

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan For Tennessee FFY 2019-2021

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems

This section identifies the leadership for the CCDF program in each Lead Agency and the entities and individuals who will participate in the implementation of the program. It also identifies the stakeholders that were consulted to develop the Plan and who the Lead Agency collaborates with to implement services. In this section respondents are asked to identify how match and maintenance-of-effort (MOE) funds are identified. Lead Agencies explain their coordination with child care resource and referral (CCR&R) systems, and outline the work they have done on their disaster preparedness and response plans.

1.1 CCDF Leadership

The Governor of a State or Territory shall designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint inter-agency office, 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(c)(1)). Note: An amendment to the CCDF State Plan is required if the Lead Agency changes or if the Lead Agency official changes.

1.1.1 Which Lead Agency is designated to administer the CCDF program?

Identify the Lead Agency or joint interagency office designated by the state or territory. ACF will send official grant correspondence, such as grant awards, grant adjustments, Plan approvals, and disallowance notifications, to the designated contact identified here (658D(a)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Office Information:

Name of Lead Agency: Tennessee Department of Human Services

Street Address: 400 Deaderick Street

City: Nashville

State: Tennessee

ZIP Code: 37248

Web Address for Lead Agency: <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices.html>

b) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Official Contact Information:

Lead Agency Official First Name: Danielle

Lead Agency Official Last Name: Barnes

Title: Commissioner

Phone Number: 615-313-4700

Email Address: Danielle.W.Barnes@tn.gov

1.1.2 Who is the CCDF Administrator?

Identify the CCDF Administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, or the person with responsibility for administering the state's or territory's CCDF program. ACF will send programmatic communications, such as program announcements, program instructions, and data collection instructions, to the designated contact identified here. If there is more than one designated contact with equal or shared responsibility for administering the CCDF program, please identify the Co-Administrator or the person with administrative responsibilities and include his or her contact information.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) CCDF Administrator Contact Information:

CCDF Administrator First Name: Jude

CCDF Administrator Last Name: White

Title of the CCDF Administrator: Assistant Commissioner for Child Care and Community Services

Phone Number: 615-837-5092

Email Address: Jude.White@tn.gov

Address for the CCDF Administrator (if different from the Lead Agency):

Street Address: 400 Deaderick Street

City: Nashville

State: Tennessee

ZIP Code: 37248

b) CCDF Co-Administrator Contact Information (if applicable):

CCDF Co-Administrator First Name: Gwen

CCDF Co-Administrator Last Name: Laaser

Title of the CCDF Co-Administrator: Director of Child Care Certificate Program

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator: The Co-Administrator is the Director of the Child Care Certificate Program

Phone Number: 615-313-3893

Email Address: Gwen.Laaser@tn.gov

Address for the CCDF Co-Administrator (if different from the Lead Agency):

Street Address: 400 Deaderick Street

City: Nashville

State: Tennessee

ZIP Code: 37248

1.2 CCDF Policy Decision Authority

The Lead Agency has broad authority to administer (i.e., establish rules) and operate (i.e., implement activities) the CCDF program through other governmental, non-governmental, or public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program (658D(b)). Administrative and implementation responsibilities undertaken by agencies other than the Lead Agency must be governed by written agreements that specify the mutual roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and other agencies in meeting the program requirements.

1.2.1 Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are administered (i.e., set or established) at the state or territory level or local level? Identify whether CCDF program rules and policies are established by the state or territory (even if operated locally) or whether the CCDF policies or rules are established by local entities, such as counties or workforce boards (98.16(i)(3)). Check one.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- All program rules and policies are set or established at the state or territory level. If checked, skip to question 1.2.2.
- Some or all program rules and policies are set or established by local entities. If checked, indicate which entities establish the following policies. Check all that apply.

1. Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:

- State or territory
- Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.

- Other.

Describe:

2. Sliding-fee scale is set by the:

State or territory

Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.

Other.

Describe:

3. Payment rates are set by the:

State or territory

Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of eligibility policies the local entity(ies) can set.

Other.

Describe:

4. Other. List and describe other program rules and policies and describe (e.g., quality rating and improvement systems [QRIS], payment practices):

1.2.2 How is the CCDF program operated? In other words, which entity(ies) implement or perform these CCDF services? Check all that apply

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Who conducts eligibility determinations?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agency
- Other state or territory agency
- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Other.

Describe

b) Who assists parents in locating child care (consumer education)?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Other state or territory agency
- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Other.

Describe

c) Who issues payments?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Other state or territory agency
- Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Other.

Describe

1.2.3 Describe the processes the Lead Agency uses to monitor CCDF administration and implementation responsibilities performed by other agencies as reported above in 1.2.2, including written agreements, monitoring and auditing procedures, and indicators or measures to assess performance of those agencies (98.16(b)). Note : The contents of the written agreement may vary based on the role the agency is asked to assume or type of project, but must include at a minimum, tasks to be performed, schedule for completing tasks, budget which itemizes categorical expenditures in accordance with CCDF requirements, and indicators or measures to assess performance (98.11(a)(3)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

The following items represent processes, procedures, and indicators that are used to monitor administrative and implementation responsibilities performed by other agencies:

- o Memoranda of Understanding;
- o Contract with partners and agencies;
- o Monitoring by the Lead Agency of partner agencies providing training and technical assistance to providers;

An MOU is maintained with the Department of Education to facilitate collaboration on variety of early education initiatives that include but are not limited to provision of child care services and voluntary pre-K.

An MOU is maintained with the Department of Children's Services to facilitate child care for children in state custody or protective services.

Contracts are maintained with the following:

Department of Commerce & Insurance - to conduct fire inspections of child care facilities.

Department of Health - to conduct general environmental, food service, and immunization inspections.

Child Care Resource and Referral - to provide training and technical assistance for child care agency staff

Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance - to provide professional development opportunities for child care agency staff

Tennessee Social Work Office of Research and Public Service - to support child care assessment program training and quality assurance

The Lead Agency conducts at least one site visit annually to partner agencies that provide

training and technical assistance and conducts quarterly partner meetings. In addition, the Lead Agency also conducts monthly reviews of expenditure reports and desk reviews of quarterly activity reports.

1.2.4 Lead Agencies must assure that, to the extent practicable and appropriate, any code or software for child care information systems or information technology for which a Lead Agency or other agency expends CCDF funds to develop must be made available on request to other public agencies, including public agencies in other States, for their use in administering child care or related programs (98.15(a)(11)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Assure by describing how the Lead Agency makes child care information systems available to public agencies in other states to the extent practicable and appropriate.

The Lead Agency would follow federal guidelines for including language in RFPs that support system transferability and address intellectual property rights to comply with the provisions of 98.15 (a) (11).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.2.5 Lead Agencies must have in effect policies to govern the use and disclosure of confidential and personally identifiable information about children and families receiving CCDF assistance and child care providers receiving CCDF funds (98.15(b)(13)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Certify by describing the Lead Agency's policies related to the use and disclosure of confidential and personally identifiable information.

The Lead Agency works with the Office of General Counsel and the State of Tennessee Central Procurement Office on rules prohibiting disclosure of information that is:

- Protected as confidential or privileged pursuant to any state or federal law, regulation, court order or court rule; or
- Protected as privileged under any statutory or common law privilege; or
- Protected as any attorney work product; or
- Protected by the attorney/client or any other professional privilege; or
- Reasonably expected by its disclosure to reveal the name or location of a source that is protected by state or federal law or regulation as part of any statutory or regulatory requirements for reporting of abuse, neglect or harm, or that is protected by state or federal law or regulation as part of any statutory or regulatory requirement for the purpose of protecting any person from the threat of domestic violence.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.3 Consultation in the Development of the CCDF Plan

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing the CCDF plan, which serves as the application for a 3-year implementation period. As part of the Plan development process, Lead Agencies must consult with the following:

(1) Appropriate representatives of units of general purpose local government-(658D(b)(2); 98.10(c); 98.12(b); 98.14(b)). General purpose local governments are defined by the U.S. Census at https://www.census.gov/newsroom/cspan/govts/20120301_cspan_govts_def_3.pdf.

(2) The State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act) (658E(c)(2)(R); 98.15(b)(1)) or similar coordinating body pursuant to 98.14(a)(1)(vii).

(3) Indian tribe(s) or tribal organization(s) within the state. This consultation should be done in a timely manner and at the option of the Indian tribe(s) or tribal organization(s) (658D(b)(1)(E)).

Consultation

involves meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the

development of the state or territory CCDF Plan. Describe the partners engaged to provide services under the CCDF program in question 1.4.1.

1.3.1 Describe the Lead Agency's consultation in the development of the CCDF plan.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with appropriate representatives of general purpose local governments.

The Lead Agency facilitated eight (8) public focus group sessions statewide where a variety of local stakeholders including parents, local government representatives, child care agencies and providers, and Child Care Resource and Referral and other community partners, were presented with information and engaged by the director of child care services.

b) Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body.

The Lead Agency's director of child care services presented the proposed plan and consulted with the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council (TYCWC). Members from the TYCWC participated in the statewide Focus Groups. The director of child care services is the TYCWC representative from the Lead Agency and participates as an active member of the council.

c) Describe, if applicable, how the Lead Agency consulted with Indian tribes(s) or tribal organizations(s) within the state. Note: The CCDF regulations recognize the need for States to conduct formal, structured consultation with Tribal governments, including Tribal leadership. Many States and Tribes have consultation policies and procedures in place.

Not Applicable

d) Describe any other entities, agencies, or organizations consulted on the development of the CCDF plan.

Lead Agency staff consulted with stakeholders that included early care and educators, Child Care Resource & Referral, higher education, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Mental Health, Department of Children's Services, state and

local child care associations, Child Care Certificate staff, families and the general public.

1.3.2 Describe the statewide or territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan (658D(b)(1)(C); 98.16(f)).

Reminder:

Lead Agencies are required to hold at least one public hearing in the state or territory, with sufficient statewide or territory-wide distribution of notice prior to such a hearing to enable the public to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF Plan. At a minimum, this description must include:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Date of the public hearing. 06/07/2018

Reminder: Must be no earlier than January 1, 2018, which is 9 months prior to the October 1, 2018, effective date of the Plan. If more than one public hearing was held, please enter one date (e.g. the date of the first hearing, the most recent hearing or any hearing date that demonstrates this requirement).

b) Date of notice of public hearing (date for the notice of public hearing identified in (a)). 05/17/2018

Reminder: Must be at least 20 calendar days prior to the date of the public hearing. If more than one public hearing was held, enter one date of notice (e.g. the date of the first notice, the most recent notice or any date of notice that demonstrates this requirement).

c) How was the public notified about the public hearing? Please include specific website links if used to provide notice.

DHS Public Information and Legislation Office posted the Public Hearing notice and media advisory sent directly to licensed child care agencies and partners via email. Media advisory distributed to news outlets statewide and posted on Lead Agency website. Links to public hearing notice:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/events/2018/6/7/proposed-child-care-and-development-fund-plan-public-hearing---knoxville.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/events/2018/6/7/proposed-child-care-and-development-fund-plan-public-hearing---knoxville.html>

[development-fund-plan-public-hearing---nashville.html](#)

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/events/2018/6/7/proposed-child-care-and-development-fund-plan-public-hearing---memphis.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/events/2018/5/17/proposed-child-care-and-development-fund-plan-public-hearings---chattanooga.html>

d) Hearing site or method, including how geographic regions of the state or territory were addressed. Hearings were held in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville, allowing for participation across the entire state.

e) How the content of the Plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing. (e.g. the Plan was made available in other languages, in multiple formats, etc.) A draft of the Plan was posted on the Lead Agency website and a link to the Plan was included in the public hearing advisory issued on May 17, 2018.

f) How was the information provided by the public taken into consideration regarding the provision of child care services under this Plan? Information collected during statewide focus group meetings and public hearings was reviewed and considered in developing the content of the plan.

1.3.3 Lead Agencies are required to make the submitted and final Plan, any Plan amendments, and any approved requests for temporary relief (i.e., waivers) publicly available on a website (98.14(d)). Please note that a Lead Agency must submit Plan amendments within 60 days of a substantial change in the Lead Agency's program. (Additional information may be found here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/pi-2009-01>)

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Provide the website link to where the Plan, any Plan amendments, and/or waivers are available. Note: A Plan amendment is required if the website address where the Plan is posted is changed.

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/information-and-resources/tdhs-reports-and->

[information.html](#)

b) Describe any other strategies that the Lead Agency uses to make the CCDF Plan and Plan amendments available to the public (98.14(d)). Check all that apply and describe the strategies below, including any relevant website links as examples.

Working with advisory committees.

Describe:

Invitations were sent to statewide community and local partners to participate in the statewide focus groups. In addition, the CCDF Plan was sent for review to the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council, which operates as the State Advisory Council, to solicit feedback into the draft Plan. Further input as regards to the development of the CCDF Plan was available via email, website, face to face meetings, and Public Hearings.

Working with child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

Invitation to participate in the statewide focus groups was extended to Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). In addition, the CCDF Plan was sent to solicit feedback from the Director of CCR&R. Further input in regards to the development of the CCDF Plan was available via email, website, face to face meetings, and Public Hearings.

Providing translation in other languages.

Describe:

Translations of the final CCDF Plan approved by the ACF will be made available in Spanish, Arabic, and Somali to increase public access to the CCDF Plan.

Sharing through social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, email).

Describe:

The CCDF Plan will be hosted at the website of the Lead Agency and may also be shared through social media, i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

Providing notification to stakeholders (e.g., provider groups, parent groups).

Describe:

The CCDF Plan will be posted on the website of the Lead Agency and child care agencies will be alerted by email to share the availability of the CCDF Plan with the families they serve.

Other.

Describe:

1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

Lead Agencies are required to describe how the state or territory will efficiently, and to the extent practicable, coordinate child care services supported by CCDF with programs operating at the federal, state/territory, and local levels for children in the programs listed below. This includes programs for the benefit of Indian children, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, children experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care (98.14(a)(1)).

1.4.1 Describe how the Lead Agency coordinates the provision of child care services with the following programs to expand accessibility and continuity of care and to assist children enrolled in early childhood programs in receiving full-day services that meet the needs of working families (658E(c)(2)(O); 98.12(a); 98.14(a)).

This list includes agencies or programs required by law or rule, along with a list of optional partners that Lead Agencies potentially would coordinate with over the next 3 years to expand accessibility and continuity of care and to assist children enrolled in early childhood programs in receiving full-day services.

Include in the descriptions the goals of this coordination, such as:

- extending the day or year of services for families;
- smoothing transitions for children between programs or as they age into school;
- enhancing and aligning the quality of services for infants and toddlers through school-age children;
- linking comprehensive services to children in child care or school age settings; or
- developing the supply of quality care for vulnerable populations (as defined by the Lead

Agency) in child care and out-of-school time settings

Check the agencies or programs the Lead Agency will coordinate with and describe all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- (REQUIRED) Appropriate representatives of the general purpose local government, which can include counties, municipalities, or townships/towns.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has representation serving on the Governor's Children's Cabinet which is charged with coordinating, streamlining, and enhancing the State's efforts to provide needed resources and services to Tennessee's children.

The Lead Agency facilitates quarterly partner agency meetings that include the Department of Health, Department of Education and the State Higher Education to coordinate statewide CCDF early care and education services. These meetings provide a platform for coordination of Quality Contracts, and assessment of current and new resources and services needed to support children's early learning and development and the implementation of the 2 Generation approach to family supports.

Through the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council the Lead Agency will seek recommendations for representatives of local government to engage in partner agency meetings.

- (REQUIRED) State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (or similar coordinating body) (pursuant to 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act).

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The director of Child Care Services is the Lead Agency representative on the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council and attends regularly occurring council meetings to coordinate statewide CCDF early care and education services. These meetings provide a platform for coordination, brainstorming, and assessment of current and new services needed to support children's early learning and development and the implementation of the 2 Generation approach to family supports.

Check here if the Lead Agency has official representation and a decision-making role in the State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body.

(REQUIRED) Indian tribe(s) and/or tribal organization(s), at the option of individual tribes.

Describe the coordination goals and process, including which tribe(s) was consulted:

N/A-There are no Indian tribes and/or tribal organizations in the State.

(REQUIRED) State/territory agency(ies) responsible for programs for children with special needs, including early intervention programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C for infants and toddlers and and Part B, Section 619 for preschool).

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency meets with representatives from the agency responsible for IDEA (Department of Education) on a regular basis. These meetings provide a platform for coordination, brainstorming, and assessment of current and new services needed to support children's early learning and development and the implementation of the 2 Generation approaches to family supports.

(REQUIRED) State/territory office/director for Head Start state collaboration.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency maintains an ongoing working relationship with the Head Start state collaboration office. Regular meetings and contacts provide a platform for coordination, brainstorming, and assessment of current and new services needed to support children's early learning and development and the implementation of the 2 Generation approach to family supports.

(REQUIRED) State agency responsible for public health, including the agency responsible for immunizations.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency maintains a partnership with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) and six regional metropolitan public health departments which have responsibility for immunizations in Tennessee. Additionally, TDH and the Lead Agency actively participate in regularly scheduled and recurring meetings that provide a platform for coordination, brainstorming, and assessment of current and new services needed to support children's health, early learning and development as well as the

implementation of the 2 Generation approach to family supports.

(REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency maintains a working relationship with the local and state entities responsible for employment services and workforce development.

Tennessee will fully integrate child care services for low-income families enrolled and in and in compliance with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training program. This collaboration will include Child Care Services, SNAP, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development along with their subcontractors. These partners will design and manage a plan to maximize the delivery and availability of safe and stable child care services that will assist families seeking to become independent from public assistance while parent(s) are either working or attending job training or educational programs in order to become self-sufficient. This two generation change initiative will work to redesign child care service delivery to better meet the needs of families and children. This will help participants and their children to access opportunities that will increase their financial security, education and skills, social capital, and health and well-being.

Families First, the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, is a workforce development and employment program under the Lead Agency. It is temporary and has a primary focus on gaining self-sufficiency through employment. The Families First program helps participants reach this goal by providing transportation, child care assistance, education, job training, employment activities, and other support services. Temporary cash assistance is also provided to families with dependent children when at least one parent is incapacitated, unemployed, deceased, or absent from the home, and the family is unable to pay for essential living expenses.

Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance Program was established to provide Child Care support to working families and those pursuing post-secondary educational goals. This allows TDHS to apply two-generational approaches in alignment with the commitment to creating cycles of success. The Smart Steps Program aligns with the

Office of Child Care priorities for increasing access to quality childcare services. The Lead Agency created Smart Steps to support two generation pathways by providing child care financial support to parents who are working or in education programs and offer quality early learning experiences for their children. By providing continuity of care for the child, we are enabling the child to remain in a stable environment, which will better prepare them for school and on-going educational success. In addition, stable child care is critical to strengthening parents' ability to go to work, improve their prospects in the job market and increase earning potential which is crucial to self-sufficiency. This supports eligible families with Child Care financial assistance to foster self-sufficiency and promote children's learning and development in quality early care and educational programs. In order to enhance the consumer education, so that families become more aware of the importance of quality child care and supports such as the Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance Program, the Lead Agency is developing a statewide media campaign to ensure all families are aware of how to access child care services in their local area. We want to build the knowledge of our families about child care and other services that families may be eligible to receive. We will provide information to families using multimedia, community partnerships, and other communication methods, including translation of materials to languages other than English, to strengthen dissemination and access to families and consumers.

(REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for public education, including prekindergarten (preK).

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency engages in ongoing collaboration and partnerships with the Tennessee Department of Education to:

- Support children and families;
- Align early learning standards in child care programs with Pre-K and Kindergarten;
- Improve the transition from child care programs to early education;
- Help early educators understand the connection between quality child care programs, school readiness, and positive outcomes;
- Develop a system that promotes effective communication and connections between child care educators and Pre-K and Kindergarten; and
- Promote the 2 Generation approaches to family engagement and support services through several targeted program initiatives.

A partnership with the Governor's Books From Birth Foundation was launched in January 2016 to register age-eligible children of families receiving child care payment assistance so they may receive the gift of free books through the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This literacy initiative promotes both reading and family engagement.

The Read to Be Ready Summer Literacy grant program was launched with the Tennessee Department of Education in 2016 to support educator-led and literacy-based summer camps to assist school-age students to improve reading skills.

The Lead Agency is partnering with the Tennessee Department of Education on an early childhood literacy training pilot study, Early Literacy Matters. The pilot launched in 2017 and includes early childhood educator training, classroom observations, and coaching. The Lead Agency is engaging in conversations with the Department of Education to explore how these literacy supports may be continued into the future.

(REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for child care licensing.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency is responsible for licensing child care agencies.

(REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and other relevant nutrition programs.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

Lead Agency administers the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Lead Agency partners with CACFP and SFSP to provide a bridge for these programs that offer afterschool snack and supper options for children from at-risk environments. Lead Agency continues promotion of good nutrition and physical activity in child care agencies enrolled in CACFP and encourages participation of eligible child care centers and homes.

Tennessee will fully integrate child care services for low-income families enrolled and in compliance with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training program. This collaboration will include Child Care

Services, SNAP, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development along with their subcontractors. These partners will design and manage a plan to maximize the delivery and availability of safe and stable child care services that will assist families seeking to become independent from public assistance while parent(s) are either working or attending job training or educational programs in order to become self-sufficient. This 2 Generation change initiative will work to redesign child care service delivery to better meet the needs of families and children. This will help participants and their children to access opportunities that will increase their financial security, education and skills, social capital, and health and well-being.

