variations (be) acknowledged in implementation?

Focus groups have been and will continue to be utilized to ensure cultural, linguistic and individual appropriateness.

How are (or will) the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation?

Use of the Early Learning Outcomes within child care setting is currently voluntary. However, because of the involvement of individuals from so many diverse settings, the Early Learning Outcomes themselves are considered to be universally appropriate.

Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.3**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address:

<https://www.newmexicoprek.org/?pageID=35&path=/File/PreK/PreK%20Materials/>

- 5.2.4 **Assessment of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** As applicable, **describe** the State's plan for:
- (a) Validating the content of the early learning guidelines
 - (b) Assessing the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines
 - (c) Assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines
 - (d) Aligning the guidelines with accountability initiatives

A pre-kindergarten Early Learning Outcome Report Form (Attachment 5.2.3) is available that staff may use to indicate each child's level on selected indicators from each area of the learning outcomes. Teachers will observe children and rate the indicators as either not

present, emerging, or established. Additionally, a focused portfolio observation documentation process based on selected Early Learning Outcomes will be used. In addition, a task force appointed by the Public Education Department and the Children, Youth and Families Department has reviewed existing assessment instruments for this age group to determine if more appropriate, broader, yet still cost-effective measures can be identified to use for aggregating child outcome data based on the Early Learning Outcomes

Written reports of these efforts are included as **Attachment 5.2.4**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (reports must still be attached to Plan): **A written Policy Brief regarding Assessment can be found at** <https://www.newmexicoprek.org/?pageID=35&path=/File/PreK/PreK%20Materials/>

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. **NOTE: Check ONLY ONE box to best describe the status of your State's professional development plan.**

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the entities involved in the planning process, 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 or planning documents are included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented, or has been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5**
- Revising.** The State previously developed a professional development plan and is now revising that plan, or has revised it since submitting the 06-07 State Plan. The revisions or the revised plan are included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.
- Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in planning, developing, implementing, or revising the professional development plan since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5 (“Common Core Content and Areas of Specialization”). The Lead Agency has had a professional development plan, called New Mexico’s Career Lattice, in place for many years. The plan consists of seven competency areas: Child Growth, Development and Learning; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Family and Community Collaboration; Developmentally Appropriate Content; Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation; Assessment of Children and Evaluation of Programs; and Professionalism. New Mexico’s Career Lattice is available to Child care providers, early intervention personnel, family advocates, Head Start personnel and staff hired by the new Pre-K initiative. Some of the participants are accessing the career lattice through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program, which offers scholarships to early childhood educators.

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include (Check EITHER yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
Specific goals or desired outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 – 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"/>

Specific goals or desired Outcomes

A Five-Year Plan for the Professional Development of Early Care and Education Professionals has been approved by the Child Development Board and is attached (please see attachment 5.2.5a).

A link to Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-Kindergarten Learning Outcomes)

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5, pages 9 – 85. The Common Core Content includes the following categories: Child Growth, Development, and Learning; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Family and Community Collaboration; Curriculum Development and Implementation; Assessment of Children and Evaluation of Programs; and Professionalism. These categories align with the Pre-Kindergarten Learning Outcomes, which include Health and Well-Being, Literacy, Numeracy, Aesthetic/Creativity, Scientific Conceptual Understandings, and Self, Family and Community.

Continuum of training and education to form a career path

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5, pages 1 – 3. The New Mexico Early Care, Education and Family Support Career Lattice was established with the intention of creating a vision of a trellis that provides multiple pathways for growth and development. Individuals can move horizontally, vertically and/or diagonally within a single system or across systems as positions become available and/or as professional preparation enables them to seek and move into positions with more responsibility and increased compensation. The levels of the career lattice are as follows:

- 45-Hour Entry Level Course
- Child Development Associate (CDA)
- Certificate
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree

Articulation from one type of training to the next:

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5, pages 1 – 3. The career lattice is designed so that each level fully articulates with the next level. That is, a CDA counts toward work for the certificate; a certificate constitutes the equivalent of the first year of work toward an associate degree; and an associate degree transfers to any early childhood program at four-year institutions as the first two years of work toward a bachelor's degree. The Higher Education Early Childhood Task Force, a standing task force of the Child Development Board and the Office of Child Development, is continuing work to develop a common catalogue of coursework with common course titles and content for all institutions of higher education in the state, which will set the stage for a universal system of credit for prior learning/prior learning assessment.

A system to track practitioner's training

A computerized tracking system has been piloted and will be implemented state-wide by all TTAP's this year utilizing identification cards with unique bar codes.

Assessment or Evaluation of Training Effectiveness

A newly established Training and Technical Assistance Network has been established and is funded the coordinate the TTAP infrastructure. Within their contractual responsibilities is the establishment of performance measures and the assessment of the effectiveness of training provided by the eight TTAP's

Quality Assurance through approval of trainers:

Trainer approval is a function of the 8 Training and Technical Assistance Programs (TTAPs). Each trainer seeking approval contacts the local TTAP and is guided through the trainer approval process on the newmexicokids.org website.