- (REQUIRED) McKinney-Vento state coordinators for homeless education and other agencies providing services for children experiencing homelessness and, to the extent practicable, local McKinney-Vento liaisons.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency established relationships with the Tennessee Association of Community Action (TACA) through a partnership with the DHS Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program to collect data on children (ages 0 to 5) statewide experiencing homelessness and the Tennessee liaison to the National Center for Homeless Education to share information and coordinate activities associated with services for homeless children and families.

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are private nonprofit and public organizations created out of Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to combat poverty. CAAs assess community needs and resources, establish priorities, determine strategies to address local poverty issues, and in partnership with community organizations, deliver a broad range of comprehensive services to create economic opportunity and have a measurable impact in the lives of those in our communities.

The Lead Agency is also establishing a partnership to liaison with the National Center for Homeless Education as well as with other community agencies, such as the United Way of Middle Tennessee, to provide resources for students experiencing homelessness.

- (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

[Describe the coordination goals and process:](#)

The Lead Agency also administers TANF. The overall goal is to improve service delivery and provide consumer education to TANF recipients. Child Care Certificate Program staff and Family Assistance staff of the Lead Agency working in local Tennessee Department of Human Services offices administer child care services for eligible families.

- (REQUIRED) [Agency responsible for Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program.](#)

[Describe the coordination goals and process:](#)

The Lead Agency coordinates information about the child care health insurance program (CoverKids) for CCDF families and children receiving child care services through consumer education services provided by the Lead Agency and its partners, including Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and through consumer education publications and websites.

- (REQUIRED) [State/territory agency responsible for mental health](#)

[Describe the coordination goals and process:](#)

The Lead Agency is among collaborative participants with Team Tennessee Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) State Partnership facilitated by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. This collaborative partnership strives to promote the social and emotional development of children, birth-early elementary age, through a cross agency collaborative professional development system, including community based training, continuing education and higher education, which fosters and sustains the state-wide, high-fidelity use of the Pyramid Model, integrated with other relevant Tennessee efforts.

- (REQUIRED) [Child care resource and referral agencies, child care consumer education organizations, and providers of early childhood education training and professional development.](#)

[Describe the coordination goals and process:](#)

The Lead Agency coordinates early care and education services statewide in collaboration with Child Care Resource and Referral and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance to improve the quality of child care services for children, families, and the child care workforce. Services delivered to children and families are

consistent with the two generational approach adopted by the Lead Agency.

- (REQUIRED) Statewide afterschool network or other coordinating entity for out-of-school time care (if applicable).

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency coordinates early care and education services statewide for school-age children in collaboration with the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and Tennessee Afterschool Network to improve the quality of child care service for children, families, and the child care workforce.

- (REQUIRED) Agency responsible for emergency management and response.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency coordinates statewide responses for early care and education in collaboration with the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) in support of the Tennessee Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The Lead Agency actively participates with a statewide task force, including TEMA, Tennessee Department of Health, Tennessee Department of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), and other public agency, nonprofit, and institutional partners to provide emergency preparedness training and awareness for child care agencies statewide.

The following are examples of optional partners a state might coordinate with to provide services. Check all that apply.

- State/territory/local agencies with Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership grants.

Describe

The Lead Agency coordinates early care and education services through multiple Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships statewide. Per the Early Head Start Child Care partnership grant guidelines, the Lead Agency provides support to assist in maintaining 25% subsidized slots for each approved Early Head Start classroom. The rate is paid based upon child care agency payment rate determined by the agency's quality star rating.

- [State/territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges](#)

[Describe](#)

The Lead Agency maintains extensive partnerships with Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee to support early care and education services for children and families statewide. The Lead Agency provides financial assistance for students enrolled in higher education early childhood education programs pairing with state initiatives, such as TNReconnect and TNPromise. All Child Care Services staff receive training on TNReconnect to better understand the initiative to share with families and the child care workforce. The Lead Agency additionally collaborates through its partnerships with universities, community colleges, and/or colleges of applied technology as institutions of higher education coordinated by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to facilitate the development of articulation and accreditation planning to support the early childhood education workforce.

- [Other federal, state, local, and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services.](#)

[Describe](#)

- [State/territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Child Home Visitation programs grant.](#)

[Describe](#)

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) administers the Maternal and Child Home Visitation Program. The Lead Agency meets regularly with TDH staff to explore opportunities to cross promote priority initiatives from both Departments.

- [Agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment.](#)

[Describe](#)

The Lead Agency maintains multiple partnerships with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH), the state agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening. TDH staff participate in regularly scheduled recurring meetings that provide a platform for coordination, brainstorming, and assessment of current and new services needed to support children's early learning and development and the implementation of 2 Generation approach to family supports.

- [State/territory agency responsible for child welfare.](#)

[Describe](#)

The Lead Agency maintains a regular working relationship with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) to facilitate child care opportunities for children in foster care or state custody. The Lead Agency also established an automated process with the agency to check prospective child care educators against the child abuse and neglect registry maintained by DCS. Additionally, the Lead Agency and DCS works collaboratively to investigate reports of imminent risk or allegations of child abuse and/or neglect which may include injuries and/or fatalities. The Lead Agency also works to support expedited and efficient enrollment of children placed in foster care into the child care payment assistance program as appropriate. Multiple channels of communication have been established between the Lead Agency and the child welfare agency to support timely and efficient services.

- [State/territory liaison for military child care programs.](#)

[Describe](#)

- [Provider groups or associations.](#)

[Describe](#)

The Lead Agency maintains working relationships with provider groups to coordinate services to support children and families. These working relationships include groups such as the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance, Tennessee Association for Children's Early Education, and ChildCareNashville.com.

- [Parent groups or organizations.](#)

[Describe](#)

- [Other.](#)

[Describe](#)

The Lead Agency meets regularly to discuss strategies and outcomes with the Governor's Children's Cabinet, co-chaired by the Governor and First Lady of Tennessee, and including representation from the Departments of Health, Education, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Children's Services as well as the

1.5 Optional Use of Combined Funds, CCDF Matching and Maintenance-of-Effort Funds

Optional Use of Combined Funds:

States and territories have the option to combine CCDF funds with any program identified as required in 1.4.1. These programs include those operating at the federal, state, and local levels for children in preschool programs, tribal early childhood programs, and other early childhood programs, including those serving infants and toddlers with disabilities, children experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care (658E(c)(2)(O)(ii)). Combining funds could include blending multiple funding streams, pooling funds, or layering funds together from multiple funding streams to expand and/or enhance services for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children and families to allow for the delivery of comprehensive quality care that meets the needs of children and families. For example, state/territory agencies may use multiple funding sources to offer grants or contracts to programs to deliver services; a state/territory may allow a county/local government to use coordinated funding streams; or policies may be in place that allow local programs to layer CCDF funds with additional funding sources to pay for full-day, full-year child care that meets Early Head Start/Head Start Program Performance Standards or state/territory prekindergarten requirements in addition to state/territory child care licensing requirements.

As a reminder, CCDF funds may be used in collaborative efforts with Head Start programs to provide comprehensive child care and development services for children who are eligible for both programs. In fact, the coordination and collaboration between Head Start and CCDF is strongly encouraged by sections 640(g)(1)(D) and (E); 640(h); 641(d)(2)(H)(v); and 642(e)(3) of the Head Start Act in the provision of full working day, full calendar year comprehensive services. To implement such collaborative programs, which share, for example, space, equipment, or materials, grantees may layer several funding streams so that seamless services are provided (Policy and Program Guidance for the Early Head Start ' Child Care Partnerships:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/acf_im_ohs_15_03.pdf
).

1.5.1 Does the Lead Agency choose to combine funding for CCDF services for any required early childhood program (98.14(a)(3))?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

No (If no, skip to question 1.5.2)

Yes. If yes, describe at a minimum:

a) How you define "combine"

We utilize funds from Department of Education for Pre-K Services.

b) Which funds you will combine

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) expenditures from the Tennessee Department of Education will be combined with funds from the Tennessee Department of Human Services to meet MOE requirements.

c) Your purpose and expected outcomes for combining funds, such as extending the day or year of services available (i.e., full-day, full-year programming for working families), smoothing transitions for children, enhancing and aligning quality of services, linking comprehensive services to children in child care or developing the supply of child care for vulnerable populations

To further care for Pre-K children and their families by providing wrap around child care support for working families.

d) How you will be combining multiple sets of funding, such as at the State/Territory level, local level, program level?

Funds are only combined at the state level.

e) How are the funds tracked and method of oversight

Funds are tracked in Edison (the state electronic online payment system).

1.5.2 Which of the following funds does the Lead Agency intend to use to meet the CCDF matching and MOE requirements described in 98.55(e) and 98.55(h)?

Note:

The Lead Agency must check at least public and/or private funds as matching, even if preK funds also will be used.

Use of PreK for Maintenance of Effort: The CCDF final rule clarifies that public preK funds may also serve as maintenance-of-effort funds as long as the state/territory can describe how it will coordinate preK and child care services to expand the availability of child care while using public preK funds as no more than 20 percent of the state's or territory's maintenance of effort or 30 percent of its matching funds in a single fiscal year (FY) (98.55(h)). If expenditures for preK services are used to meet the maintenance-of-effort requirement, the state/territory must certify that it has not reduced its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services (98.55(h)(1); 98.15(a)(6)).

Use of Private Funds for Match or Maintenance of Effort: Donated funds do not need to be under the administrative control of the Lead Agency to qualify as an expenditure for federal match. However, Lead Agencies do need to identify and designate in the state/territory Plan the donated funds given to public or private entities to implement the CCDF child care program (98.55(f)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- N/A - The territory is not required to meet CCDF matching and MOE requirements
- Public funds are used to meet the CCDF matching fund requirement. Public funds may include any general revenue funds, county or other local public funds, state/territory-specific funds (tobacco tax, lottery), or any other public funds.

-- If checked, identify the source of funds:

State General Fund and lottery funds.

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of public funds that the Lead Agency will receive: \$ Approximately 18.9 Million at this time

- Private donated funds are used to meet the CCDF matching funds requirement. Only private funds received by the designated entities or by the Lead Agency may be counted for match purposes (98.53(f)).

-- If checked, are those funds:

- donated directly to the State?
- donated to a separate entity(ies) designated to receive private donated funds?

-- If checked, identify the name, address, contact, and type of entities designated to receive private donated funds:

Not Applicable

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of private donated funds that the Lead Agency will receive: \$ Not Applicable

State expenditures for preK programs are used to meet the CCDF matching funds requirement.

If checked, provide the estimated percentage of the matching fund requirement that will be met with preK expenditures (not to exceed 30 percent): 8% or approximately \$1 Million.

-- If the percentage is more than 10 percent of the matching fund requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its preK and child care services:

Not Applicable

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of preK funds that the Lead Agency will receive for the matching funds requirement: \$ Aproximately \$1 Million (or 8%)

-- Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that preK programs meet the needs of working parents:

The State Pre-K program is required to meet a minimum of 5.5 hours per day for a minimum of 180 days (school year). In collaborative programs between child care and State Pre-K, the Pre-K funds pay for the instructional day of 5.5 hours for a minimum of 180 days of the school year. Child care provides before care, after care, and summer child care services.

State expenditures for preK programs are used to meet the CCDF maintenance-of-effort requirements. If checked,

-- The Lead Agency assures that its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to 98.55(h)(1) and 98.15(6).

No

Yes

-- Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that preK programs meet the needs of working parents:

The State Pre-K program is required to meet a minimum of 5.5 hours per day for a

minimum of 180 days (school year). In collaborative programs between child care and State Pre-K, the Pre-K funds pay for the instructional day of 5.5 hours for a minimum of 180 days of the school year. Child care provides before care, after care, and summer child care services.

-- Estimated percentage of the MOE Fund requirement that will be met with preK expenditures (not to exceed 20 percent): 20%

-- If the percentage is more than 10 percent of the MOE requirement, describe how the State will coordinate its preK and child care services to expand the availability of child care:

Collaboration is a cornerstone of the Tennessee Child Care Services and Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) systems. Collaborative structures like the TN Young Child Wellness Council and Tennesseans for Quality Early Education provide a forum to explore initiatives that enhance quality, availability, and accessibility across the two systems. The Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS) are required to be used in all programs serving children birth to age 5. In addition, a shared system of professional development training is offered across both the VPK and child care services systems. By using the same standards and professional development supports, the VPK and child care services support systems are able to stretch resources to support a greater number of providers to expand the availability of child care.

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of preK funds that the Lead Agency will receive for the MOE Fund requirement: \$ \$3.7 Million

1.6 Public-Private Partnerships

Lead Agencies are required to describe how they encourage public-private partnerships among other public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith-based organizations, businesses or organizations that promote business involvement, and/or community-based organizations to leverage existing service delivery (i.e., cooperative agreement among providers to pool resources to pay for shared fixed costs and operation) (658E(c)(2)(P)). ACF expects these types of partnerships to leverage public and private resources to further the goals

of the CCDBG Act. Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate how they encourage public-private partnerships to leverage existing child care and early education service-delivery systems and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children younger than age 13, for example, by implementing voluntary shared service alliance models (98.14(a)(4)).

1.6.1 Identify and describe the entities with which and the levels at which the state/territory is partnering (level-state/territory, county/local, and/or programs), the goals of the partnerships, the ways that partnerships are expected to leverage existing service-delivery systems, the method of partnering, and examples of activities that have resulted from these partnerships (98.16(d)(2)).

The Lead Agency works with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) to allow DCS personnel to make direct arrangements with the Lead Agency for child care assistance for children in foster care or protective services.

The lead agency also maintains limited access to the child abuse registry maintained by DCS for the purposes of completing in state abuse registry checks on prospective child care staff.

The Lead Agency works with the Department of Education (DOE) to allow them limited access to the licensing database in order for DOE to enter data about the child care agencies that are regulated by DOE. This enables the information about these agencies to be available to parents and the general public through the "Find Child Care" feature on the Lead Agency's website.

The Lead Agency collaborations with DOE include the Read to Be Ready Summer Literacy Program which perfectly aligns with the 2 Generation framework approach. The Lead Agency has exchanged multiple communications with the Office of Child Care (OCC) regarding this program. In these communications, OCC has stated that the Read to be Ready Summer Literacy Camp is likely an allowable use of CCDF quality funds, regardless of whether all of the children participating currently receive child care subsidies through CCDF. It is an example of intentional and collective impact in support of the future success of Tennessee children and families. The criteria used for participation in Read to be Ready Summer Literacy Program include children participating in the Child Care Certificate Program, free or reduced lunch, children and families experiencing homelessness and or children who live in economically disadvantage communities in Tennessee. Children who

participate in before and after school programs, including children who enrolled in the Child Care Certificate Program, also have the opportunity to experience a summer enriched program through the Read to be Ready Summer Literacy Program.

Read to Be Ready Camps strategically promote attendance by partnering with families. Camps ensure that all families and children have equitable access and intentionally and responsively reach out when attendance is an issue. Home visits, translators, and supports are used to connect with and encourage families to participate. Below outlines some of the Read to be Ready Summer Camp enrichment activities:

- Critical reading skills and increased motivation to read;
- Literacy training;
- Enrichment experiences related to art and music, in a manner that connects to and supports literacy in thoughtful ways;
- Hands-on learning and an introduction to concepts, experiences, and books that expand their background knowledge; and
- The ability to self-select the texts they want to read and the writing topics they want to explore.

The Tennessee Department of Education (DOE) and the Lead Agency recruited non-public schools and child care centers to participate in Early Literacy Matters, a pilot that focuses on integrating more literacy-based practices into early childhood education classrooms. The pilot launched in 2017 and includes early childhood educator training, classroom observations, and coaching. The Lead Agency is engaging in conversations with the Department of Education to explore how these literacy supports may be continued into the future.

Students begin learning to read and think before they enter the classroom. The state believes that providing training and support to those who work with our youngest children, as well as their families, will mean greater success for students as they continue to grow. Each classroom teacher, assistant, and site director of participating sites complete six (6) one-hour online learning modules during the 2017-2018 school year. The Lead Agency is exploring with DOE opportunities to strengthen and expand the Early Literacy Matters program to increase early literacy skills and training of early care educators to support the early literacy environments across Tennessee.

In addition, students receive learning guides and free books to place in their classrooms. Specifically, each classroom receives two sets of books composed of seven books each; one

set is intended for classroom use and the other set is sent home with children to read with their families. Pilot participants are provided with varied levels of coaching support. Pre- and post- environmental assessments as well as provider awareness surveys are collected at the conclusion of the program, and the results will be shared with the participating providers to further improve their practice. The Lead Agency is also collaborating with other public and non-profit agencies, including DOE and United Way, to identify opportunities and partnerships with approximately 66 local Family Resource Centers across Tennessee to provide families with resources and information.

By 2025, 55 percent of the jobs available in Tennessee will require a postsecondary credential, and currently only 33 percent of Tennesseans qualify. Gov. Bill Haslam launched his Drive to 55 two years ago to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary degree or certificate.

The Lead Agency is partnering with parents by providing them with information about the program and assisting them in enrolling their child or children in the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. The partnership aligns with Lead Agency's 2 Generation approach to creating cycles of success and compliments both the Tennessee Department of Education's work in early literacy and First Lady Crissy Haslam's statewide READ20 Family Book Club campaign. The 2 Generation approach has a specific focus on partnering with parents and children together to support them in realizing a pathway toward self-sufficiency and a better quality of life.

As a part of Early Childhood Education, in an effort to assist the Governor's Children's Cabinet reach a goal of 75% of 3rd grade students being reading proficient by 2025, the Lead Agency is committed to enrolling age-eligible Child Care Certificate Program participants in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library through its partnership with the Governor's Books From Birth Foundation to encourage at home reading on a consistent basis.

"Introducing books to children beginning at birth is one of the most impactful ways to prepare them for Kindergarten," First Lady Haslam said. "I appreciate the Department of Human Services' efforts to encourage more families to read together and make education a priority. Collaborative partnerships that support early literacy can help children be more successful in school and in life."

The Governor's Books From Birth Foundation in tandem with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available to all children from birth to 5 years old living in Tennessee. Once children are enrolled in the program, a new book is mailed to the child every month until he or she turns five. The books are provided to children at no cost. Overall, more than 240,000 Tennessee children are currently receiving books. The Lead Agency's commitment to enroll age-eligible Child Care Certificate Program participants in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has resulted in enrollment of more than 23,000 children. The program allows additional opportunities for parents to read to their children and engage in learning opportunities. Each book is age appropriate and includes reading comprehension activities and suggestions.

The Lead Agency is working to expand the collaboration/partnership with the Books from Birth initiative. The Lead Agency is exploring opportunities to contribute funding to the cost of books and mailing costs for children enrolled in the initiative that also participate in the Child Care Certificate Program. In addition, the Lead Agency is exploring possibilities to strengthen family engagement in early literacy activities through this partnership.

The Lead Agency is also exploring collaboration with the TN Department of Education (DOE) focused on Family Resource Centers. Consistent with the 2Gen Framework Approach, Family Resource Centers provide a valuable opportunity to educate and engage the entire family around resources and supports that can help strengthen child development, health, economic stability, and educational achievement.

The Lead Agency is also exploring collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) regarding provider, parent, and general consumer education focused on safe sleep practices. Raising awareness of parents and providers about safe sleep practices aligns with the Office of Child Care priorities to support child health and safety and aligns with a focus on enhancing the quality of services available for infant populations.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.7 Coordination With Local or Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Systems

Lead Agencies may use CCDF funds to establish or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral (CCR&R) organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined by the state/territory, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization (such as a statewide CCR&R network) (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii); 98.52).

- If Lead Agencies use CCDF funds for local CCR&R organizations, the local or regional CCR&R organizations supported by those funds must, at the direction of the Lead Agency, provide parents in the State with consumer education information concerning the full range of child care options (including faith-based and community-based child care providers), analyzed by provider, including child care provided during non-traditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their area.
- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance to offer the families support and assistance to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting that suits their needs and one that is of high quality (as determined by the Lead Agency).
- Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in areas of the state and submit the information to the State;
- Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the state and, as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the state Lead Agency and local agencies that administer funds made available through CCDF (98.52(b)).

Nothing in the statute or rule prohibits States from using CCR&R agencies to conduct or provide additional services beyond those required by statute or rule.

Note: Use 1.7.1 to address if a state/territory funds a CCR&R organization, what services are provided and how it is structured and use section 7.6.1 to address the indicators of progress met by CCR&R organizations if they are funded by quality set-aside funds.

1.7.1 Does the Lead Agency fund a system of local or regional CCR&R organizations?

Effective Date: 10-1-19

No. The state/territory does not fund a CCR&R organization(s) and has no plans to establish one.

Yes. The state/territory funds a CCR&R system. If yes, describe the following:

a) What services are provided through the CCR&R organization?

The Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network is a managed network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) serving eight (8) geographic areas across Tennessee and offering services to families, child care agencies, and the child care workforce statewide.

CCR&R staff offers families consumer information to identify and better understand the components of high-quality child care as well as answer questions about child care agencies in their geographic areas. For child care agencies, CCR&R staff provides coaching and technical assistance, training, consultation, and supporting materials and resources on such topics that include developmentally appropriate practices, health and safety issues, parent engagement, social/emotional and behavioral health, and best practices across related themes. CCR&R staff also provides child care agencies assistance with program inclusion for children having special needs or on-site consultation problem-solving child care and other health issues. Additionally, the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network CCR&Rs identify unmet training needs of providers and deliver or facilitate the delivery of resources and training content.

The Lead Agency maintains a contract with Signals Centers, Inc. to provide and administer the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Services. The contract includes such provisions and activities that support children, families, and child care agencies as:

- Supporting a system of high-quality early care and education for children in

Tennessee through the management of the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network, and providing quality resources, consistent practices, and support for child care agencies that include expertise, training, and technical assistance.

- Maintaining consistency in services to the network in the following areas: health and safety; infant/toddler best practices; family and group child care; center-based childcare; and school-age child care. Services must reflect developmentally appropriate practices around core areas such as: supervision, child guidance, parent engagement/child care consumer education information, child outcomes and kindergarten readiness. Continuous Quality Improvement Plans form the frame work for technical assistance to agencies requiring identification of agency needs, resources needed, assignment of CCR&R staff and other resources within a timeline and required support from the administration of the child care agency.
- Providing prioritized targeted technical assistance in response to referrals from the Lead Agency and partner agencies, and supporting the development of agency continuous quality improvement plans.
- Supporting developmental monitoring and knowledge of development milestones among child care agencies, teachers, and families.
- Ensuring child care agencies receive the most accurate and up-to-date information about the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and how they are scored.
- Assisting families, especially among vulnerable populations, with accessing local services. of include developmentally appropriate practices, health and safety issues, parent Collaborating with local community-based organizations to engage with and support the education of families and the general community regarding high-quality child care.
- Developing a statewide initiative to increase outreach and services benefiting homeless populations.
- Promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of children utilizing models developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL).
- Conducting outreach and awareness campaigns in collaboration with the Lead Agency and other partners on such topics as quality child care, accessibility, etc.
- Working with families who receive child care assistance to make an informed decision when choosing a child care agency.
- Coordinating with the Lead Agency and other partners to strengthen and improve data to ensure adequate supply of child care exists to sufficiently satisfy demand.
- Assisting the State in responding to state or national requirements to improve childcare quality.
- Developing and maintaining a statewide delivery system for ongoing training in CPR and First Aid that includes the availability of weekend training sessions.
- Creating small business academies to support, strengthen, and improve small business practices among child care providers.

b) How are CCR&R services organized, include how many agencies, if there is a statewide network and if the system is coordinated?

The Lead Agency contracts with Signal Centers, Inc. to manage the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Signal Centers, Inc. is funded through a variety of federal, state, and local agencies including the United Way of Greater Chattanooga, Tennessee's Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Hamilton County Social Services, State of Tennessee Social Services Block Grant (Title XX), local service and community organizations, various fund-raising activities, fees for service, and charitable donations. Signal Centers, Inc. contracts with community-based nonprofit agencies or public institutions to operate five (5) CCR&R agencies and serve eight (8) regional service delivery areas offering free services to families and any child care agencies licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services. These CCR&R sites fulfill scopes of services that improve the overall quality of child care, strengthen the training and technical assistance system for the state, and assure quality and consistent practices throughout the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

Signal Centers, Inc. strengthens and further enhances the Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network through the provision of quality coaches who directly support families and child care agencies through Infant-Toddler, Family Engagement, and Health, Safety, and Well-Being specializations.

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

Lead Agencies are required to establish a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan (658E(c)(2)(U)). They must demonstrate how they will address the needs of children including the need for safe child care, before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as defined by Section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122) through a Statewide Disaster Plan that, for a State, is developed in collaboration with the State human services agency, the State emergency management agency, the State licensing agency, the State health department or public health department, local and State child care resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))) or similar coordinating body

(98.16(aa)).

1.8.1 Describe how the Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan was developed in collaboration with the State human services agency, the State emergency management agency, the State licensing agency, the State health department or public health department, local and State child care resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care or similar coordinating body:

The Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Plan is reviewed annually and is informed, in part, by the active participation of the Lead Agency in a statewide task force that includes Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), Tennessee Department of Health, Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network, and other agencies and institutions. This further informs the plan of the Lead Agency as part of the Tennessee Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.8.2 Describe how the Statewide Disaster Plan includes the Lead Agency's guidelines for the continuation of child care subsidies and child care services, which may include the provision of emergency and temporary child care services during a disaster and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster:

The Lead Agency will utilize internal emergency preparedness teams to coordinate a response, including:

- Executive Team - oversees the Department's response, maintains communication with the Governor's office, and implements any special response initiatives through the Central Office Director Team.
- Central Office Director Team - manages emergency preparedness communications between the Executive Team and central office/field staff and coordinates the response for each of their respective areas in conjunction with the responses of the other team members.

If the Subsidized Child Care Reimbursement System is down throughout the state and it is not anticipated that the system can be reestablished within two weeks, the disaster function team identifies procedures for counties to follow in the interim. Subsidy Services staff members contact the appropriate offices to make them aware of new procedures. In the

event that phone, fax, and email communications are disrupted, Subsidy Services staff will make contact on-site if it is possible to travel.

Child Care Services' Director and the team decides whether temporary child care arrangements are needed to supplement existing capacity or make child care more easily accessible to families affected by the disaster or assisting with the relief effort. If temporary child care arrangements are needed, the Director determines the appropriate scope of Child Care Services involvement.

Using information on family needs gathered with the help of Child Care Services representatives, the Director works with Subsidy Services, Regulatory Services, and others as needed to determine what kind of temporary child care arrangements may be allowed and encouraged. Examples might include:

- ad hoc child care arrangements set up at such locations as utility offices, police departments, or hospitals for the children of these employees who must work during or just after disasters, when licensed child care facilities may still be closed
- child care in emergency shelters if shelters are expected to be open for an extended amount of time (e.g., longer than a week)
- child care at Disaster Application Centers to provide safe supervision of children while parents work with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Small Business Administration (SBA), and other disaster relief representatives
- child care offered at temporary housing sites if no existing child care providers in the area can accommodate extra demand (or if transportation obstacles prevent access)
- use of child care arrangements that are license-exempt and would not normally serve children receiving subsidy services

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.8.3 Describe Lead Agency procedures for the coordination of post-disaster recovery of child care services:

The Lead Agency provides technical assistance to licensed providers who sustain damages through its Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Teams and partner agencies to evaluate and determine conditions for continuing operations or other alternatives that may include, but are not limited to, temporary closure, enrollment reduction, or relocation.

If a licensed provider decides to relocate, the Child Care Services Emergency Preparedness Teams and partner agencies assist the provider to reestablish licensed care on a temporary basis at the new location. If a local child care supply is significantly impacted by a disaster, and the team decides that it is necessary to expand capacity, Child Care Services will coordinate the provision of technical assistance to any of the largely-unaffected providers who are willing to provide care for additional children.

To facilitate recovery during a natural disaster or other emergencies, the Lead Agency will consider the need for temporary licensing policies in consultation with the Office of General Counsel.

In response to the recent tornados and the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lead Agency is adjusting staff resources in order to be most responsive to provider needs. In addition, Governor Lee issued an Executive Order to give the Lead Agency discretion to waive child care licensure requirements as needed to respond to the effects of COVID-19. The Lead Agency's application of discretion regarding rule requirements is consistent with the Lead Agency's Emergency Preparedness Plan. The discretion regarding specific rule requirements is being applied at the individual program level rather than the overall rule level on a case by case basis to accommodate the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic. The application of this discretion includes conversations about strategies to ensure that the health and safety of children will not be compromised as a result of such accommodations. The Lead Agency used email and daily web updates to keep providers informed about the potential relief from licensure requirements outlined in the Executive Orders issues by the Governor. Throughout the period, providers were asked to inform the Lead Agency of any impacts of COVID-19 and Licensing Program Evaluators made regular contact to assess needs.

The Lead Agency is implementing changes to payment practices and absence/enrollment policies to support continuation and recovery of child care subsidies/services.

At the discretion of the Lead Agency, payments for full-time enrollment of children served through the Child Care Certificate Program may continue for 30 days from the onset of a state or federally declared emergency for providers not able to serve families due to damage to their facilities or impacts of COVID-19. During the recovery period, families/providers will have flexibility to transfer enrollments to temporary locations to continue care and meet

increased demand. Thereafter, payments may be extended for the period of impact created by the disaster/emergency and as deemed necessary by the Lead Agency. During the disaster/emergency recovery period the Lead Agency may also pay eligible providers who provide care for a child on a temporary basis while the operations are restored to the original provider. Child care assistance payments may continue when parents are off work due to circumstances beyond the parent's control related to the state or federally declared emergency. Based upon need, the Lead Agency may also broaden the definition of protective services to permit emergency eligibility for parents who might not meet income or other eligibility requirements, such as essential employees. Redeterminations for subsidy assistance have been extended for six months for each eligibility period ending March 2020 through August 2020, and may be further extended by the Lead Agency, if determined necessary. Notifications are being sent to all families and child care agencies regarding the extensions.

The Lead Agency is distributing financial assistance/grants to impacted child care agencies, including those that closed and those that have continued operations. The Lead Agency is using CARES Act funds and/or quality dollars to provide immediate assistance to impacted families/providers, even if they are not on CCDF. Through a waiver, the Lead Agency has relief from the requirement to utilize 70% of funds on direct services. This gives the Lead Agency more flexibility to respond to provider and family needs and allows an option if more resources are needed to open or expand child care capacity.

TDHS established and is funding a network of temporary sites with the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs for the provision of temporary/emergency care for school-aged children of essential workers. The contract includes health and safety provisions for criminal background checks, ratios, age grouping, accountability procedures, facility safety, medical precautions, and injury/child abuse reporting. Temporary sites will meet ratios with staff who have either already been background checked through the TDHS system or who have been subject to the name-based checks as outlined below.

Staff at these temporary sites are subject to name-based background checks that include the following elements:

- Criminal checks utilizing CLEAR investigation software for law enforcement to conduct name-based checks using DOB and Driver License number where available
 - The CLEAR database includes real time incarceration records, arrests, and warrant information as well as criminal history for many states.
 - 100% of Tennessee is covered

- CLEAR also provides previous addresses for the individual
- TN Vulnerable Persons Registry
- TN Child Abuse Checks
- TN Sex Offender Registry

Checks on new staff associated with licensed agencies continue to include all required elements. Procedures for utilizing and mailing fingerprint cards have been established to accommodate fingerprinting scan sites that are temporarily closed.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

1.8.4 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that providers who receive CCDF funds have the following procedures in place-evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place; lockdown; communications with and reunification of families; continuity of operations; and accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions:

All licensed child care centers, family homes, and group homes are required by law to develop a written multi-hazard plan based upon Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 71-3-517:

Development of a written multi-hazard plan to protect children in emergencies:

(a) All persons or entities operating a child care agency as defined in this part, excluding drop-in child care centers and those programs and facilities exempt from licensing as provided in § 71-3-503, shall, in consultation with appropriate local authorities and local emergency management, develop a written multi-hazard plan to protect children in the event of emergencies, including, but not limited to, fires, tornados, earthquakes, chemical spills, and floods. Such persons or entities shall also inform parents and guardians of children attending the child care agency of the plan.

(b) The written plan required pursuant to this section shall include: (1) Procedures for child

care agency staff to notify parents in an emergency; (2) The development of designated relocation sites and evacuation routes to those sites; (3) Reunification plans for children and families; and (4) Written individualized plans for accommodating a child's special needs in an emergency situation.

(c) The child care agency shall maintain documentation that the emergency plan is reviewed monthly.

(d) All child care agency staff persons shall be trained on the plan annually.

(e) The child care agency shall implement these emergency procedures through timely practice drills to meet local regulations and local emergency services plans and shall maintain documentation of drills for one (1) year. Such drills shall involve the following: (1) At least one (1) fire drill shall be conducted monthly; (2) Child care agencies shall alternate drills each month to cover each shift while children are present, including extended care hours; (3) At least one (1) drill other than fire shall be conducted every six (6) months; and (4) All drills shall be conducted in such a way as to simulate, as closely as is practical, conditions of a real emergency, with alarms to be utilized and evacuation plans to be practiced.

(f) (1) Emergency telephone numbers for the following entities shall be posted next to all child care agency telephones and shall be readily available to all child care agency staff members:

- (A) Fire department;
- (B) Police department and sheriff's office;
- (C) Nearest hospital emergency room;
- (D) Department of children's services child abuse hotline;
- (E) Local emergency management agency;
- (F) Ambulance or rescue squad;
- (G) Poison control center; and
- (H) Department of human services child care complaint hotline.

(2) If a generic emergency number, including, but not limited to, 911 service, is operable in the community, it shall also be posted in the manner prescribed in this subsection (f).

(g) All contact information for parents, guardians, and emergency personnel shall be readily available to all child care agency staff, including work, home and cell phone numbers.

The health and safety checklists used to monitor non-licensed agencies that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program include requirements for documented Emergency/Disaster preparedness procedures, practice drills, and training.

Program Evaluators monitor licensed agencies, and non-licensed participants in the Child Care Certificate Program, for compliance with the emergency preparedness requirements.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.8.5 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that providers who receive CCDF funds have the following procedures in place for child care staff and volunteers-emergency preparedness training and practice drills as required in 98.41(a)(1)(vii):

Child care educators in licensed centers, family homes, and group homes are required to receive annual training on their emergency preparedness plan. Documentation of practice drills that include monthly fire drills and one drill other than fire must be conducted every six months. Lead Agency Program Evaluators monitor licensed agencies annually for compliance with the emergency preparedness requirements.

The health and safety checklists used to monitor non-licensed agencies (including Boys & Girls Clubs, Department of Education-approved, and Authorized Professionals) that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program include requirements for documented emergency/disaster preparedness procedures, practice drills, and training. Program Evaluators monitor licensed agencies for compliance with the emergency preparedness requirements.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1.8.6 Provide the link to the website where the statewide child care disaster plan is available:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-resources-for-providers/child-care-emergency-preparedness.html>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2 Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education

Lead Agencies are required to support the role of parents as child care consumers who need information to make informed choices regarding the services that best suit their needs. A key purpose of the CCDBG Act is to 'promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings' (658A(b)). Lead Agencies have the opportunity to consider how information can be provided to parents through the child care assistance system, partner agencies, and child care consumer education websites.

The target audience for the consumer education information includes three groups: parents receiving CCDF assistance, the general public, and when appropriate, child care providers. In this section, Lead Agencies will address how information is made available to families to assist them in accessing high-quality child care and how information is shared on other financial assistance programs or supports for which a family might be eligible. In addition, Lead Agencies will certify that information on developmental screenings is provided and will describe how research and best practices concerning children's development, including their social-emotional development, is shared.

In this section, Lead Agencies will delineate the consumer and provider education information related to child care, as well as other services, including developmental screenings, that is made available to parents, providers, and the general public and the ways that it is made available. This section also covers the parental complaint process and the consumer education

website that has been developed by the Lead Agency and the manner in which it links to the national website and hotline. Finally, this section addresses the consumer statement that is provided to parents supported with CCDF funds.

2.1 Outreach to Families With Limited English Proficiency and Persons With Disabilities

The Lead Agency is required to describe how it provides outreach and services to eligible families with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities and to facilitate the participation of child care providers with limited English proficiency and disabilities in the CCDF program (98.16(dd)). Lead Agencies are required to develop policies and procedures to clearly communicate program information, such as requirements, consumer education information, and eligibility information, to families and child care providers of all backgrounds (81 FR 67456).

2.1.1 Check the strategies the Lead Agency or partners utilize to provide outreach and services to eligible families for whom English is not their first language. Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Application in other languages (application document, brochures, provider notices)
- Informational materials in non-English languages
- Website in non-English languages
- Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- Bilingual outreach workers
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Other.

Describe:

The Lead Agency takes reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in its services, activities, programs and other benefits. The policy of Lead Agency is to ensure meaningful communication with persons that experience LEP and their authorized representatives. This policy also provides for communication of information contained in vital documents, including but not limited to, applications for benefits,

client release forms, and civil rights complaint forms. Lead Agency contracts with the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute, a public state agency, and other language services to provide interpretation, translation, and other services needed to comply with this policy without cost to the person being served.

Language assistance is provided through use of competent bilingual staff, contracts or formal arrangements with organizations providing interpretation or translation services, or technology and telephonic interpretation services. All employees receive notice of this LEP policy and procedure, and staff who may have direct contact with LEP persons are provided effective communication techniques, including the effective use of an interpreter and how to engage such services.

2.1.2 Check the strategies the Lead Agency or partners utilize to provide outreach and services to eligible families with a person(s) with a disability. Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Applications and public informational materials available in Braille and other communication formats for access by individuals with disabilities
- Websites that are accessible (e.g. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act)
- Caseworkers with specialized training/experience in working with individuals with disabilities
- Ensuring accessibility of environments and activities for all children
- Partnerships with state and local programs and associations focused on disability-related topics and issues
- Partnerships with parent associations, support groups, and parent-to-parent support groups, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) federally funded Parent Training and Information Centers
- Partnerships with state and local IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C providers and agencies
- Availability and/or access to specialized services (e.g. mental health, behavioral specialists, therapists) to address the needs of all children
- Other.

Describe:

The Lead Agency makes reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or

procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is housed in the Lead Agency and coordinates to support the needs of families and children with disabilities. The Lead Agency, through the Division of Rehabilitation Services, takes appropriate steps to ensure that communication with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services furnishes appropriate auxiliary aids and services upon request and where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and receive, a service, program, or activity conducted by the Department.

2.2 Parental Complaint Process

The Lead Agency must certify that the state/territory maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request (658E(c)(2)(C); 98.15(b)(3)). Lead Agencies must also provide a detailed description of the hotline or similar reporting process for parents to submit complaints about child care providers; the process for substantiating complaints; the manner in which the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints; and ways that the Lead Agency makes information on such parental complaints available to the public on request (98.16; 98.32).

2.2.1 Describe the Lead Agency's hotline or similar reporting process through which parents can submit complaints about child care providers, including a link if it is a Web-based process:

Parents as well as the general public may report violations and/or submit complaints regarding child care agencies through the Tennessee Child Care Complaint Hotline at (800) 462-8261 or a planned web-based option for submitting complaints that is not yet implemented.

Complaints are typically received via dedicated sources, such as the Child Care Complaint Hotline, the Department of Children’s Services, and the Comptroller’s Hotline. However, the department will accept complaints from other sources. Complaints can be made via telephone, electronically, in person or in writing. Information about violations/complaints may also be emailed to the Human Services’ Webmaster: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/families/child-care-services/child-care-report-child-care-violations-complaints.html>

The complainant will be asked for their name and contact information in case additional information is needed. However, complainants may also remain anonymous. The person receiving the complaint will collect as much information as is available. The following information is desired, at a minimum: a) The name and address of the agency; b) specific circumstances of the complaint; c) date and time of the alleged incident; d) full names of all staff and children involved; and e) the location of the alleged incident.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.2.2 Describe the Lead Agency's process and timeline for screening, substantiating and responding to complaints regarding CCDF providers, including whether the process includes monitoring:

Lead Agency Licensing Program Evaluators responsible for monitoring an agency conduct the complaint investigation to determine if it is valid. The exception is a complaint alleging child abuse which is investigated jointly by the Lead Agency and the Department of Children’s Services (DCS). In such cases of alleged child abuse, Lead Agency Licensing Program Evaluators also investigate the complaint to see if the agency violated any licensing rules but would not determine whether or not abuse occurred.

Complaints are maintained indefinitely in the Lead Agency's Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS) database. The format includes a description of the agency that is the subject of the complaint and a narrative description of the complaint issue. The investigation of complaints by the Lead Agency is detailed in Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 13.03, Investigating Complaints at Child Care Agencies.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the assigned Program Evaluator shall consult with his/her supervisor to determine if additional information is needed and develop an appropriate investigative strategy, including timeframes for an investigation, and utilize Tennessee Department of Human Services Form HS-3038 Investigative Work Plan for this analysis.

- All complaints alleging health and safety violations must be investigated by an unannounced visit.
- Complaints that do not allege health and safety violations will be addressed by telephone or during the next monitoring visit.

The goal of Child Care Services complaint inquiries are to determine if a violation of rules or statute has occurred. The primary factors used to make this determination are:

- Review and analysis of the evidence gathered;
- Witness statements;
- Observations;
- Documentation or lack of required documentation; and/or
- Professional judgment.

Complaints may be made directly to a Licensing staff person in a local county office or made via the centralized Complaint Hotline. Complaints may be made by telephone, in person, electronically, or by mail. The Program Evaluator completes an investigation of the complaint and enters the results into TLCS. Complaints involving abuse, improper supervision, inappropriate discipline, or injury to a child are also sent to Department of Children's Services and may require a safety plan. All complaints are encoded in the Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS) database and maintained indefinitely. Parental complaints about unregulated providers are managed on the local level through the county offices of the Lead Agency.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.2.3 Describe the Lead Agency's process and timeline for screening, substantiating and responding to complaints for non-CCDF providers, including whether the process includes monitoring:

The complaint investigation process is the same for CCDF and Non-CCDF entities. See response to previous question.

2.2.4 Certify by describing how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints:

Complaints are maintained in the Lead Agency's child care database (Tennessee Licensed Care System). The format includes a description of the agency that is the subject of the complaint and a narrative description of the complaint issue. The information is maintained indefinitely.

2.2.5 Certify by describing how the Lead Agency makes information about substantiated parental complaints available to the public; this information can include the consumer education website discussed in section 2.3:

Currently, violations associated with complaints are available on the Lead Agency website under the compliance history tab for the child care agency. However, the full detail of a complaint without violations is maintained within the child care agency electronic case file maintained by the Lead Agency. The general public/parents may submit email or phone inquiries to receive information about complaints. There is no fee associated with making an inquiry.