State Credentials:

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5, pages 2 – 4.

State-issued certificates issued by the Office of Child Development include: 18-Hour Course Certificate for family, friend and neighbor caregivers. 45-Hour Course for any individual beginning the work with young children. This or the equivalent is required for individuals in a licensed child care setting.

One-Year Vocational Certificate

Associate Degree Certificate

Family, Infant Toddler Certificate

Early Childhood Program Administrator's Certificate

The Public Education Department issues the Early Childhood Teacher License: Birth through Grade Three.

Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers:

The Career Lattice does not address this population specifically, however this population can access the system. In addition, the 18-Hour Course and local Regional Early Care and Education Conferences (RECEC) are geared specifically toward home child care providers. The 18-hour course has been piloted in Dona Ana county and will be required of all new registered home providers beginning in July, 2006. The course consists of 9 modules, each geared specifically toward family home child care providers and consisting of information on child development, families and communities, learning environments, health and safety, business practices, social-emotional development, discipline, language, literacy, and numeracy.

For each **No** response, **indicate** any plans the Lead Agency has to incorporate these components.

Quality assurance through approval of training content:

CYFD currently approves the trainers based on their education and experience. However, CYFD does not currently have the financial capability to approve training content.

Are the professional development opportunities described in the plan available:

Note: Check either yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Please refer to Attachment 5.2.5 (“Common Core Content and Areas of Specialization”). The Common Core Content describes the minimum expected level of competence for individuals that exit preparation programs at each level of the career lattice. In other words, it describes what all early childhood professionals must know and be able to do when they complete the entry level, the certificate/associate degree level, bachelor’s and master’s level. At each level, content is based on the same set of competencies but the indicators of competence represent increasing depth and breadth at each ascending level. All institutions of higher education in the State of New Mexico include the common core content in their coursework, thereby guaranteeing each student’s level of competence when exiting the program, regardless of the particular institution. Higher education faculty in the state have also designed a universal catalogue of courses at the associate degree and bachelor’s degree levels with common course syllabi, common course titles, and common course numbering. Based upon this universal catalogue of courses, a statewide system of credit for prior learning and on-line courses have been implemented.

The following areas address early language, etc. concepts: Child Growth, Development and Learning and Curriculum Development and Implementation. It is expected that participants in the Lattice will learn and be able to implement the competencies outlined in these sections of the plan (see Attachment 5.2.5, pages 9 – 21; pages 41 – 49).

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.

Program and provider level incentives are offered in a number of ways to encourage provider training and education. The Department pays a higher differential rate to providers who are nationally accredited. In addition, participation in New Mexico’s Look

for the Stars program, a 5-level quality rating system for licensed homes and centers, allows for higher reimbursement rates to providers. Reimbursement rates increase incrementally beginning at level 2 and continuing through level 5 (accreditation) Part of obtaining the higher levels of the Stars program involves becoming more knowledgeable about ways to support children’s development of pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills.

- No. If no, **describe** any plans to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts?

As applicable, does the State assess the effectiveness of its professional development plan, including the achievement of any specified goals or desired outcomes?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** how the professional development plan’s effectiveness/goal is assessed.

- No. **Describe** any plans to include assessments of the professional development plan’s effectiveness/goal achievement.

The expected outcomes of the State’s professional development plan are:

- **To improve the skills of early care and education professionals;**
- **To improve the quality of early care and education programs across the various child care settings;**
- **To ensure that children begin kindergarten with the knowledge, skills and abilities in literacy, language, pre-reading and numeracy to succeed; and**
- **To increase the number of early childhood professionals obtaining AA and BA degrees.**

The Department, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force will develop assessment methodologies to determine if the professional development plan is contributing to the above listed outcomes.

Does the State assess the effectiveness of specific professional development initiatives or components?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** how specific professional development initiatives or components’ effectiveness is assessed.

- No. **Describe** any plans to include assessments of specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness.

The Department recently initiated an individualized training program for licensed providers that is offered through the TTAPs, called "Train High." The Department will develop an evaluation process to assess the effectiveness of the training as well as the services provided to the children.

As applicable, does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape or revise its professional development plan?

- Yes. **Describe** how assessment informs the professional development plan.

The Department initiated an informal assessment of the professional development plan, involving various sectors of the early childhood community. This assessment brought to light the gaps in the plan and identified five areas that needed to be strengthened: formal education/higher education, informal education/training, professional requirements, recruitment and retention and financing a professional development system.

- No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessment to inform the professional development plan.

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. Describe which center-based providers are exempt from licensing under State law and 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:

See Attachment 6.1, Child Care Licensing Regulations 8.16.2.22(B)(2)(b):

Substitutes are exempt from the requirement to take the 45-Hour Entry Level Course.

- No.