Persons inquiring about complaints on agencies are referred directly to the Program Evaluator who is responsible for monitoring the agency. Normally, the Program Evaluator verbally gives an account of the electronic record that includes the number of complaints, the type of complaint, and whether or not the complaint was validated. If requested, the Program Evaluator may provide a copy of the complaint information from the electronic record. Extensive public records requests are routed through the office of Public Information and Legislative Office (PILO).

2.2.6 Provide the citation to the Lead Agency's policy and process related to parental complaints:

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 13.03 – Investigating Complaints at Child Care Agencies

2.3 Consumer Education Website

States and Territories are required to provide information to parents, the general public, and when applicable, child care providers through a State website, which is consumer-friendly and easily accessible (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(III)). The website must include information to assist families in understanding the policies and procedures for licensing child care providers. The website information must also include provider-specific information, monitoring and inspection reports for the provider, the quality of each provider (if such information is available for the provider), and the availability of the provider (658E(c)(2)(D); 98.33(a)). The website should also provide access to a yearly statewide report on deaths, serious injuries, and the number of cases of substantiated child abuse that have occurred in child care settings. To assist families with any additional questions, the website should provide contact information for local child care resource and referral organizations and any other agencies that can assist families in better understanding the information on the website.

To certify, respond to questions 2.3.1 through 2.3.10 by describing how the Lead Agency meets these requirements and provide the link in 2.3.11. If the Lead Agency has not fully implemented the Consumer Education website elements identified in Section 2.3, then respond to question 2.3.12. Please note that any changes made to the web links provided below in this section after the CCDF Plan is approved will require a CCDF Plan amendment.

2.3.1 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that its website is consumer-friendly and easily accessible:

The Lead Agency website is designed with most programs accessible from the homepage, or within 3-clicks from the homepage. The Child Care Services section has a left navigation menu which lists child care related rules, regulations and resources in detail. Within that menu all other child care related topics are included.

The Lead Agency also promotes resources and information through kidcentraltn.com, a website created by the Governor's Children's Cabinet to pull information from across state government so parents and providers can more easily find what they need. This comprehensive website includes information about children's health, education, development and support. The website kidcentraltn is consumer friendly. It includes information about the child care certificate program, child care resource and referral centers, the child care star rating system, and tips for finding the right child care. This website is promoted by multiple departments in Tennessee state government.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.2 Describe how the website ensures the widest possible access to services for families that speak languages other than English (98.33(a)):

On the bottom right corner of each web page on the Lead Agency website there is a translate button, which allows the web page to be translated across several dozen languages, powered by Google Translate.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.3 Describe how the website ensures the widest possible access to services for persons with disabilities:

The site is designed to be 508 compliant. We attempt to use alt-tags on relevant photos, embed readable PDF documents, and spell out statements that open as a hyperlink so that screen readers and other tools can easily convey what the person with the disability is attempting to open. More information can be found here:

<https://www.tn.gov/web-policies/accessibility.html>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.4 Lead Agency processes related to child care.

A required component of the consumer education website is a description of Lead Agency policies and procedures relating to child care (98.33(a) (1)). This information includes a description of how the state/territory licenses child care, a rationale for exempting providers from licensing requirements, the procedure for conducting monitoring and inspections of providers, and the policies and procedures related to criminal background checks.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Provide the link to how the Lead Agency licenses child care providers, including the rationale for exempting certain providers from licensing requirements, as described in section 5.3.6:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/how-to-become-a-licensed-child-care-provider.html>

Tennessee statute includes provisions for exempting a number of programs/facilities from licensure. Entities within this group include the following:

- Entities licensed or regulated by other agencies
- Preschool/school-age, Title I program, school-administered regulated by the Department of Education
- Private or parochial kindergartens

- Centers operated by church-related schools regulated by the Department of Education
- Educational programs
- Parents Day Out
- Recreational programs
- Camp programs
- Casual Care
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Individuals providing care for up to four children who are not related to the educator

Link to Exempt Statute:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Exempt_-_Child_Care_Services.pdf

In addition, agencies that do not meet the licensing threshold are also exempt from licensure. The definition of child care agency as defined in statute:

"Child care agency" or "agency" means and only where the context requires in any other provision of law, a place or facility, regardless of whether it is currently licensed, that is operated as a family child care home, a group child care home, a child care center, or a drop-in center, as those terms are defined in this part, or that provides child care for five (5) or more children who are not related to the primary caregiver for three (3) or more hours per day.

Among the exemptions allowed by statute, only the three categories below are allowed to participate in the Child Care Certificate Program (CCCP):

- Centers regulated by the Department of Education
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Authorized Professionals (individuals that care for up to four children who are not related to the educator)

In order to participate in CCCP these entities enter into a contract with the Lead Agency that includes compliance with all CCDBG requirements including monitoring for health and safety.

b) Provide the link to the procedure for conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers, as described in section 5.3.2:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-provider-monitoring-and-inspections.html>

c) Provide the link to the policies and procedures related to criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers and the offenses that prevent individuals from being employed by a child care provider or receiving CCDF funds, as described in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.11:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-resources-for-providers/background-checks-for-child-care-employees.html>

2.3.5 List of providers

The consumer education website must include a list of all licensed providers and, at the discretion of the Lead Agency, all providers eligible to deliver CCDF services, identified as either licensed or license-exempt. Providers caring for children to whom they are related do not need to be included. The list of providers must be searchable by ZIP Code.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Provide the website link to the searchable list of child care providers:

Below is the direct link to the searchable list of child care providers:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/WebProviderList_10-15-18.xlsx

Parents and the general public may also search for providers by zip code using the search tool on the Find Child Care page:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/find-child-care.html>

b) In addition to the licensed providers that are required to be included in your searchable list, which additional providers are included in the Lead Agency's searchable list of child care providers (please check all that apply):

- License-exempt center-based CCDF providers
- License-exempt family child care (FCC) CCDF providers
- License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- Relative CCDF child care providers

Other.

Describe

Programs approved under the Tennessee Department of Education.

c) Identify what informational elements, if any, are available in the searchable results.

Note: Quality information (if available) and monitoring results are required on the website but are not required to be a part of the search results.

Licensed Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

Provider information available on the Lead Agency's website may be accessed through a downloadable spreadsheet as well as basic and interactive search functions, including searches by address, county, and zip code. The information shared is the same for all providers.

The information available includes provider name, physical address, mailing address, county, telephone number, provider type, provider star rating, minimum and maximum ages served, capacity, open and close times, date opened, regulatory agency, and regulatory Program Evaluator name and telephone number. Additional information detailing program, environmental, or accessibility includes:

- Offers scholarships (Y/N)
- Offers sliding fee scale (Y/N)
- Offers multi-child discount (Y/N)
- Wheelchair Accessible (Y/N)
- Near public transportation (Y/N)

- Approved for transportation (Y/N)
- Charges a fee for transportation (Y/N)
- Participant in Child and Adult Care Food Program (Y/N)
- Non-Smoking (Y/N)
- No Dogs/Cats/Pets (Y/N)

Compliance history of providers, including monitoring and inspection reports, are also available using interactive searches at the website.

License-Exempt, non-CCDF Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

License-Exempt CCDF Center Based Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

Provider information available on the Lead Agency's website may be accessed through a downloadable spreadsheet as well as basic and interactive search functions, including searches by address, county, and zip code. The information

shared is the same for all providers.

The information available includes provider name, physical address, mailing address, county, telephone number, provider type, minimum and maximum ages served, capacity, open and close times, date opened, regulatory agency, and regulatory Program Evaluator name and telephone number. Additional information detailing program, environmental, or accessibility includes:

- Offers scholarships (Y/N)
- Offers sliding fee scale (Y/N)
- Offers multi-child discount (Y/N)
- Wheelchair Accessible (Y/N)
- Near public transportation (Y/N)
- Approved for transportation (Y/N)
- Charges a fee for transportation (Y/N)
- Participant in Child and Adult Care Food Program (Y/N)
- Non-Smoking (Y/N)
- No Dogs/Cats/Pets (Y/N)

Compliance history of providers, including monitoring and inspection reports, are also available using interactive searches at the website

License-Exempt CCDF Family Child Care

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

Relative CCDF Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

- Contact Information
- Enrollment Capacity
- Years in Operation
- Provider Education and Training
- Languages Spoken
- Quality Information
- Monitoring Reports
- Other.

Describe:

Programs approved under the Tennessee Department of Education. A limited number of child care centers regulated by the Department of Education (DOE) are assessed using the Environment Rating Scales®. Approximately 25 DOE centers are assessed annually.

2.3.6 Lead Agencies must also identify specific quality information on each child care provider for whom they have this information. The type of information provided is determined by the Lead Agency, and it should help families easily understand whether a

provider offers services that meet Lead Agency-specific best practices and standards or a nationally recognized, research-based set of criteria. Provider-specific quality information must only be posted on the consumer website if it is available for the individual provider.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) How does the Lead Agency determine quality ratings or other quality information to include on the website?

- Quality rating and improvement system
- National accreditation
- Enhanced licensing system
- Meeting Head Start/Early Head Start requirements
- Meeting prekindergarten quality requirements
- School-age standards, where applicable
- Other.

Describe

b) For what types of providers are quality ratings or other indicators of quality available?

- Licensed CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

Licensed child care agencies (centers, family homes, and group homes) voluntarily participate in the Child Care Report Card and Star Quality Rating system.

The primary considerations that determine a center-based child care provider's Star Quality rating are:

- o Director Qualifications
- o Professional Development
- o Parent/Family Involvement
- o Ratio and Group Size
- o Staff Compensation
- o Program Assessment
- o Developmental Learning

The primary considerations that determine a family or group home child care provider's Star Quality rating are:

- o Professional Development
- o Parent/Family Involvement
- o Business Management
- o Program Assessment
- o Developmental Learning

Licensed non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

License-exempt center-based CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

License-exempt FCC CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

License-exempt non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

Relative child care providers.

Describe the quality information:

Other.

Describe

A limited number of child care centers regulated by the Department of Education (DOE) are assessed using the Environment Rating Scales®. Approximately 25 DOE centers are assessed annually.

2.3.7 Lead Agencies are required to post monitoring and inspection reports on the consumer education website for each licensed provider and for each non-relative provider eligible to provide CCDF services on the consumer education website. These reports must include results of required annual monitoring visits and visits due to major

substantiated complaints about a provider's failure to comply with health and safety requirements and child care policies. The reports must be in plain language and be timely to ensure that the results of the reports are available and easily understood by parents when they are deciding on a child care provider. Lead Agencies must post at least 3 years of reports when available, going forward (not retrospectively), beginning October 1, 2018.

Certify by responding to the questions below:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) What is the Lead Agency's definition of plain language and describe the process for receiving feedback from parents and the public about readability of reports.

The Lead Agency defines "plain language" as communication that is clear and easily understood by the general public. The concept as related to inspection reports also includes presenting information in a format that contributes to a better understanding of the material. For example, the regulation for posting the results of monitoring and inspection reports identifies three required elements:

- Date of Inspection
- Information on Corrective Action
- Any Health and Safety Violations (including any fatalities and serious injuries occurring at the provider)

Upon completing an inspection of a child care agency the Licensing Program Evaluator encodes information about all inspections and any associated violations observed in the Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS). Parents and the general public can access this information on the website by clicking on the Compliance History tab associated with each agency. Doing so will display a table for each inspection that includes the following information from left to right:

- Date of Inspection
- Type of Inspection (Monitoring Visit, Complaint Investigation, Serious Injury Investigation, Fatality Investigation, etc.)
- Violation Correction Date
- Violation Narrative

Information about any violation observed, the rule citation and the corrective action that was encoded in TLCS will display in the Violation Narrative portion of the table. If there are no violations associated with the visit the words "No Violations Found" will be displayed in narrative cell. Presenting the information in this concise straight-forward

format allows parents and the general public to easily review the inspections and associated violations for a child care agency. Feedback from parents/public about the readability of reports may be received via phone, email or in writing. The lead agency provides a number of avenues for receiving feedback that include direct communication with state office or field licensing staff, general email communications through the child care services mailbox, or communications through the Department main number or email mailbox.

b) Are monitoring and inspection reports in plain language?

If yes,

include a website link to a sample monitoring report.

<https://www.tn.gov/accweb/faces/providerList.jsp>

Unfortunately, due to the security features associated with the Find Child Care locator, it is not possible to provide a direct link to a monitoring and inspection report for a specific child care agency. In order to access the information for a particular agency you must first locate the agency on the website. Once the agency is located, there is a direct link for the Compliance History information for that agency. For example, follow the steps below to find the Compliance History information for Community Child Care Services, Inc. in Sumner County at Zip Code: 37075:

Go to the Find Child Care page:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/find-child-care.html>

On this page select the "Click here to search by county" link.

Next click on "Sumner County" on the state map.

Next click on the Zip Code link for 37075.

Next scroll down to the "Community Child Care Services, Inc." (agencies are in alphabetical order).

Now click on the Compliance History tab associated with the agency to see the information associated with any visits.

If no,

describe how plain language summaries are used to meet the regulatory requirements and include a link to a sample summary.

c) Check to certify what the monitoring and inspection reports and/or their plain language summaries include:

Date of inspection

Health and safety violations, including those violations that resulted in fatalities or serious injuries.

Describe how these health and safety violations are prominently displayed.

Additional visit types were added to the system to specifically identify fatalities or serious injuries. All violations are prominently displayed on the compliance history tab on the website.

Corrective action plans taken by the State and/or child care provider.

Describe

Licensing Program Evaluators include a corrective action statement for all violations in the narrative of the case management system that is also displayed on the website under the compliance history tab .

d) The process for correcting inaccuracies in reports.

Providers may contact the Child Care Licensing by phone, email, or in writing to identify report errors that are reviewed by Child Care Licensing field management who will ensure that necessary corrections are completed. This process is applicable to all licensed, regulated, or license-exempt agencies.

e) The process for providers to appeal the findings in reports, including the time requirements, timeframes for filing the appeal, for the investigation, and for removal of any violations from the website determined on appeal to be unfounded.

Providers may appeal enforcement actions by submitting a request in writing within ten (10) days. Appeals of enforcement actions are heard by a Child Care Board of Review, as required by T.C.A. § 71-3-510 was established to hear the appeals of the denial, revocation or the restriction or limitation of other than summary suspensions of child care

agencies licensed by the lead agency. Inaccuracies may be corrected at any time by contacting Child Care Licensing by phone, email, or in writing to identify report errors.

f) How reports are posted in a timely manner. Specifically, provide the Lead Agency's definition of 'timely' and describe how it ensures that reports are posted within its timeframe. Note: While Lead Agencies define 'timely,' we recommend Lead Agencies update results as soon as possible and no later than 90 days after an inspection or corrective action is taken

Visit reports must be completed and encoded in the Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS) database within five (5) business days as required by Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 13 and Child and Adult Care Licensing Policy and Procedures Manual (Feb 2013). Child Care Licensing field management monitor this process through a review of visit information encoded by assigned staff that ensures information is encoded accurately and timely. Upon the internal approval process, information including date of visit, visit type, date of violation correction, violations, and statement of corrective action will be posted to the Lead Agency website within twenty-four hours.

g) Describe the process for maintaining monitoring reports on the website. Specifically, provide the minimum number of years reports are posted and the policy for removing reports (98.33(a)(4)(iv)).

Violations are available at the Lead Agency website from July 01, 2013. Corrective action and visit type information were added in 2017. There is no policy for removing reports after a certain amount of time has passed.

h) Any additional providers on which the Lead Agency chooses to include reports. Note - Licensed providers and CCDF providers must have monitoring and inspection reports posted on their consumer education website.

License-exempt non-CCDF providers

Relative child care providers

Other.

Describe

Child Care Centers regulated by the Department of Education and exempt Boys and Girls Clubs that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program.

2.3.8 Aggregate data on serious injuries, deaths, and substantiated cases of child abuse that have occurred in child care settings each year must be posted on the consumer education website. This aggregate information on serious injuries and deaths must be organized by category of care (e.g., center, FCC, etc.) and licensing status for all eligible CCDF provider categories in the state. The information on instances of substantiated child abuse does not have to be organized by category of care or licensing status. The aggregate report should not list individual provider-specific information or names.

Certify by providing:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) The designated entity to which child care providers must submit reports of any serious injuries or deaths of children occurring in child care (98.16 (ff)) and describe how the Lead Agency obtains the aggregate data from the entity.

The rules of the Department of Human Services require child care facilities to notify the Lead Agency of all serious incidents the same day of the incident, by contacting the Complaint Hotline. Once received, this information is entered into the Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS) database. Cases of child abuse and neglect are investigated by the Department of Children's Services (DCS). The Lead Agency receives an investigation summary from DCS related to any allegations of abuse or neglect in licensed child care settings. Any documentation received from DCS that indicate cases of substantiated abuse are aggregated and verified with DCS annually and posted to the Lead Agency website.

b) The definition of "substantiated child abuse" used by the Lead Agency for this requirement.

Rules of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services Child Protective Services
Chapter 0250-07-09-.01:

(1) "Abuse" exists when a child victim is suffering from, has sustained, or may be in immediate danger of suffering from or sustaining a wound, injury, disability or physical or mental condition caused by brutality, neglect or other actions or inactions of a parent,

relative, guardian or caregiver.

(10) "Neglect" means the actions or omissions of a parent, relative, guardian, or caregiver which subject a child victim to actual or threatened harm, including, but not limited to, conduct which leads to a child suffering from any of the conditions listed in the definition of "dependent and neglected child" set out at T.C.A. § 37-1-102(b)(13) (2016 and as amended).

(13) "Substantiated" means the classification assigned to an individual determined to be a perpetrator of abuse, severe child abuse, child sexual abuse, or neglect. The term substantiated also encompasses synonymous terms set out in rules, policy, and statute, including, but not limited to, "indicated", "founded", or other terms signifying the individual was determined to be the perpetrator of child abuse or neglect.

c) The definition of "serious injury" used by the Lead Agency for this requirement.

The department defines injuries where treatment by a medical professional was necessary. If a medical professional determines that no injury occurred, or treatment is unnecessary, the incident is not counted as a serious injury.

d) The website link to the page where the aggregate number of serious injuries, deaths, and substantiated instances of child abuse are posted.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/FFY2017-Child-Care-Data.pdf>

The lead agency is beginning to use a serious injury reporting form that includes the ability to select from each of the available care categories.

2.3.9 The consumer education website should include contact information on referrals to local child care resource and referral organizations. How does the Lead Agency provide referrals to local CCR&R agencies through the consumer education website? Describe and include a website link to this information:

The Lead Agency website includes a page dedicated to CCR&R. Information about how to contact CCR&R is also included in the Consumer Education Statement discussed in section 2.7.

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-resource-referral-centers.html>

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/article/child-care-resource-and-referral-centers>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.10 The consumer education website should include information on how parents can contact the Lead Agency, or its designee, or other programs that can help the parent understand information included on the website. Describe and include a website link to this information:

Contact information for the Child Care assistance and Child Care Licensing offices are maintained on the website and included in the Consumer Education Statement materials:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-assistance-office-locator.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Child%20Care%20Staff%20Directory%20January%202018.pdf>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.11 Provide the website link to the Lead Agency's consumer education website. Note: An amendment is required if this website changes.

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services.html>

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.3.12 Other. Identify and describe the components that are still pending per the instructions on

CCDF Plan Response Options for Areas where Implementation is Still in Progress in the Introduction.

Not Applicable

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.4 Additional Consumer and Provider Education

Lead Agencies are required to certify that they will collect and disseminate information about the full diversity of child care services to promote parental choice to parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers. In addition to the consumer education website, the consumer education information can be provided through CCR&R organizations or through direct conversations with eligibility case workers and child care providers. Outreach and counseling can also be effectively provided via information sessions or intake processes for families (658E(c)(2)(E); 98.15(b)(4); 98.33(b)).

In questions 2.4.1 through 2.4.5, certify by describing:

2.4.1 How the Lead Agency shares information with eligible parents, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers about the availability of child care services provided through CCDF and other programs for which the family may be eligible, such as state preK, as well as the availability of financial assistance to obtain child care services. At a minimum, describe what is provided (e.g., such methods as written materials, the website, and direct communications) and how information is tailored for these audiences.

The majority of information for parents, the general public, and child care providers is shared through the Lead Agency website and partner websites to include but not limited to the following:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services.html>

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/>

Information is also made available through written materials placed at county DHS offices or direct communication for individuals without internet access. Website resources are often grouped under a heading that identifies the targeted audience.

The Lead Agency is exploring the possibility of a statewide media campaign to raise awareness about the importance of quality child care services and supports available to families. The Lead Agency will seek lessons learned from a recent campaign managed by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, TN Together, to tackle the opioid epidemic.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.4.2 The partnerships formed to make information about the availability of child care services available to families.

The Lead Agency maintains a contract to provide statewide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services. The contract includes provisions for assisting families in identifying and understanding high quality care and for updating their website to include additional resources for families. The Lead Agency also partners with other state agencies to utilize Geographic Informational System (GIS) data to provide an interactive search for child care by typing in an address on the “Find Child Care” page.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.4.3 How the Lead Agency provides the required information about the following programs and benefits to the parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, providers. In the description include, at a minimum, what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners who assist in providing this information.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Parents are informed about the website and TANF eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists during child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the TANF requirements, services and contact information. Brochures are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information on TANF to families. <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/families>

Head Start and Early Head Start programs:

Head Start / Early Head Start: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists, during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.kidcentraltn.com/article/head-start>
<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/early-head-start-ehs>

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and

Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://thda.org/business-partners/liheap>

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) Program:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap.html>

Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) program:

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/fhw/wic.html>;
<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/article/women-infants-and-children-wic>.

Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP):

Child and Adult Care Food Program: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/children/dhs-nutrition-programs/child-and-adult-care-food-program.html>;
<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/humanservices/children/dhs-nutrition-programs/learn-about-the-summer-food-service-program.html>

Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP):

TennCare Medicaid: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families.

<https://www.tn.gov/tenncare/members-applicants/eligibility/tenncare-medicaid.html>

Children's Health Insurance Program (CoverKids): Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.tn.gov/coverkids.html>

Programs carried out under IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information. Brochures and resources are available in English and Spanish. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families. <https://www.tn.gov/education/finance-and-monitoring/idea.html>

Information about all these programs is also provided through kidcentraltn.com, as a centralized website where parents can find information about children's health, education, development and support.

2.4.4 Describe how the Lead Agency makes available to parents, providers, and the general public information on research and best practices concerning children's development, including physical health and development, particularly healthy eating and physical activity. Information about successful parent and family engagement should also be shared. At a minimum, include what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners in providing this information.

Pulling together information from across state departments with subject matter expertise, the Kidcentraltn website serves as a clearing house for information on child health, education, development, and support for families, providers, and the public.

<http://www.kidcentraltn.com/>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.4.5 Describe how information on the Lead Agency's policies regarding the social-emotional and behavioral issues and early childhood mental health of young children, including positive behavioral intervention and support models based on research and best practices for those from birth to school age, are shared with families, providers, and the general public. At a minimum, include what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how information is tailored to a variety of audiences and include any partners in providing this information.

Families:

- Through web materials such as those on kidcentraltn.com
- The Kidcentraltn.com website includes a number of resources regarding the social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children.
- Positive Action - The Positive Action Prevention Program is an evidence-based substance abuse prevention program. The program addresses social, behavioral and academic performance, and core risk factors related to self-esteem, self-efficacy and overall risk-related behaviors of children and adolescents. The program is provided in schools and other community settings.
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health –

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/positive-action>

- Early Connections Network - The Early Connections Network (ECN) is a System of Care (SOC) for children from birth - 5 years of age with social, emotional and behavioral needs and for their families. ECN brings together families, caregivers, teachers, providers, governmental agencies and supports to improve access to quality care for those with mental health challenges and to prepare children for school and for life. ECN has a special focus on working with the children and families of military service members and veterans. <https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/early-connections-network>

Agencies:

- The Keeping Kids Safe Curriculum was designed to assist agencies in providing the most effective program possible - one that children will enjoy and understand. Research has established that children can be given the tools and knowledge to be safer. Because of this, the purpose of this safety curriculum is to improve the knowledge, self-confidence and assertiveness skills of children thereby:
- Promoting disclosure of victimization
- Enhancing communication between parents and children about personal safety
- Reinforcing adult supervision and protection
- Assisting children in learning to identify adults they can trust who can help them with problems too big for them to handle alone. https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/keeping_kids_safe_content_updated_wdraft_cover.pdf.

General Public:

- Through web materials such as those on kidcentraltn.com. The kidcentraltn.com website includes a number of resources regarding the social- emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health of young children.
- Positive Action - The Positive Action Prevention Program is an evidence-based substance abuse prevention program. The program addresses social, behavioral and academic performance, and core risk factors related to self-esteem, self-efficacy and overall risk-related behaviors of children and adolescents. The program is provided in schools and other community settings.
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
–<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/positive-action>
- Early Connections Network - The Early Connections Network (ECN) is a System of Care (SOC) for children from birth - 5 years of age with social, emotional and behavioral needs and for their families. ECN brings together families, caregivers, teachers, providers, governmental agencies and supports to improve access to quality care for those with mental health challenges and to prepare children for school and for life. ECN has a special focus on working with the children and families of military service members and veterans. <https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/early-connections-network>

Partners:

- Tennessee Voices for Children, Inc. (TVC) is a statewide and national source of referral, support, and advocacy for families and the systems that serve them. Through the

Statewide Family Network and its other ten main programs, the organization informs, supports, and assists parents and providers statewide. The Lead Agency partners with TVC along with other public and nonprofit agencies under Team TN to support early childhood mental health services and programs for early care and child care agencies about social, emotional, and behavioral health and well-being. <http://www.tnvoices.org>

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

2.4.6 Describe the Lead Agency's policies to prevent the suspension and expulsion of children from birth to age 5 in child care and other early childhood programs receiving CCDF funds (98.16(ee)), including how those policies are shared with families, providers, and the general public.

The child care licensing rules for licensed child care centers, group homes, and family homes includes requirements for having a written expulsion policy. Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01:

(13) The agency shall have a written expulsion policy.

(a) The policy shall be:

Clearly articulated to staff and parents;

Developmentally appropriate and consistent; and

Non-discriminatory.

(b) Other options shall be considered prior to expulsion, such as but not limited to reducing the number of days or amount of time the child may attend, or if applicable, referrals to the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), Early Intervention System, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

(c) Procedures shall be developed to allow for a planned transition of a child to another program if expulsion must occur.

(d) Aggregate data that includes reasons for expulsions shall be maintained and reported to the Department annually.

In addition, the Tennessee Department of Human Services Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension Policy Statement was developed as a resource for all licensed agencies and non-licensed agencies (that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program):

Purpose

The Tennessee Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion policy statement is a requirement of the CCDBG Reauthorization Act of 2014 that aims to prevent, reduce, and eliminate suspension and expulsion in early care and educational settings.

High quality child care and early learning programs are important to preventing suspensions and expulsions in the early learning setting. It is recommended that programs focus on fostering the social and emotional health of children. Early childhood education programs are responsible for creating positive learning environments that focus on preventing expulsions and suspensions, encouraging partnerships between programs and families to support healthy development, and ensuring fairness, equity and continuous improvement to support children's social, emotional and behavioral health.

Definitions

- Expulsion – The permanent dismissal of a child from the assigned early childhood setting for disciplinary purposes.
- Suspension- The temporary removal of a child from the assigned early childhood setting for disciplinary purposes.
- Social Emotional and Behavioral Health – The child's developing capacity to form secure relationships, experience and regulate emotions and explore and learn.
- Challenging Behavior – Any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults.

Recommendations

- Develop and implement policies that promote social emotional health to prevent, limit and eliminate suspensions and expulsions in early learning childcare settings.
- Invest in professional development, training and education to prepare and develop educators so that they are equipped to support children's social and emotional health.
- Identify and adopt specific strategies to include positive behavior interventions and discipline and guidance practices to effectively manage challenging behaviors in the early learning setting.
- Research best practices on classroom management techniques in order to assist educators in developing and implementing effective and intentional techniques.
- Provide opportunities for family engagement activities such as but not limited to parent teacher conferences, parent meetings and developmental monitoring and screenings to allow educators, parents, and partners to develop strong partnerships and healthy support systems.
- Provide parent resources to give parents additional information about community supports such as, but not limited to brochures, handouts and websites, on a variety of topics such as child development, social and emotional health, early mental health counselors, developmentally appropriate behavior management, support groups, family

activities, etc.

- Develop and implement a means of documenting efforts to reduce and prevent challenging behaviors; examples include teacher observations, teacher and classroom modifications, daily progress reports, parent conferences, consults with early mental health professionals.
- Written policies should be communicated to parents and classroom expectations for positive behavior and consequences should be communicated to children and parents.

Children with Unique Needs and Challenging Behaviors

Early childhood programs are responsible for creating environments that promote children's social, emotional, and behavioral health. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services early childhood prevention and discipline practices should be used as learning opportunities to guide children's appropriate behavioral development.

The following outlines developmentally appropriate social, emotional, and behavioral health promotion practices in the early childhood and child care environment.

- Forming strong, supporting and nurturing relationships with children and families including valuing of cultural diversity.
- Reinforcing children's desired behaviors and implementing logical, non-punitive consequences that is consistent and developmentally appropriate for challenging behaviors.
- Paying distinct attention to the developmental appropriateness of both behavioral expectations and consequences for challenging behavior, given the substantial developmental and experiential differences among children birth through five years of age.

Resources

- https://www.ecmhc.org/tutorials/social-emotional/mod1_0.html
- <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/2.2.0.8>
- <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/2.2.0.6>
- <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/training.htm>
- <https://www.kidcentraltn.com/program/regional-intervention-program-rip-centerstone>
- https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/research/pro/about_peabody_research/funded_projects/center_on_social_and_emotional_foundations_project_home.php
- <https://www.tn.gov/education/early-learning/tennessee-early-intervention-system-teis.html>
- <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/states.html#tennessee>

The Lead Agency also provides an Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension Policy template to assist agencies in creating their personal document:

Sample Policy

The Tennessee Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension policy statement is a requirement of the CCDBG Reauthorization Act of 2014 that aims to prevent, reduce, and eliminate expulsion and suspension in early care and educational settings.

It is recommended that early childhood programs focus on fostering social-emotional development, appropriately responding to challenging behaviors by incorporating preventive guidance, discipline practices and policies before ever considering expulsion or suspension from early childhood programs.

Guidance for Prevention of Expulsion and Suspension and Expulsion

- Developmentally appropriate practices provide for stimulating and interactive learning environments, diversity, age appropriate expectations, small group activities, teachable moments and a knowledge of research-based evidence and best practices in child development and early learning and education.
- Invest in professional development, training and education to ensure educators have the competencies to support children's social and emotional health.
- Develop and implement classroom schedules that meet the needs of the children.
- Adapt learning environments to promote healthy social interactions with others.
- Develop healthy and nurturing relationships with children. Develop strong partnerships and relationships with parents.
- Develop and implement classroom expectations that are developmentally appropriate, clear and consistent.
- Provide opportunities family engagement.

Other Options Prior to Expulsion and Suspension

Prior to the expulsion or suspension of any child from this child care facility, the staff and Director will:

- Refer child to the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), Early Intervention System, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, etc.
- Reduce the number of days in care for a specified amount of time.
- Reduce the amount of time the child may attend for a specified amount of time.
- Conference with parents to discuss positive behavior interventions and development of goals.
- Document efforts to prevent and reduce expulsion.
- Identify and engage mental health consultants and community resources after obtaining parent permission.
- Provide reasonable accommodations.

Transition Procedures

If an expulsion must occur and the child care facility has exhausted all other options, the child care agency will assist the child and family in transitioning to another program by identifying and engaging mental health consultants and community resources to assist in determining the most appropriate placement for the child. This child care facility will collaborate with parents / guardians to utilize appropriate referrals and community resources to assist in securing an appropriate placement for the child.

Resources

Regional Intervention Program (615) 963-1177

Tennessee Early Intervention System 1-800-852-7157

Tennessee Voices for Children (615) 269-7751

Centerstone (615) 460-4100

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations For Early Learning (CSEFEL) (615) 322-8150

STEP, Inc. (423) 639-0125

Web Resources- Parent

www.parentcenterhub.org

www.teis.org www.tnstep.org

www.parenttoolkit.com

www.cdc.gov/parents

<https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu>

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea>

Web Resources- Facility

www.ecmhc.org

www.pyramidmodel.org

<https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea>

www.challengingbehavior.org

www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

Communication

Employees - The Expulsion and Suspension Policy will be incorporated into the employee / staff handbook and training practices. The agency Director will explain suspension and expulsion policies to all current staff and any new staff. All existing staff and any new staff are required to be knowledgeable of the policy and will sign a statement acknowledging they have received and read the agency's Expulsion and Suspension Policy.

Parents / Guardians – The Expulsion and Suspension policy will be incorporated into the parent handbook. Within thirty (30) days of adopting the policy, the Director shall disseminate and review the policy with parents / guardians of all currently enrolled children. A copy of the policy will be disseminated and reviewed with newly enrolled children upon enrollment. All parents / guardians will sign a statement acknowledging they have received and read the agency's Expulsion and Suspension policy.

Parent Acknowledgement

I, the parent / guardian of _____

Child's Name

acknowledge that the Expulsion and Suspension Policy was explained to me and I have read and received a copy of the Expulsion and Suspension Policy.

Parent Signature

Date

The Lead Agency trained all field staff on the early childhood expulsion and suspension policy by June 30, 2018.

The information has been shared with child care providers via email, presentations, and face to face meetings. The CCR&R will support child care providers in the implementation of these policies and other related activities through its health, safety, and well-being coaches.

The Lead Agency is exploring a partnership with the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN) to support infant early childhood mental health in

child care learning environments and among the early care and education workforce.

The information has been shared with child care providers via email, presentations, and face to face meetings. The CCR&R will support child care providers in the implementation of these policies and other related activities through its health, safety, and well-being coaches.

The Lead Agency is exploring a partnership with the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN) to support infant early childhood mental health in child care learning environments and among the early care and education workforce.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

[2.5 Procedures for Providing Information on Developmental Screenings](#)

Lead Agencies are required to provide information on developmental screenings, including information on resources and services that the State can deploy, such as the use of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act and developmental screening services available under IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C, in conducting those developmental screenings and in providing referrals to services for children who receive subsidies. Lead Agencies must also include a description of how a family or child care provider can use these resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for children who receive subsidies and who might be at risk of cognitive or other developmental delays, which can include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays (658E(c)(2)(E)(ii)). Lead Agencies are required to provide this information to eligible families during CCDF intake and to child care providers through training and education (98.33(c)).

2.5.1 Certify by describing:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) How the Lead Agency collects and disseminates information on existing resources and services available for conducting developmental screenings to CCDF parents, the general public, and where applicable, child care providers (98.15(b)(3)).

The Lead Agency collects information about existing resources and services available for conducting developmental screenings from the Tennessee Department of Health through monthly informational meetings and disseminates this information to all licensed agencies and non-licensed agencies that serve applicable populations and participate in the Child Care Certificate Program, as a resource to share with families. This information is also shared with CCDF parents through our Child Care Certificate Program Specialists during intake eligibility and redetermination. The information is also made available in Spanish, Somali, and Arabic.

Parents are also informed that if they have concerns or questions about a child's development and are interested in developmental screening, they can contact their child's pediatrician, local Health Department, <https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/localdepartments.html> , or their local TEIS (Tennessee Early Intervention System) <https://www.tn.gov/education/early-learning/tennessee-early-intervention-system-teis.html>, and for children 3 years and older, they can contact the School-Based Support Services, <https://www.tn.gov/education/early-learning/school-based-support-centers.html> of the local school system. Information about Developmental Monitoring and Screening, for providers and parents can be accessed through the following links shared with all potential families and providers:

Milestone Moments - Learn the Signs. Act Early

https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/milestonemomentseng508.pdf

Developmental Milestones Checklist

https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/all_checklists.pdf

Learn More About Your Child's Development: Developmental Monitoring and Screening

https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/developmentalscreening.pdf

The following additional resources are shared with Parents and are available at

kidcentral.com and TennCare:

Detailed information on developmental screening services is available at:

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/article/screenings-newborns-and-infants-birth-12-months>

<https://www.kidcentraltn.com/article/screenings-beyond-12-months>

b) The procedures for providing information on and referring families and child care providers to the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program - carried out under Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) - and developmental screening services available under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.).
<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/resources-for-parents.html>

c) How the Lead Agency gives information on developmental screenings to parents receiving a subsidy as part of the intake process. Include the information provided, ways it is provided, and any partners in this work.

A Resource list is given to parents during the intake process. Parents are informed about the website and eligibility by Child Care Certificate Specialists during their child care eligibility and redetermination visits. Families are also given brochures that provide information on the requirements, services and contact information for accessing developmental screenings. Brochures and resources are also made available in languages other than English. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Family Engagement Quality Coaches also provide resources and information to families.

d) How CCDF families or child care providers receiving CCDF can use the available resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for CCDF children at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays.

The information provided to parents upon intake and renewal includes contact information that parents can use to schedule screenings.

e) How child care providers receive this information through training and professional development.

Child care providers will receive training and technical assistance on developmental monitoring and screening by CCR&R Statewide Infant Toddler Specialist. The available dates for training and professional development will be made available to all providers

through the CCR&R professional Development training calendar.

f) Provide the citation for this policy and procedure related to providing information on developmental screenings.

The Benefits of Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Young Children is available at the Lead Agency website: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/resources-for-parents.html>

2.6 Consumer Statement for Parents Receiving CCDF Funds

Lead Agencies must provide CCDF parents with a consumer statement in hard copy or electronically (such as referral to a consumer education website) that contains specific information about the child care provider they select. This information about the child care provider selected by the parent includes health and safety requirements met by the provider, any licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider, the date the provider was last inspected, any history of violations of these requirements, and any voluntary quality standards met by the provider. It must also describe how CCDF subsidies are designed to promote equal access, how to submit a complaint through a hotline, and how to contact local resource and referral agencies or other community-based supports that assist parents in finding and enrolling in quality child care (98.33(d)). Please note that if the consumer statement is provided electronically, Lead Agencies should consider how to ensure that the statement is accessible to parents and that parents have a way to contact someone to address questions they have.

2.6.1 Certify by describing:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) How the Lead Agency provides parents receiving CCDF funds with a consumer statement.

The Lead Agency created a consumer education statement that is accessible via the website. A companion handout was created for the Child Care Certificate Program to distribute to families that outlines information on the website and includes phone contact details for the Child Care Resource & Referral, Child Care Licensing, and Child Care Certificate Program offices. The handout is designed to enable the parent to locate the information on the website or contact the applicable office to get the information by

phone if they do not have internet access.

In addition, the Lead Agency also created a Child Care Certificate Program Fact Sheet to help communicate information about the available types of child care payment assistance.

b) What is included in the statement, including when the consumer statement is provided to families.

The consumer education statement contains tools to help the parent choose the child care setting that best suits their family's needs and information about how to find specific information about the full range of eligible child care settings including: Health and safety requirements How to download a list of providers or search for agencies by zip code, county, or the parent's address Compliance history Provider quality rating Contact information for CCR&R, the Child Care Certificate Program, and Child Care Licensing office Information on developmental monitoring and screening Information about how to submit a complaint or report violations

Information included within the Child Care Certificate Program Fact Sheet includes:

The Lead Agency Child Care Certificate Program provides child care payment support to families who are working, in post-secondary education programs, teen parents who are enrolled in high school or those who are participating in the Families First program. Child care payment assistance not only allows parents and guardians a sense of security while they work or pursue educational goals, it also promotes children's learning and development in child care environments. TDHS provides financial assistance with child care costs for families meeting income guideline criteria through several child care assistance programs. Eligibility is re-determined every twelve (12) months.

Types of Child Care Payment Assistance:

Families First participants are eligible to receive child care to assist in completing their approved activity on their Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP). Families must be determined eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) by Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) staff before they can participate in the program.

Transitional Child Care or TCC is available for qualifying families for 18 months following the successful closure of Families First cash assistance. Thirty hours of paid work per week, including self-employment and/or education and training hours must be met to receive TCC.

The At-Risk Child Care program serves guardians of Families First child-only cases that are working and/or post-secondary education programs. Child-only guardians are typically grandparents, aunts, or uncles that have care and control of a relative child. Thirty hours of paid work including self-employment and/or education and training hours must be met to receive ARCO.

Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance is available to income eligible families who are working or enrolled in post-secondary education programs. Smart Steps was established to provide child care financial assistance to eligible families with children ages six (6) weeks until kindergarten. The family is not required to receive other benefits through TDHS to qualify.

The Teen Parent Child Care Program serves teen parents who are enrolled in and attending high school and who meet income guidelines. Assistance may be available for eligible teens living at home with their parent(s) or those who are emancipated and living independently from their parent(s). Written or verbal communication from school staff that the school's requirements are met is adequate verification for school enrollment.

c) Provide a link to a sample consumer statement or a description if a link is not available.

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/resources-for-parents.html>

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

In providing child care assistance to families, Lead Agencies are required to implement these policies and procedures: a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination periods, a process to account for irregular fluctuations in earnings, a policy ensuring that families' work schedules are not disrupted by program requirements, policies to provide for a job search of not fewer than 3 months if the Lead Agency exercises the option to discontinue assistance, and policies for the graduated phase-out of assistance. Also, procedures for the enrollment of homeless children and children in foster care, if served, pending the completion of documentation, are required.

Note: Lead Agencies are not prohibited from establishing policies that extend eligibility beyond 12 months to align program requirements. For example, Lead Agencies can allow children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start, state or local prekindergarten, and other collaborative programs to finish the program year. This type of policy promotes continuity for families receiving services through multiple benefit programs.

In this section, Lead Agencies will identify how they define eligible children and families and how the Lead Agency improves access for vulnerable children and families. This section also addresses the policies that protect working families and determine a family's contribution to the child care payment.

3.1 Eligible Children and Families

At the time when eligibility is determined or redetermined, children must (1) be younger than age 13; (2) reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the State's median income for a family of the same size and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of said family); and (3)(a) reside with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program or (b) receives, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in (3)(a.) (658P(4)).

3.1.1 Eligibility criteria based on a child's age

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) The CCDF program serves children

from 6 Weeks

(weeks/months/years)

through 12

years (under age 13). . Note: Do not include children incapable of self-care or under court supervision, who are reported below in (b) and (c).

b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children age 13 and above but below age 19 years who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care?(658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3))

No

Yes,

and the upper age is 18

(may not equal or exceed age 19).

If yes, Provide the Lead Agency definition of physical and/or mental incapacity: The Lead Agency policy definition is: Physical or mental fitness means that an individual is fit for employment and does not suffer from any disability which would prevent his/her being gainfully employed.

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

No.