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 immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

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

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. Describe which group home providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

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.

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)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

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. Describe which family child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

Non-licensed family child care providers are required to register through one of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsors. They are also required to meet and maintain compliance with the registration regulations (see Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes) in order to receive payment for child care services.

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:

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2.

Training – Section 8.17.2.9 G – Primary caregivers are required to attend first aid training during their first year of registration. The 18-hour course that was previously required is now a recommendation.

No.

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)

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Sections 8.17.2.7 Definitions Part G Notifiable Diseases and Section 8.17.2.23.H - requiring that immunization records show current, age-appropriate immunizations for each child.

- Building and physical premises safety

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Section 8.17.2.21 A-W .

- Health and safety training

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Section 8.17.2.9E-H G, H and I.

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. Describe which in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

All in-home providers are exempt from licensing but must be registered through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Section 8.17.2.8 and Section 8.17.2.7E.

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:

In-home providers must follow all health and safety regulations in Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2. In-home providers, though, are exempt from participating in the CACFP. Training – Section 8.17.2.9 G – Primary caregivers are required to attend first aid training during their first year of registration. The 18-hour course that was previously required is currently a recommendation.

- 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)

See Attachment 3.1.1, Child Care Assistance Regulations 8.15.2.13.E.

In addition, CYFD requires parents to provide an immunization record for all children under the age of 13 that will be cared for in the home.

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Sections 8.17.2.7 Definitions Part G Notifiable Diseases and Section 8.17.2.23.H - requiring that immunization records show current, age-appropriate immunizations for each child.

- Building and physical premises safety

CYFD requires parents to complete a self-certification Home Safety Checklist, which includes requiring a fire extinguisher and an operational smoke detector. The parent must certify that the home meets minimum health and safety standards.

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Section 8.17.2.21 A-W.

- Health and safety training

Written and oral information is provided to the parents at the time of the certification for in-home child care services. Parents are instructed on child development, health and safety, nutrition and other issues related to caring for children. They are also encouraged to attend conferences and other training opportunities in their local area to receive additional information on child development, health and safety.

See Attachment 6.3, Regulations Governing Registration of Non-licensed Family Child Care Homes 8.17.2, Section 8.17.2.9E-H G, H and I.

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:

- 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:

All licensed and registered child care providers are subject to unannounced visits. Licensed providers are inspected at least once annually. Registered home providers are visited four times per year if participating in the food program, and twice a year if non-participating.

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):

Licensed child care owners, operators, employees, staff, providers and other adults over age 18 in the home are subject to a state and federal criminal background check. In addition, these same individuals are subject to a child protective services screening to determine any substantiated cases of abuse and neglect. Registered providers and any adults over the age of 18 in the home are subject to the same criminal records and child protective services screening.

No.

- 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):

See Attachment 6.1, Child Care Licensing Regulations 8.16.2, Sections 20.C, 30.C and 40.C.

No.

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

In addition to regular licensing survey visits and registered home site visits, CYFD investigates all complaints received on licensed and registered homes. CYFD has a complaint protocol with specific timeframes for initiation of a complaint investigation of a licensed and registered child care facility. The Department has hired private investigators to conduct complaint investigations to ensure timely and thorough investigations are completed.

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.

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))

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

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:

- 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:

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

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:

- 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:

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. If yes, **indicate** which providers are subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:

No.

Are child care providers subject to background checks?

Yes. If yes, **indicate** which types of providers are subject to background checks and 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. If yes, **describe** the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

No.

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))

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. 109-149)

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))

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- (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) - **being physically present and actively participating in a job training or educational program.**
- *in loco parentis* – **Any blood relative with custody (whether or not court ordered) or any other court ordered custody.**
- *job training and educational program* - **participation in a short or long term educational or training program which provides specific job skills which allow the participant to enter the workforce and/or directly relate to enhancing job skills, including but not limited to the acquisition of a General Equivalency Diploma (GED), English as a second language, Literacy training, vocational education training, secondary education including Adult Basic Education and accredited high school programs, and Post Secondary Institutions.**
- *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) - **Special Supervision: Child care benefits may be provided to children between the ages of thirteen and eighteen who are under the supervision of a court of law, or who are determined by a medical professional to require supervision because of a diagnosis of a physical, emotional, or neurobiological impairment, or who are physically or mentally incapable of caring for themselves. Children with special needs are prioritized relative to budget availability.**
- *protective services* - **child care services for children placed in the custody of the Protective Services Division of the Department.**
- *residing with* - **living in a household which provides shelter and care to a child during the non-working hours of the child’s parent or guardian.**
- *special needs child* - **a child with a medically documented condition, which results in physical or mental incapacity requiring care and supervision by an adult.**
- *very low income* - **income at or below 100% of the federal poverty level.**
- *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) - **employment of any type, including self-employment. For TANF recipients, this includes work experience and/or community service or any other activity that meets the TANF work activity requirements.**
- Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:

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