Yes

and the upper age is 18

(may not equal or exceed age 19)

d) How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

"residing with":

The Lead Agency uses the TANF definition which is to be eligible to receive child care benefits, a child must live in a place of residence maintained by a specified relative (within the 5th degree) as his or her home and the home of the child. This same individual must have care and control of the child. A relative is considered to have care and control of child when he/she has the major responsibility for parental obligations of day-to-day care, support, supervision and guidance for the child.

The Lead Agency also utilizes the non-TANF definition, which provides as follows: In order for a child to be eligible to receive child care benefits they must be residing with a parent/guardian that meets the following criteria:

A biological or adoptive parent, relative or individual with legal custody to the child who:

- Provides a home for the child, and
- Exercises primary responsibility for care/control, and
- Is responsible for providing financial support, and
- Is included in the household (HH) unit.

"in loco parentis":

The Lead Agency TANF definition of in loco parentis is a caretaker within the 5th degree of relationship to be eligible for assistance.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) How does the Lead Agency define "working or attending a job training and educational program" for the purposes of CCDF eligibility at the time of determination? Provide the definitions below for:

"Working":

The Tennessee program aligns its definition with the TANF program. For individuals receiving TANF cash assistance, any TANF-countable activity per the State's Work Verification Plan qualifies as "work" for the purposes of receiving child care

assistance. Thirty hours of paid work per week, including self-employment and/or education and training hours, must be met to receive post-TANF cash child care assistance. Work that does not meet the federal minimum wage requirement is allowed, but the "countable" hours per week are determined by dividing the gross weekly income by the federal minimum wage.

Non-TANF Child Care:

To be eligible for Non-TANF Child Care, the parent/guardian must comply with at least one of the following work and/or education requirements:

1. The Parent/Guardian must be employed no less than thirty (30) hours per week, enrolled in a post-secondary education activity combined with employment or enrolled in a full-time post-secondary education program.

a. Parent/Guardian enrolled in post-secondary education programs must maintain full-time student status based on the definition of full-time status by the institution.

b. Parent/Guardian enrolled in graduate programs may count up to six (6) hours toward the work requirement with verification from the institution. An additional hour for each course up to two (2) hours can be counted as study time for a combined maximum of eight (8) hours.

2. In a two-parent household, both parents must meet one of the following criteria:

a. Both parents employed at least thirty (30) hours per week.

b. One parent employed at least thirty (30) hours per week with the second parent attending a post-secondary education program either full-time or part-time.

c. Both parents enrolled in post-secondary education; one must be attending full-time as defined by the institution.

d. One parent is meeting the thirty (30) hour per week work requirement and the second parent is disabled and cannot meet the needs of the child. The parent with the disability may qualify with verification of the disability.

3. Parent/guardian enrolled in an approved training or workforce development program.

4. Teen Parent/guardian enrolled and attending an approved secondary education program.

The Lead agency is relaxing the requirement for hours worked as a point of eligibility for essential workers during the COVID-19 emergency. The parent/guardian must

verify that he/she is currently employed in a position identified as essential services. This provision is effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to no more than 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

"Job training":

For individuals receiving TANF cash assistance, any TANF-countable activity per the State's Work Verification Plan qualifies as "work" for the purposes of receiving child care assistance. For the post-TANF population, the following education and training hours can be counted: Class hours in any public school, Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) school (including Internet courses), or accredited private institution; Non-paid work performed in college service learning or volunteer programs; Internship hours; Laboratory hours; Tutoring hours received or provided by the participant; and Clients participating in educational activities will be allowed to count supervised homework/study time and one hour of unsupervised homework/study time for each hour of class time. Supervised homework/study time must be verified and documented to be countable toward educational training hours. The total countable homework/study time may not exceed the hours required or advised by the educational program.

"Education":

For individuals receiving TANF cash assistance, any TANF-countable activity per the State's Work Verification Plan qualifies as "work" for the purposes of receiving child care assistance. For the post-TANF population, the following education and training hours can be counted: Class hours in any public school, Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) school (including Internet courses), or accredited private institution; Non-paid work performed in college service learning or volunteer programs; Internship hours; Laboratory hours; Tutoring hours received or provided by the participant; and Clients participating in educational activities will be allowed to count supervised homework/study time and one hour of unsupervised homework/study time for each hour of class time. Supervised homework/study time must be verified and documented to be countable toward educational training hours. The total countable homework/study time may not exceed the hours required or advised by the educational program.

"Attending job training or education" (e.g. number of hours, travel time):

For individuals receiving TANF cash assistance, any TANF-countable activity per the State's Work Verification Plan qualifies as "work" for the purposes of receiving child care assistance. For the post-TANF population, the following education and training hours can be counted: Class hours in any public school, Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) school (including Internet courses), or accredited private institution; Non-paid work performed in college service learning or volunteer programs; Internship hours; Laboratory hours; Tutoring hours received or provided by the participant; and Clients participating in educational activities will be allowed to count supervised homework/study time and one hour of unsupervised homework/study time for each hour of class time. Supervised homework/study time must be verified and documented to be countable toward educational training hours. The total countable homework/study time may not exceed the hours required or advised by the educational program.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

b) Does the Lead Agency allow parents to qualify for CCDF assistance on the basis of education and training participation alone (without additional minimum work requirements)?

No.

If no, describe the additional work requirements:

Yes.

If yes, describe the policy or procedure:

Post-secondary education is an allowable activity. There is no time-limit as long as the parent meets the criteria below: Parent/Guardian enrolled in post-secondary education programs must maintain full-time student status based on the definition of full-time status by the institution. For Two Parent Household: Both parents enrolled in post-secondary education; one must be attending full-time as defined by the institution.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

c) Does the Lead Agency consider seeking employment (engaging in a job search) an

eligible activity at initial eligibility determination (at application) and at the 12-month eligibility redetermination? (Note: If yes, Lead Agencies must provide a minimum of three months of job search)

No.

Yes.

If yes, describe the policy or procedure. (including any differences in eligibility at initial eligibility determination vs. redetermination of eligibility):

For TANF Child Care Eligibility: Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance a) This activity is time-limited to four (4) consecutive weeks or twelve (12) weeks total within a calendar year beginning with the date of engagement with ECMS. b) Following the four (4) consecutive weeks, a one (1) week break is required prior to resuming Job Search and Job Readiness.

The Lead Agency provides and is temporarily counting a ninety day job search period for those who are not in compliance at redetermination to be determined eligible due to the impact of the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19. This provision is effective from March 3, 2020 up until the end of the current plan cycle, September 30, 2021.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

d) Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children in protective services?

No.

Yes. If yes:

i. Please provide the Lead Agency's definition of "protective services":

The child welfare agency (Department of Children's Services) determines eligibility for this category of assistance, and the Lead Agency functions as the point of entry for children in protective services to receive child care services. Effective April 1, 2019, the Lead Agency began funding child care payment assistance for children in state custody.

The Lead Agency is expanding the definition of "protective services" to include care for children of essential workers during the COVID-19 emergency. Income

requirements are being waived for essential workers within this class based upon the approved waiver received. Essential workers under this definition include the following groups outlined in Executive Orders issued by the Governor:

- Medical Professionals
- Government Personnel (such as law enforcement, emergency dispatchers, legislators, firefighters, etc.)
- Human Services Personnel (such as government funded services and field offices, public school educators, etc.)
- Infrastructure Personnel (such as personnel that produce or distribute food, provide transportation, construction services, etc.)
- Miscellaneous Personal (such as personnel associated with wedding, funeral, financial, hotel/motel, postal services, etc.)
- Manufacturing Personnel (such as personnel that produce or supply essential products and services, farmers/agricultural production workers, etc.)

Note: Federal requirements allow other vulnerable children identified by the Lead Agency not formally in child protection to be included in the Lead Agency's definition of protective services for CCDF purposes. A Lead Agency may elect to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care when foster care parents are not working or are not in education/training activities, but this provision should be included in the protective services definition above.

ii. Are children in foster care considered to be in protective services for the purposes of eligibility at determination?

No

Yes

iii. Does the Lead Agency waive the income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services on a case-by-case basis (658E(c)(5))?

No

Yes

iv. Does the Lead Agency provide respite care to custodial parents of children in protective services?

No

Yes

3.1.3 Eligibility criteria based on family income. Note: The question in 3.1.3 relates to initial determination. Redetermination is addressed in 3.1.7.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) How does the Lead Agency define "income" for the purposes of eligibility at the point of determination?

The State Agency defines the following sources as countable income:

Gross Wages or Salary

Net Income from Non-Farm Self-Employment

Net Income from Farm Self-Employment

Social Security

Dividends, Interest, Income from Estates or Trusts, from Net Rental Income or Royalties
Public Assistance or Welfare Payments, Pensions and Annuities, Unemployment
Compensation, Worker's Compensation, Alimony, Child Support, Veterans Pension,
Education and Training Stipends received directly by the student or to cover living
expenses.

The Lead Agency is expanding the definition of "protective services" to include care for children of essential workers during the COVID-19 emergency. Income requirements are being waived for essential workers within this class based upon the approved waiver received. Essential workers under this definition include the following groups outlined in Executive Orders issued by the Governor:

- Medical Professionals
- Government Personnel (such as law enforcement, emergency dispatchers, legislators, firefighters, etc.)
- Human Services Personnel (such as government funded services and field offices, public school educators, etc.)
- Infrastructure Personnel (such as personnel that produce or distribute food, provide

- transportation, construction services, etc.)
- Miscellaneous Personal (such as personnel associated with wedding, funeral, financial, hotel/motel, postal services, etc.)
- Manufacturing Personnel (such as personnel that produce or supply essential products and services, farmers/agricultural production workers, etc.)

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

b) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below at the time of initial determination. Complete columns (a) and (b) based on maximum eligibility at initial entry into CCDF. Complete columns (c) and (d) *only if* the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85 percent of the current state median income (SMI) at the initial eligibility determination point. Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the state (the area serving the highest number of CCDF children). If the income eligibility limits are not statewide, please respond to c) below the table.

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Family Size	100% of SMI(\$/Month)	85% of SMI (\$/Month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(IF APPLICABLE) (\$/Month) Maximum Initial or First Tier Income Limit (or Threshold) if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI	IF APPLICABLE) (% of SMI) [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI
1	NA	NA	NA	NA
2	3844	3228	2306	60%
3	4691	3988	2848	60%
4	5653	4805	3392	60%
5	6557	5574	3934	60%

c) If the income eligibility limits are not statewide, describe how many jurisdictions set their own income eligibility limits and provide the income limit ranges across the jurisdictions (e.g. range from [lowest limit] to [highest limit])(98.16(i)(3)).

Income eligibility limits are statewide

The Lead Agency utilizes income limits set at the 60th percentile for some categories of

care. These income limits were entered in column C in the table above. Otherwise, income limits are set at the 85th percentile as noted in column B in the table above.

Reminder: Income limits must be established and reported in terms of current SMI based on the most recent data published by the Bureau of the Census (98.20(a)(2)(i)) even if the federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. SMI guidelines are available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im2017-03>.

d) SMI source and year. ACF website LIHEAP Calculations FFY 2018

e) Identify the most populous area of the State used to complete the chart above.

Income eligibility limits are statewide regardless of population

f) What was the date (mm/dd/yyyy) that these eligibility limits in column (c) became effective? 10/01/2017

g) Provide the citation or link, if available, for the income eligibility limits.

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Child_Care_Certificate_Program_Income_Eligibility_Limits_and_Parent_Co-Pay_Fee_Table_Fiscal_Year_2017-2018.pdf

3.1.4 Lead Agencies are required to ensure that children receiving CCDF funds do not have family assets that exceed \$1,000,000, as certified by a family member (98.20(a)(2)(ii)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe how the family member certifies that family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (e.g., a checkoff on the CCDF application).

A declaration statement is included on the Tennessee Department of Human Services Form HS-2853 Parent Agreement Form.

b) Does the Lead Agency waive the asset limit on a case-by-case basis for families defined as receiving, or in need of, protective services?

No.

Yes.

If yes, describe the policy or procedure and provide citation:

3.1.5 Describe any additional eligibility conditions or priority rules applied by the Lead Agency during eligibility determination or redetermination (98.20(b)).

The Lead Agency has a policy on prioritization of need in the event of a waiting list for child care services. The Lead Agency currently does not have a waiting list. The following groups will be given priority in the event of a waiting list: Homelessness, Children with a Diagnosed Disability, Military

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

3.1.6 Lead Agencies are required to take into consideration children's development and promote continuity of care when authorizing child care services (98.21(f); 98.16(h)(6)). Check the approaches, if applicable, that the Lead Agency uses when considering children's development and promoting continuity of care when authorizing child care services.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Coordinating with Head Start, prekindergarten, or other early learning programs to create a package of arrangements that accommodates parents' work schedules
- Inquiring about whether the child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)
- Establishing minimum eligibility periods greater than 12 months
- Using cross-enrollment or referrals to other public benefits
- Working with IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C staff to explore how services included in a child's IEP or IFSP can be supported and/or provided onsite and in collaboration with child care services

- Providing more intensive case management for families with children with multiple risk factors;
- Implementing policies and procedures that promote universal design to ensure that activities and environments are accessible to all children, including children with sensory, physical, or other disabilities
- Other.

Describe:

Authorization of child care services is based on parental choice. Parents who have selected Head Start or Pre-K programs are eligible for before and after care after making an allowance for core hours.

3.1.7 Policies and processes for graduated phase-out of assistance at redetermination.

Effective Date: 12/17/2019

Lead Agencies are required to provide for a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased above the state's initial income threshold at the time of redetermination but remains below the federal threshold of 85 percent of the state median income. Providing a graduated phase-out promotes continuity by allowing for wage growth, allows for a tapered transition out of the child care subsidy program as income increases, and supports long-term self-sufficiency for families.

- i. 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size
- ii. An amount lower than 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size but above the Lead Agency's initial eligibility threshold that:

(A) Takes into account the typical household budget of a low-income family

(B) Provides justification that the second eligibility threshold is:

(1) Sufficient to accommodate increases in family income over time that are typical for low-income workers and that promote and support family economic stability

(2) Reasonably allows a family to continue accessing child care services without unnecessary disruption.

At redetermination, a child shall be considered eligible if his or her parents are working or

attending a job training or educational program even if their income exceeds the Lead Agency's income limit to initially qualify for assistance as long as their income does not exceed the second tier of eligibility (98.21(a); 98.21(b)(1)). Note that once deemed eligible, the family shall be considered eligible for a full minimum 12-month eligibility period, even if their income exceeds the second tier of eligibility during the eligibility period, as long as it does not exceed 85 percent of SMI.

A family eligible for services via the graduated phase-out of assistance is considered eligible under the same conditions as other eligible families with the exception of the copayment restrictions, which do not apply to a graduated phase-out. To help families transition off of child care assistance, Lead Agencies may gradually adjust copay amounts for families whose children are determined eligible under a graduated phase-out and may require additional reporting on changes in family income. However, Lead Agencies must still ensure that any additional reporting requirements do not constitute an undue burden on families.

Effective Date: 12/17/2019

a) Check and describe the option that best identifies the Lead Agency's policies and procedures regarding the graduated phase-out of assistance.

- N/A - The Lead Agency sets its initial eligibility threshold at 85 percent of SMI and, therefore, is not required to provide a graduated phase-out period.
- N/A - The Lead Agency sets its exit eligibility threshold at 85 percent of SMI and, therefore, is not required to provide a graduated phase-out period.
- The Lead Agency sets the second tier of eligibility at 85 percent of SMI.
Describe the policies and procedures.

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

- The Lead Agency sets the second tier of eligibility at an amount lower than 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size but above the Lead Agency's initial eligibility threshold.

Provide the second tier of eligibility for a family of three.

Tennessee offers care categories at different income caps:

- Categories at the 60th percentile cap (first tier of eligibility)
- Categories at the 85th percentile cap (second tier of eligibility)

At the point of redetermination (after the family has already received a full twelve

(12) month eligibility period), if it is determined that the household income for a family at the 60th percentile cap exceeds the 60% level but is below the 85% level, the family's eligibility is extended through a twelve month phase out period. After completing the twelve (12) month phase out period, if the family's income still exceeds the income standard the family will be given a final ten (10) day phase out before care is discontinued.

Effective December 17, 2019, Lead Agency program staff were trained on revised policies to reflect that assistance to families with income above the 60th percentile but under the 85th percentile may be extended and that a twelve (12) month phase out period will be granted. The Lead Agency determined that no families were phased out prematurely between October 1, 2019 and December 17, 2019 (based upon the previous policy).

In addition, there are also three categories of care (Smart Steps, Teen Parent, Foster Care/State Custody) in which eligibility is determined up to 85th percentile. Eligibility for these categories will be terminated at the end of the twelve (12) month eligibility period, if the reported income exceeds the 85th percentile after a ten (10) day phase out. The income eligibility for a family of three at this level is up to \$4,356 gross per month.

Describe how the second eligibility threshold:

i. Takes into account the typical household budget of a low-income family:

The second eligibility threshold recognizes that the typical household income of a family in this category may exceed the first eligibility threshold. Therefore, the family may apply for another category of care to potentially continue receiving child care payment assistance.

ii. Is sufficient to accommodate increases in family income over time that are typical for low-income workers and that promote and support family economic stability:

The second eligibility threshold provides an expanded income range to accommodate increases in family income over time while still providing child care assistance.

iii. Reasonably allows a family to continue accessing child care services without unnecessary disruption:

Families at the second eligibility threshold receive a full 12-months of eligibility before scheduled redetermination.

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care Certificate Program
Policy Chapter 11

Other.

Identify and describe the components that are still pending per the instructions on *CCDF Plan Response Options for Areas where Implementation is Still in Progress* in the Introduction.

3.1.7 b) To help families transition from assistance, does the Lead Agency gradually adjust copays for families eligible under the graduated phase-out period?

No

Yes

i. If yes, describe how the Lead Agency gradually adjusts copays for families under a graduated phase-out.

ii. If yes, does the Lead Agency require additional reporting requirements during the graduated phase-out period? (*Note: Additional reporting requirements are also discussed in section 3.3.3 of the plan.*)

No.

Yes.

Describe:

3.1.8 Fluctuation in earnings.

Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate how their processes for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings (658E(c)(2)(N)(i)(II)). The Lead Agency must put in place policies that ensure that temporary increases in income, including temporary increases that can result in a monthly income exceeding 85 percent of SMI (calculated on a monthly basis) from seasonal employment or other temporary work schedules, do not affect eligibility or family copayments (98.21(c)). Check the processes, if applicable, that the Lead Agency uses to take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings and describe, at a minimum, how temporary increases that result in a monthly income exceeding 85 percent of SMI (calculated on a monthly basis) do not affect eligibility or family copayments.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Average the family's earnings over a period of time (i.e. 12 months).

Describe:

Some individuals have regular employment during certain months of the year: schoolteachers, school cafeteria workers, maintenance personnel, and Head Start workers. Some school employees are paid nine months of the year, some are paid 10 months, and some receive pay 12 months. The caseworker must determine the pay arrangement a school employee has so that income can be considered in appropriate months. The average monthly income will be considered available during the month it is received for school employees.

- Request earning statements that are most representative of the family's monthly income.

Describe:

Policies include provisions for predicting income not yet received. In cases where employment has just begun it may be necessary to estimate the income in order to determine eligibility and the parent fee amount. In such cases accept an employer's typed statement on company letterhead with employers or human resources representative's signatures describing the client's position, wage and hours.

- Deduct temporary or irregular increases in wages from the family's standard income level.

Describe:

Polices/procedures include provisions for making adjustments for irregular income such as income from individuals with "tipped" wages of less than minimum wage: Paycheck stubs covering a minimum of the last eight (8) weeks of income. A determination should be made whether or not it is representative of a usual pay. The most recent stub submitted should be no more than thirty (30) days old. If it is determined after viewing eight (8) weeks of paystubs is consistent each pay period, the most recent four (4) weeks of paystubs may be considered regular income;

Other.

Describe:

Per Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 11.13, Income Eligibility Determination for Child Care under the authority of Rules of Tennessee Department of Human Services Family Assistance Division Chapter 1240-01-54, Child Care Families First Program:

Regular overtime or seasonal income

Regular income may fluctuate from month to month due to overtime occurring on a regular basis. To produce a representative income, the income statements for the previous two-month period (8 weeks) will be averaged. This is consistent with Family Assistance policy.

Income from farm and non-farm self-employment

This type of income is usually received on an annual basis. Determine hours worked per week then determine monthly wage: Take gross wage divided by \$7.25 (or the State's current minimum wage). Convert to weekly amount/countable unsubsidized hours of employment.

Example: Annual gross net= \$15,000/52 weeks/ 30 hours = \$9.61per hour Regular income obtained during a portion of the year

Some individuals have regular employment during certain months of the year: schoolteachers, school cafeteria workers, maintenance personnel, and Head Start

workers. Some school employees are paid nine months of the year, some are paid 10 months, and some receive pay 12 months. The caseworker must determine the pay arrangement a school employee has so that income can be considered in appropriate months. The average monthly income will be considered available during the month it is received for school employees.

For example, a school employee who is paid 10 months of the year would be considered to have income for 10 months and 0 income for 2 months.

In cases where employment has just begun it may be necessary to estimate the income in order to determine eligibility and the parent fee amount.

The Lead Agency accepts an employer's typed statement on company letterhead with employers or human resources representative's signatures describing the client's position, wage and hours.

3.1.9 Lead Agencies are required to have procedures for documenting and verifying that children receiving CCDF funds meet eligibility criteria at the time of eligibility determination and redetermination (98.68(c)). Check the information that the Lead Agency documents and verifies and describe, at a minimum, what information is required and how often. Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Applicant identity.

Describe:

Applicant identity is verified at the initial determination. Acceptable forms of identification include: Driver's License; Voter's Registration Card, I-94 Card, or Passport

Applicant's relationship to the child.

Describe:

Applicant's relationship to the child is verified at initial determination. Accepted forms of verification include: Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, Court Orders, etc.

- Child's information for determining eligibility (e.g., identity, age, citizen/immigration status).

Describe:

Birth certificate is used to verify age, immunization records are used to verify identity

- Work.

Describe:

Income verification based upon check stubs or employer statement or tax documents.

- Job training or educational program.

Describe:

The Lead Agency requires that job training or educational status be verified by a written statement from an educational or vocational institution.

- Family income.

Describe:

The Lead Agency requires that job training or educational status be verified by a written statement from an educational or vocational institution until TANF cash assistance ends. Then, income is verified every 12 months either with existing information from the Family Assistance eligibility system used for other programs, or with client-provided verification.

- Household composition.

Describe:

Criteria for this item is described in Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 11.12, Determining Family Household Size for Child Care Eligibility. The following family members must be included in the household unit:

1. The natural or adoptive parent or parent/guardian.
2. The married spouse of the parent or parent/guardian, if residing in the home.
3. Should a Families First recipient marry during receipt of assistance and elects to

exclude the spouse as a household member the following applies: a. The income and resources of the spouse are not included for the first three (3) months of marriage. b. Any children who moved into the home with the spouse at the time the marriage occurred must be considered for addition to the household unit c. If the household closes while the spouse is excluded, the excluded spouse will not be eligible for TCC. The income of the excluded spouse will be counted in the household unit. Any children of the spouse will be included in the household unit and will be eligible for child care assistance.

4. A second (2nd) parent or alleged parent of the children needing care when he or she is residing in the home, even if unmarried to the parent/parent/guardian.

5. All children needing child care who are residing in the home and for whom the parent/guardian has primary responsibility for care and control and who are related within a specified degree relationship.

6. Any child needing child care residing in the home for whom the parent/guardian or married spouse has primary responsibility for care and control.

7. Any minor siblings to the child needing care, and those siblings over age 18 or under age 19 if the sibling is still attending high school.

Applicant residence.

Describe:

Verified through lease, utility bill, or identification.

Other.

Describe:

3.1.10 Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to assure the timeliness of eligibility determinations upon receipt of applications?

Effective Date: 6-1-19

Time limit for making eligibility determinations

Describe length of time:

The Lead Agency notices for redetermination are sent to the family/guardian forty-five (45) days prior to end date. Applications are processed within 15 business days upon receipt.

Track and monitor the eligibility determination process

Other.

Describe:

Online Application Pilot

The Lead Agency is piloting an online eligibility application. The pilot was first deployed in Shelby and Hamilton counties in June and will expand to Rutherford county and fourteen other counties in District 4 in October. The addition of an online application option will improve efficiency and contribute to the timeliness of the eligibility determination process with minimum disruption to the applicant.

None

3.1.11 Informing parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the TANF work requirement.

Lead Agencies are required 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 younger than age 6 (98.16(v); 98.33(f)).

Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure that TANF families with young children will be informed of their right not to be sanctioned if they meet the criteria set forth by the state/territory TANF agency in accordance with Section 407(e)(2) of the Social Security Act.

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 CCDF 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.

a) Identify the TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions: The TANF agency is under the direction of the Lead Agency-Tennessee Department of Human Services.

b) Provide the following definitions established by the TANF agency:

"Appropriate child care":

State licensed child care or approved unregulated (unlicensed) child care that meets the needs of the child.

"Reasonable distance":

The distance range as determined on a case by case basis that is deemed to not cause any additional barrier/burden to the customer.

"Unsuitability of informal child care":

Informal child care or "unregulated" child care providers must comply with a health and safety check list and must provide information regarding their criminal background. Certain crimes such as those involving children, violence against another person, or those that are drug related will disqualify a prospective provider. Registers that can be accessed without a fee are checked, such as the Sex Offender Registry.

"Affordable child care arrangements":

Affordable arrangements are determined by the parent's ability to pay for child care available in their area. Parents/caretakers who are unable to locate and/or pay for care will not be penalized for their inability to perform required work activities due to lack of child care.

c) How are parents who receive TANF benefits informed about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the TANF work requirements?

- In writing
- Verbally
- Other.

Describe:

d) Provide the citation for the TANF policy or procedure:

Tennessee Department of Human Services Form HS-2853 Parent Agreement Form.

3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

Lead Agencies are required to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, which can include vulnerable populations, in families with very low incomes and to children experiencing homelessness (658E(c)(3)(B); 98.46(a)). The prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., the establishment of a waiting list or the ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served).

Note:

CCDF defines "child experiencing homelessness" as a child who is homeless, as defined in Section 725 of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a) (98.2).

3.2.1 Describe how the Lead Agency defines:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) "Children with special needs":

Children with Special needs are defined as: A child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401); A child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20U.S.C. 1431 et seq.); Child who is less than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 794); and A child with a disability, as defined by the State.

b) "Families with very low incomes":

Families with very low incomes are defined below and may qualify for subsidy assistance in the order presented:

Guaranteed subsidy eligible if receiving TANF and Gross income is tested against a Gross Income Standard which is 185% of the Consolidated Need Standard for the appropriate Assistance Unit size, as listed on the Family Assistance Standards Desk

Guide.

Families transitioning from TANF benefits may be eligible for an eighteen (18) month Transitional Child Care eligibility period and who meet the work requirement and have income that does not exceed 60% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Code Annotated § Title 71-3-104).

Child-only guardians who have care and control of a relative child receiving TANF benefits may qualify for child care payment assistance and who meet the work requirement as defined by the state and income that does not exceed 60% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Rules & Regulations 1240-01-54-.01).

Teen parents who are enrolled in and attending middle or high school and have income for mandatory household members that does not exceed 85% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Rules & Regulations 1240-01-54-.01).

Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance provides child care support to working families and those pursuing post-secondary education goals and income does not exceed 85% of the State Median Income guidelines.

3.2.2 Describe how the Lead Agency will prioritize or target child care services for the following children and families.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Identify how services are prioritized for children with special needs. Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment
- Serve without placing these populations on waiting lists
- Waive copayments
- Pay higher rates for access to higher-quality care
- Use grants or contracts to reserve slots for priority populations

Other.

Describe:

Children with special needs are given the same priority status as non-disabled families with two notable exceptions; increased age limit for children with disabilities and priority status during a waiting list implementation by the Lead Agency.

b) Identify how services are prioritized for families with very low incomes. Check all that apply:

Prioritize for enrollment

Serve without placing these populations on waiting lists

Waive copayments

Pay higher rates for access to higher-quality care

Use grants or contracts to reserve slots for priority populations

Other.

Describe:

Guaranteed subsidy eligible if receiving TANF and Gross income is tested against a Gross Income Standard which is 185% of the Consolidated Need Standard for the appropriate Assistance Unit size, as listed on the Family Assistance Standards Desk Guide.

Families transitioning from TANF benefits may be eligible for an eighteen (18) month Transitional Child Care eligibility period and who meet the work requirement and have income that does not exceed 60% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Code § Title 71-3-104).

Child-only guardians who have care and control of a relative child receiving TANF benefits may qualify for child care payment assistance and who meet the work requirement as defined by the state and income that does not exceed 60% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Rules & Regulations 1240-01-54-.01).

Teen parents who are enrolled in and attending middle or high school and have income for mandatory household members that does not exceed 85% of the State Median Income guidelines. (Tennessee Rules & Regulations 1240-01-54-.01).

Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance provides child care support to working families and those pursuing post-secondary education goals and income does not exceed 85% of the State Median Income guidelines.

c) Identify how services are prioritized for children experiencing homelessness, as defined by the CCDF. Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment
- Serve without placing these populations on waiting lists
- Waive copayments
- Pay higher rates for access to higher-quality care
- Use grants or contracts to reserve slots for priority populations
- Other.

Describe:

d) Identify how services are prioritized, if applicable, for families receiving TANF program funds, those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF (98.16(i)(4)). Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment
- Serve without placing these populations on waiting lists
- Waive copayments
- Pay higher rates for access to higher-quality care
- Use grants or contracts to reserve slots for priority populations
- Other.

Describe:

Priority is solely based on income limits. Certain child-only cases are eligible for At-Risk Child Only Child Care, if funding is available. Former Families First recipients who are working at least 30 hours a week can receive up to 18 months of Transitional Child Care (TCC) after their cases are closed. There is a co-pay for At-Risk Child Only Child Care and Transitional Child Care. Benefits are time-limited to 60 months in a participant's lifetime for TANF (except transitional and non-working).

3.2.3 List and define any other priority groups established by the Lead Agency.

The following groups are given prioritized consideration by the Lead Agency:

- Homeless Children
- Children with a Diagnosed Disability
- Military Status of the Adult Parent- currently active duty (i.e. serving full-time) in the U.S. Military or a member of either a National Guard unit or a Military Reserve unit.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

3.2.4 Describe how the Lead Agency prioritizes services for the additional priority groups identified in 3.2.3.

These groups are coded within the system in order of priority as follows:

- Top Priority: Homeless Children
- Second Priority: Children with a Diagnosed Disability
- Third Priority: Military Status of Adult Parent

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

3.2.5 Lead Agencies are required to expend CCDF funds to (1) permit the enrollment (after an initial eligibility determination) of children experiencing homelessness while required documentation is obtained, (2) provide training and TA to child care providers and the appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving homeless children and families (addressed in section 6), and (3) conduct specific outreach to homeless families (658E(c)(3); 98.51).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- a) Describe the procedures to permit the enrollment of children experiencing homelessness while required documentation is obtained.

The following exceptions were added to the rules of the Department of Human Services -

Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01: The agency shall not admit a child into care until the parent/guardian has supplied the agency with a completed application, valid Tennessee Department of Health Official Immunization Certificates record (for children over two (2) months of age), and a health history. After an initial eligibility determination, children who are homeless and/or children in state custody may receive care prior to providing all required documentation as determined by the Department. Care without documentation of immunizations shall not exceed sixty days. The agency shall maintain written documentation that the parent/guardian performed an on-site visit to the agency prior to the child being enrolled into care and that the agency provided and reviewed parent engagement strategies recognized by the Department with the parent during the required pre-placement visit. Exception: A pre-placement visit is not required for children of homeless families. All children, including related children younger than age nine (9), shall have required records on file before care is provided. Exception: After an initial eligibility determination, children of homeless families and/or children in state custody may receive care prior to providing required documentation as determined by the Department. Exceptions to this immunization record requirement may be made only if: Care for children of homeless families and/or children in state custody is needed before documentation of immunizations can be confirmed. Care without documentation of immunizations for such children shall not exceed thirty days.

b) Check, where applicable, the procedures used to conduct outreach for children experiencing homelessness (as defined by CCDF Rule) and their families.

- Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Partnering with homeless service providers, McKinney-Vento liaisons, and others who work with families experiencing homelessness to provide referrals to child care
- Other

Note: The Lead Agency shall pay any amount owed to a child care provider for services provided as a result of the initial eligibility determination, and any CCDF payment made prior to the final eligibility determination shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.51(a)(1)(ii)).

3.2.6 Lead Agencies must establish a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care to receive CCDF assistance while providing their families with a reasonable time to take any necessary actions to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements (as described in section 5). The length of such a grace period shall be established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)(I); 98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)).

Note:

Any payment for such a child during the grace period shall not be considered an error or improper payment (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(2)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe procedures to provide a grace period to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements, including how the length of the grace period was established in consultation with the state, territorial, or tribal health agency for:

Children experiencing homelessness (as defined by Lead Agency's CCDF)

Families may receive care for up to 60 days without documentation of immunization requirements.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01.

Children who are in foster care.

Families may receive care for up to 60 days without documentation of immunization requirements.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01.

b) Describe how the Lead Agency coordinates with licensing agencies and other relevant state, territorial, tribal, and local agencies to provide referrals and support to help families with children receiving services during a grace period comply with immunization and

other health and safety requirements (98.41(a)(1)(i)(C)(4)).

The Lead Agency is the licensing authority. Exceptions were added to the child care rules to allow a grace period for immunizations.

c) Does the Lead Agency establish grace periods for other children who are not experiencing homelessness or in foster care?

No.

Yes.

Describe:

3.3 Protection for Working Families

3.3.1 12-Month eligibility.

The Lead Agency is required to establish a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination period, regardless of changes in income (as long as the income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85 percent of the state median income) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or educational activities (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) and (ii)).

This change means that a Lead Agency may not terminate CCDF assistance during the 12-month period if a family has an increase in income that exceeds the state's income eligibility threshold, but not the federal threshold of 85 percent of SMI. The Lead Agency may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the 12-month period if a family experiences a temporary job loss or a temporary change in participation in a training or educational activity. A temporary change in eligible activity includes, at a minimum, any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to such reasons as the need to care for a family member or an illness; any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working; any student holiday or break for a parent participating in a training or educational program; any reduction in work, training, or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending a training or educational program; any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or educational program that does not exceed 3 months or a longer period of time established by the Lead Agency; a child turning 13 years old during the 12-month eligibility period (except as described in 3.1.1); and any changes in residency within the state, territory, or tribal service area.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) Describe the Lead Agency's policies and procedures in implementing the minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination requirements, including when a family experiences a temporary change in activity.

The Child Care Certificate Program will conduct a redetermination for continued eligibility every twelve (12) months from date of approval. Parent/Guardians are not required to report changes within their twelve (12) month eligibility period. Self-Reported Changes will be acted on if the action benefits the family, unless the income has increased to exceed eighty-five (85) percent of SMI. During the period of time between determinations and re-determinations, if the child met all of the requirements on the date of the most recent eligibility determination or re-determination, the child shall be considered eligible and receive services at least at the same level during that twelve (12) month certification period, regardless of a change in the family income, if that family income does not exceed eighty-five (85) percent of SMI, or regardless of a temporary change in the parent/guardian's work, training or education status.

The Lead Agency is extending the eligibility period during the COVID-19 emergency. Redeterminations for subsidy assistance have been extended for six months for each eligibility period ending March 2020 through August 2020, and may be further extended by the Lead Agency, if determined necessary. Notifications are being sent to all families and child care agencies regarding the extensions.

The Lead Agency is also not applying the 12-month eligibility period to the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program implemented for children of essential workers, under the protective services category, regardless of income. The Lead Agency received a waiver to provide less than a 12 month eligibility period in these circumstances.

Care provided under the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program does not have 12 month eligibility. Families of essential workers are eligible to receive care throughout the duration of the program.

As per waiver approval letter dated September 28, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

b) How does the Lead Agency define "temporary change?"

A temporary change shall include, at a minimum:

- Any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to reasons such as need to care for a family member or an illness;
- Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons;
- Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education
- Any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education for any number of hours without regard to the thirty (30) hour requirement.
- Any change in age, including turning thirteen (13) years old during the eligibility period; and
- Any change in residency within the State or Territory.

Although the family is not required to report changes in hours of work, training or education, if the family does self-report a temporary change that employment, education or training hours have ended, a ninety (90) day Compliance period will begin. If the parent/guardian returns to work, education or training for any number of hours before the end of that ninety (90) day compliance period, eligibility will continue without change without regard to the thirty (30) hour requirement.

c) Provide the citation for this policy and/or procedure.

Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care Certificate Program Policy
Chapter 11

3.3.2 Option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period.

Lead Agencies have the option, but are not required, to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program, otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity (i.e., if the parent experiences a temporary change in his or her status as working or participating in a training or educational program, as described in section 3.3.1 of the plan).

If the Lead Agency chooses the option to discontinue assistance due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity, it must continue assistance at least at the same level for a period of not fewer than 3 months after each such loss or cessation for the parent to engage in a job search and to resume work or resume attendance in a job training or educational program. At the end of the minimum 3-month period of continued assistance, if the parent has engaged in a qualifying work, training, or educational program activity with an income below 85 percent of SMI, assistance cannot be terminated, and the child must continue receiving assistance until the next scheduled redetermination or, at the Lead Agency option, for an additional minimum 12-month eligibility period.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) Does the Lead Agency choose to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss or cessation of eligible activity and offer a minimum 3-month period to allow parents to engage in a job search and to resume participation in an eligible activity?

No, the state/territory does not allow this option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program.

Yes, the Lead Agency discontinues assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of eligible activity and provides a minimum 3-month period of job search. If yes:

i. Provide a summary describing the Lead Agency's policies and procedures for discontinuing assistance due to a parent's non-temporary change:

Effective May 30, 2019, Lead Agency program staff were trained on revised policies to clearly reflect a twelve month certification period and clarify that the individual is not required to report changes during that period. During the period of time between determinations and re-determinations, if the child met all of the requirements on the date of the most recent eligibility determination or re-determination, the child shall be considered eligible and receive services at least at the same level during that twelve (12) month certification period, regardless of a change in the family income, if that family income does not exceed eighty-five (85) percent of SMI, or regardless of a temporary change in the parent/guardian's work, training or education status.

ii. Describe what specific actions/changes trigger the job-search period.

Although the family is not required to report changes in hours of work, training or education, if the family does self-report a temporary change that employment, education or training hours have ended, a ninety (90) day Compliance period will begin. If the parent/guardian returns to work, education or training for any number of hours before the end of that ninety (90) day compliance period, eligibility will continue without change without regard to the thirty (30) hour requirement.

A temporary change shall include, at a minimum:

- Any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to reasons such as need to care for a family member or an illness;
- Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons;
- Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education;
- Any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education for any number of hours without regard to the thirty (30) hour requirement;
- Any change in age, including turning thirteen (13) years old during the eligibility period; and
- Any change in residency within the State or Territory.

iii. How long is the job-search period (must be at least 3 months)?

90 days.

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care Certificate Program Policy
Chapter 11

b) The Lead Agency may discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination in the following limited circumstances. Check and describe any circumstances in which the Lead Agency chooses to discontinue assistance prior to the next 12-month redetermination. Check all that apply.

- Not applicable.
- Excessive unexplained absences despite multiple attempts by the Lead Agency or designated entity to contact the family and provider, including the prior notification of a possible discontinuation of assistance.

i. Define the number of unexplained absences identified as excessive:

The Lead Agency does not terminate eligibility. The child's enrollment with a child care provider may be terminated due to excessive absences (defined as 20 or more days of continued absences).

The Lead Agency is also not applying the 12-month eligibility period to the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance program temporarily implemented for children of essential workers, under the protective services category, regardless of income. The Lead Agency received a waiver to provide less than a 12 month eligibility period in these circumstances.

As per waiver approval letter dated September 28, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

Tennessee Department of Human Services Form HS-2853 Child Care Certificate Program Parent Agreement.

- A change in residency outside of the state, territory, or tribal service area.

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

Tennessee Department of Human Services Child Care Certificate Program Policy Chapter 11

- Substantiated fraud or intentional program violations that invalidate prior determinations of eligibility.

Describe the violations that lead to discontinued assistance and provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

3.3.3 Change reporting during the 12-month eligibility period.

The Lead Agency must describe the requirements for parents to report changes in circumstances during the 12-month eligibility period and describe efforts to ensure that such requirements do not place an undue burden on eligible families, which could impact the continuity of care for children and stability for families receiving CCDF services (98.16(h)(1)).

Note: Responses should exclude reporting requirements for a graduated phase-out, which were described in question 3.1.7(b).

Families are required to report a change to the Lead Agency at any time during the 12-month eligibility period if the family's income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income, taking into account irregular fluctuations in income (98.21(e)(1)). If the Lead Agency chooses the option to terminate assistance, as described in section 3.3.2 of the plan, they may require families to report a non-temporary change (as described in section 3.3.3 of the plan) in work, training or educational activities (otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity).

Effective Date: 5-30-19

a) Does the Lead Agency require families to report a non-temporary change in a parent's eligible activity?

No

Yes

b) Any additional reporting requirements during the 12-month eligibility period must be limited to items that impact a family's eligibility (e.g., income changes over 85 percent of SMI or that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family or pay the child care providers (e.g., a family's change of address, a change in the parent's choice of child care provider).

Check and describe any additional reporting requirements required by the Lead Agency during the 12-month eligibility period. Check all that apply.

Additional changes that may impact a family's eligibility during the 12-month period.

Describe:

The Lead Agency requires a parent/guardian to notify and provide any change in household income or size within ten (10) calendar days of the change. In cases

where the change affects eligibility, the child care agency and parent/guardian will receive a ten (10) calendar day notice that their eligibility will phase out in ninety (90) days. See Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 11.12, Determining Family Household Size for Child Care Eligibility and Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 11.13, Income Eligibility Determination for Child Care.

The Lead Agency revised policy to include reporting provisions for families that experience temporary changes due to job loss or reduction in work hours. The Lead agency allows the family to report temporary changes that will benefit the family's co-payment structure without undue financial burden. The Lead Agency deleted the requirement to report an income change within ten (10) calendar days of the change.

[Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family.](#)

[Describe:](#)

Families are required to report changes in home address or phone contact information as required by Tennessee Department of Human Services Form HS-2853 Child Care Certificate Program Parent Agreement.

[Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to pay child care providers.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The provider contract includes a clause that states that funds are subject to availability

[Any additional reporting requirements that the Lead Agency chooses, as its option to require from parents during the 12-month eligibility period, shall not require an office visit. In addition, the Lead Agency must offer a range of notification options to accommodate families.](#)

[c\) How does the Lead Agency allow for families to report changes to ensure that reporting requirements are not burdensome and to avoid an impact on continued](#)

eligibility between redeterminations? Check all that apply.

- Phone
- Email
- Online forms
- Extended submission hours
- Postal Mail
- FAX
- In-person submission
- Other.

Describe:

d) Families must have the option to voluntarily report changes on an ongoing basis during the 12-month eligibility period. Lead Agencies are required to act on information reported by the family if it will reduce the family's co-payment or increase the family's subsidy. Lead Agencies are prohibited from acting on information reported by the family that would reduce the family's subsidy unless the information reported indicates that the family's income exceeds 85 percent of SMI after considering irregular fluctuations in income or, at the option of the Lead Agency, the family has experienced a non-temporary change in eligible activity.

i. Describe any other changes that the Lead Agency allows families to report.

The Lead Agency allows the voluntary reporting of changes in income and employment as well as residency details, including changes in household size and composition which may result in an adjustment to the parent co-payment based upon the newly reported income and/or program eligibility.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

Tennessee Department of Human Services Policy 11, Child Care Certificate Program.

3.3.4 Prevent the disruption of employment, education, or job training activities

Lead Agencies are required to have procedures and policies in place to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving assistance under the TANF program) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment, education, or job training activities to comply with the Lead Agency's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility for assistance (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii); 98.21(d)).

Examples include developing strategies to inform families and their providers of an upcoming redetermination and the information that will be required of the family, pre-populating subsidy renewal forms, having parents confirm that the information is accurate, and/or asking only for the information necessary to make an eligibility redetermination. In addition, states and territories can offer a variety of family-friendly methods for submitting documentation for eligibility redetermination that considers the range of needs for families in accessing support (e.g. use of languages other than English, access to transportation, accommodation of parents working non-traditional hours, etc.).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Identify, where applicable, the Lead Agency's procedures and policies to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving TANF program funds) do not have their employment, education, or job training unduly disrupted to comply with the state/territory's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility.

- Advance notice to parents of pending redetermination
- Advance notice to providers of pending redetermination
- Pre-populated subsidy renewal form
- Online documentation submission
- Cross-program redeterminations
- Extended office hours (evenings and/or weekends)
- Other.

Describe:

The Lead Agency allows parents to submit applications and verification via mail, fax or in person. However, a face to face meeting is not required. Telephone interview based upon parent availability are conducted

b) How are families allowed to submit documentation, described in 3.1.9, for redetermination? Check all that apply.

- Postal Mail
- Email
- Online forms
- FAX

- In-person submission
- Extended submission hours
- Other.

Describe:

3.4 Family Contribution to Payments

Lead Agencies are required to establish and periodically revise a sliding-fee scale for CCDF families that varies based on income and the size of the family to determine each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) that is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(5)). In addition to income and the size of the family, the Lead Agency may use other factors when determining family contributions/co-payments. Lead Agencies, however, may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

Note: To help families transition off of child care assistance, Lead Agencies may gradually adjust co-pay amounts for families determined to be eligible under a graduated phase-out. However, section 3.4 applies only to families in their initial/entry eligibility period. See section 3.1.7 Graduated Phase-Out regarding co-pays during the graduated phase-out period.

3.4.1 Provide the CCDF co-payments in the chart below according to family size for one child in care.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the State (area serving highest number of CCDF children).

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Family Size	Lowest Initial or First Tier Income Level Where Family Is First Charged Co-Pay	What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (a)?	The Co-Payment in Column (b) is What Percentage of the Income in	Highest Initial or First Tier Income Level Before a Family Is No Longer Eligible	What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (d)?	The Co-Payment in Column (e) is What Percentage of the Income in

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
	(Greater Than \$0)		Column (a)?			Column (d)?
1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2	1-380	3	<1%	3228	34	<1%
3	1-469	4	<1%	3988	42	<1%
4	1-565	5	<1%	4805	50	<1%
5	1-656	5	<1%	5574	58	<1%

b) What is the effective date of the sliding-fee scale(s)? 10/01/2017

c) Identify the most populous area of the state used to complete the chart above.

Income eligibility limits and co-pay fees are statewide regardless of population

d) Provide the link to the sliding-fee scale: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/ChildCareCertificateProgramIncomeEligibilityLimitsandParent_%20Co-Pay_Fee_TableFiscalYear2018-2019.pdf

e) If the sliding-fee scale is not statewide, describe how many jurisdictions set their own sliding-fee scale (98.16(i)(3)).

The sliding-fee scale is statewide.

3.4.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated, and to whom will it be applied?

Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- The fee is a dollar amount and:
 - The fee is per child, with the same fee for each child.
 - The fee is per child and is discounted for two or more children.
 - The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
 - No additional fee is charged after certain number of children.
 - The fee is per family.
 - The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

The fee is a percent of income and:

The fee is per child, with the same percentage applied for each child.

The fee is per child, and a discounted percentage is applied for two or more children.

The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.

No additional percentage is charged after certain number of children.

The fee is per family.

The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's co-payment (658E(c)(3)(B))? Reminder ' Lead Agencies may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

No.

Yes, check and describe those additional factors below.

Number of hours the child is in care.

Describe:

Lower co-payments for a higher quality of care, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

Other.

Describe:

3.4.4 The Lead Agency may waive contributions/co-payments from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size (98.45(k)) or for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined for purposes of CCDF eligibility, or who meet other criteria established by the Lead Agency (98.45(k)(4)). Does the Lead Agency waive family contributions/co-payments for any of the following? Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

- No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments.
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families with an income at or below the poverty level for families of the same size.
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined by the Lead Agency for purposes of CCDF eligibility.

Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

Child care assistance for children who are in the custody of our state child welfare agency is paid for through use of SSBG funds. This practice is documented in the Knowledge and Retention Plan 1.2.4 How to Process Yearly Income Eligibility Limits and Parent Co-pay Fee Table, May 2015.

- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for other criteria established by the Lead Agency.

Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

The Lead Agency is waiving co-payments for all families during the impact of the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

4 Ensure Equal Access to Child Care for Low-Income Children

A core purpose of CCDF is to promote parental choice and to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suit their family's needs. Parents have the option to choose from center-based care, family child care or care provided in the child's own home. In supporting parental choice, the Lead Agencies must ensure that families receiving CCDF funding have the opportunity to choose from the full range of eligible child care settings and must provide families with equal access to child care that is comparable to that of non-CCDF families. Lead Agencies must employ strategies to increase the supply and to improve the quality of child care services, especially in underserved areas. This section addresses strategies that the Lead Agency uses to promote parental choice, ensure equal access, and increase the supply of child care. Note: In responding to questions in this section, the Office of Child Care (OCC) recognizes that each State/Territory identifies and defines its own categories and types of care. The OCC does not expect States/Territories to change their definitions to fit the CCDF-defined categories and types of care. For these questions, provide responses that closely match the CCDF categories of care.

4.1 Parental Choice in Relation to Certificates, Grants, or Contracts

The parent(s) of each eligible child who receive(s) or is offered financial assistance for child care services has the option of either receiving a child care certificate or, if available, enrolling his or her child with a provider that has a grant or contract for providing child care services (658E(c)(2)(A); 98.30(a)). Even if a parent chooses to enroll his or her child with a provider who has a grant or contract, the parent will select the provider, to the extent practicable. If a parent chooses to use a certificate, the Lead Agency shall provide information to the parent on the range of provider options, including care by sectarian providers and relatives. Lead Agencies must require providers chosen by families to meet health and safety standards and has the option to require higher standards of quality. Lead agencies are reminded that any policies and procedures should not restrict parental access to any type of care or provider (e.g. center care, home care, in-home care, for-profit provider, non-profit provider or faith-based provider, etc.) (98.15 (a)(5)).

4.1.1 Describe the child care certificate, including when it is issued to parents (before or after the parent has selected a provider) and what information is included on the certificate (98.16 (q)).

The child care certificate contains demographic information for the parent and the child, the parent work activity, the name and address of the provider, the funding eligibility category, and the amount of co-pay, if applicable.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

4.1.2 Describe how the parent is informed that the child certificate allows the option to choose from a variety of child care categories, such as private, not-for-profit, faith-based providers; centers; FCC homes; or in-home providers (658E(c)(2)(A)(i); 658P(2); 658Q). Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Certificate that provides information about the choice of providers
- Certificate that provides information about the quality of providers
- Certificate not linked to a specific provider, so parents can choose any provider
- Consumer education materials on choosing child care
- Referral to child care resource and referral agencies
- Co-located resource and referral in eligibility offices
- Verbal communication at the time of the application
- Community outreach, workshops, or other in-person activities
- Other.

Describe:

Lead Agency provides consumer education and explains parent's rights and responsibilities on choosing child care. If necessary, the parent is referred to CCR&R for additional assistance. Once the parent makes a selection of a provider, the Lead Agency directly issues a certificate to the child care provider of choice.

4.1.3 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency provide child care services through grants or contracts for child care slots (658A(b)(1))? Note: Do not check 'yes' if every provider is simply required to sign an agreement to be paid in the certificate program.

No. If no, skip to 4.1.4.

Yes, in some jurisdictions but not statewide.

If yes, describe how many jurisdictions use grants or contracts for child care slots.

Yes, statewide. If yes, describe:

i. How the Lead Agency ensures that parents who enroll with a provider who has a grant or contract have choices when selecting a provider:

ii. The type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts:

iii. The entities that receive contracts (e.g., shared services alliances, CCR&R agencies, FCC networks, community-based agencies, child care providers):

iv. The process for accessing grants or contracts:

v. How rates for contracted slots are set through grants and contracts:

vi. How the Lead Agency determines which entities to contract with for increasing supply and/or improving quality:

vii. If contracts are offered statewide and/or locally:

4.1.3 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to increase the supply and/or quality of specific types of care? Check all that apply.

- Programs to serve children with disabilities
- Programs to serve infants and toddlers
- Programs to serve school-age children
- Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
- Programs to serve children experiencing homelessness
- Programs to serve children in underserved areas
- Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
- Programs that serve specific geographic areas
 - Urban
 - Rural
- Other
 - Describe

4.1.3 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

c) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to increase the quality of specific types of care? Check all that apply.

- Programs to serve children with disabilities
- Programs to serve infants and toddlers
- Programs to serve school-age children
- Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
- Programs to serve homeless children
- Programs to serve children in underserved areas
- Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
- Programs that serve specific geographic areas
 - Urban
 - Rural
- Other
 - Describe

4.1.4 Certify by describing the Lead Agency's procedures for ensuring that parents have unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(B); 98.16(t)).

The Lead Agency requires licensed or approved child care agencies to permit parents/guardians immediate access to their children unless an Order of Protection or other legal document otherwise restricts or prohibits such access. The Lead Agency requires authorized child care professionals afford parents/guardians unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in care unless an Order of Protection or other legal document otherwise restricts or prohibits such access.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

4.1.5 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care (i.e., care provided in the child's own home) but may limit its use (98.16(i)(2)). Will the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- No.
- Yes. If checked, what limits will the Lead Agency set on the use of in-home care? Check all that apply.
 - Restricted based on minimum the number of children in the care of the provider to meet the Fair Labor Standards Act (minimum wage) requirements.
Describe:
 - Restricted based on the provider meeting a minimum age requirement. (A relative provider must be at least 18 years of age based on the definition of eligible child care provider (98.2).
Describe:
 - Restricted based on the hours of care (i.e., certain number of hours, non-traditional work hours).

Describe:

- Restricted to care by relatives.

Describe:

The Lead Agency only permits relative care in circumstances when the child in care resides in the provider's home, i.e. a child or grandchild

- Restricted to care for children with special needs or a medical condition.

Describe:

- Restricted to in-home providers that meet additional health and safety requirements beyond those required by CCDF.

Describe:

- Other.

Describe:

4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs

Lead Agencies have the option to conduct a statistically valid and reliable (1) market rate survey (MRS) reflecting variations in the price to parents of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child and/or (2) an alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model (658E(c)(4)(B)). A cost estimation model estimates the cost of care by incorporating both data and assumptions to model what expected costs would be incurred by child care providers and parents under different cost scenarios. Another approach would be a cost study that collects cost data at the facility or program level to measure the costs (or inputs used) to deliver child care services. The MRS or alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than 2 years before the date of submission of the Plan.

Note - Any Lead Agency considering using an alternative methodology, instead of a market rate survey, is required to submit a description of its proposed approach to its ACF Regional Child Care Program Office for pre-approval in advance of the Plan submittal (see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/ccdf-acf-pi-2016-08>). Advance approval is not required if the Lead Agency plans to implement both a market rate survey and an alternative methodology.

In its request for ACF pre-approval, a Lead Agency must:

- Provide an overview of the Lead Agency's proposed approach (e.g., cost estimation model, cost study/survey, etc.), including a description of data sources.
- Describe how the Lead Agency will consult with the State's Early Childhood Advisory Council or similar coordinating body, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, organizations representing child care caregivers, teachers and directors, and other appropriate entities prior to conducting the identified alternative methodology.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will use methods that are statistically valid and reliable and will yield accurate results. For example, if using a survey, describe how the Lead Agency will ensure a representative sample and promote an adequate response rate. If using a cost estimation model, describe how the Lead Agency will validate the assumptions in the model.
- If the proposed alternative methodology includes an analysis of costs (e.g., cost estimation model or cost study/survey), describe how the alternative methodology will account for key factors that impact the cost of providing care'such as: staff salaries and benefits, training and professional development, curricula and supplies, group size and ratios, enrollment levels, licensing requirements, quality level, facility size, and other factors.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will provide complete information that captures the universe of providers in the child care market.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will reflect variations by provider type, age of children, geographic location and quality.
- Describe how the alternative methodology will use current, up to date data.
- Describe the estimated reporting burden and cost to conduct the approach.

4.2.1 Please identify the methodology(ies) used below to assess child care prices and/or costs.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- MRS
- Alternative methodology.

Describe:

Both.

Describe:

4.2.2 Prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency is required to consult with the (1) State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities and (2) organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.45 (e)).

Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body:

A survey designed to collect feedback regarding the annual market rate survey was distributed to the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council, licensed child care agencies, and partners.

b) Local child care program administrators:

A survey designed to collect feedback regarding the annual market rate survey was distributed to the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council, licensed child care agencies, and partners.

c) Local child care resource and referral agencies:

A survey designed to collect feedback regarding the annual market rate survey was distributed to the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council, licensed child care agencies, and partners.

d) Organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors:

A survey designed to collect feedback regarding the annual market rate survey was distributed to the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council, licensed child care

agencies, and partners.

e) Other. Describe:

NA

4.2.3 Describe how the market rate survey is statistically valid and reliable. To be considered valid and reliable, the MRS must represent the child care market, provide complete and current data, use rigorous data collection procedures, reflect geographic variations, and analyze data in a manner that captures other relevant differences. For example, market rate surveys can use administrative data, such as child care resource and referral data, if they are representative of the market. If an alternative methodology, such as cost modeling, is used, demonstrate that the methodology used reliable methods.

The Daycare Market Rate Survey utilizes the Department of Human Services' exhaustive list of reported provider rates across care type and child age, as well as the proportion of providers' enrollment that is subsidized. In order to minimize the effect of subsidization on market rate calculations, providers with more than half of their enrollments receiving subsidies for childcare are excluded. Additionally, a lower bar is set on weekly rates in order to exclude reported part-time rates from analysis. Finally, if a provider does not report a weekly rate, it is calculated using, for example, the daily rate provided. After these adjustments are made to the data, the average market rate and ranked percentiles are calculated for two tiers of the market, as well as for the state as a whole. The Top Tier Market is comprised of Tennessee counties that are one of the top 20 highest in population, or have one of the top 20 highest per capital personal income averages. The Lower Tier Market includes all those counties not in the Top Tier Market. Separating the two markets based on population and personal income captures the different conditions faced in each market, and exclusion of heavily-subsidized providers minimizes the Lead Agency's influence on percentile and average calculations.

The response rate is identified within each of the market rate survey results tables. It identifies the number of agencies reporting for each age group for licensed child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes. The results include tables that outline the average fee for age bracket by geographic regions that include urban and

rural counties, and all counties combined. In addition, the survey results include data for the ten most populous metropolitan statistical areas and the median fee by care type by county for child care centers, group homes, and family homes.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

4.2.4 Describe how the market rate survey or alternative methodology reflects variations in the price or cost of child care services by:

Effective Date: 0

a) Geographic area (e.g., statewide or local markets). Describe:

The Market Rate data are gathered from an Annual Reporting Survey that is required of all licensed child care agencies in the state of Tennessee.

b) Type of provider. Describe:

Rate data for all active child care providers across the state are collected and reported for three provider categories: Day Care Centers, Group Homes, and Family Homes.

c) Age of child. Describe:

Within each provider category, rates are further categorized by age of child (infant through school-age).

d) Describe any other key variations examined by the market rate survey or alternative methodology, such as quality level.

Percentiles are reported for two groups of counties, as well as the state as a whole. The method used to identify the counties in the first group (Tier I Market) includes those Tennessee counties that were either one of the top-20 highest 2013 population counties or one of the top-20 highest 2011-2013 average per capita personal income counties. This method is preferable to one that relies on a ranking of the average daycare rates charged by day care centers. Use of population and personal income rankings allows

selection based on measures that are likely correlated with the conditions in each market for child care services, while at the same time it separates the selection criteria from the Lead Agency's influence on the market rates.

4.2.5 After conducting the market rate survey or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or alternative methodology. The detailed report must also include the estimated cost of care (including any relevant variation by geographic location, category of provider, or age of child) necessary to support (1) child care providers' implementation of the health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements and (2) higher quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality indicators, at each level of quality. For States without a QRIS, the States may use other quality indicators (e.g. provider status related to accreditation, pre-K standards, Head Start performance standards, or State defined quality measures.)

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Describe how the Lead Agency made the results of the market rate survey or alternative methodology report widely available to the public (98.45(f)(1)). by responding to the questions below.

a) Date of completion of the market rate survey or alternative methodology (must be no earlier than July 1, 2016, and no later than July 1, 2018). 08/24/2018

b) Date the report containing results was made widely available - no later than 30 days after the completion of the report. The most recent market rate survey was compiled July 2018, reviewed by the lead agency, and approved on 08/24/2018. The results were posted on the website on 08/24/2018.

c) Describe how the Lead Agency made the detailed report containing results widely available and provide the link where the report is posted.

The results of the 2017-2018 market rate survey were posted on the Lead Agency website. Information about the availability of the market rate survey results was included in the Child Care News Brief/Newsletter sent to child care providers and partners on August 28, 2018

Link to market rate survey results:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-certificate-program.html>

d) Describe how the Lead Agency considered stakeholder views and comments in the detailed report.

Child care providers, advisory groups, and partners gave feedback and contributed to the design of the annual market rate survey during the spring of 2018, . In response to the comments received, the Lead Agency calculated the Median Fee by Care Type and Age by County for each category of care and included this additional county level data in the overall results of the 2017-2018 survey.

4.3 Setting Payment Rates

The Lead Agency must set CCDF subsidy payment rates, in accordance with the results of the current MRS or alternative methodology, at a level to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services that are comparable with those provided to families not receiving CCDF funds. The Lead Agency must re-evaluate its payment rates at least every 3 years.

4.3.1 Provide the base payment rates and percentiles (based on the most recent MRS) for the following categories below. Percentiles are not required if the Lead Agency conducted an alternative methodology only (with pre-approval from ACF), but must be reported if the Lead Agency conducted an MRS alone or in combination with an alternative methodology. The ages and types of care listed below are meant to provide a snapshot of the categories on which rates can be based and are not intended to be comprehensive of all categories that might exist or to reflect the terms used by the Lead Agency for particular ages. Please use the most populous geographic region (area serving highest number of CCDF children) to report base payment rates below, if they are not statewide. Note: If the Lead Agency obtained approval to conduct an alternative methodology, then reporting of percentiles is not required.

Effective Date: 08/01/2020

a) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 178 per week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 58th-59th

b) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed FCC home in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 135 Family 155 Group per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: Family 62nd-63rd Group 78th

c) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 155 per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 48th - 49th

d) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 128 Family 135 Group per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: Family 65th-66th Group 60th-66th

e) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 119 per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 33rd

f) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 102 Family 108 Group per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: Family 33rd-34th Group 31st

g) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 90 per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 62nd-63rd

h) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

Rate \$ 90 Family 90 Group per Week unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: Family 51st-59th Group 37th-39th

i) Describe how part-time and full-time care were defined and calculated.

Full-time is defined and calculated as 20 or more hours per week and part-time is anything less than 20 hours per week.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the available educational arrangements for school-age children vary greatly statewide and may include virtual and or in-person options. The schedules associated with these programs may also vary widely. Virtual sessions are often only scheduled for a portion of each day. In some instances, students may attend in-person sessions for two or three days a week and work online during the other days. As a result, our traditional school-in or school-out rate structure is not compatible with school schedules during the pandemic. Therefore, as of August 1, 2020, we are temporarily changing our payment policies to allow us to pay a uniform full-time school-out rate for school-age care until December 31, 2020. During this period the full-time school out rate will be applied for all school-age children, regardless of the number of hours of attendance based on the July 2019 reimbursement rate chart, which was subsequently updated October 1, 2020. The temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from August 1, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

j) Provide the effective date of the current payment rates (i.e., date of last update based on most recent MRS). 07/01/2019

k) Identify the most populous area of the state used to complete the responses above.

The top-tier counties identified on the most recent market rate survey include:

Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Cheatham, Davidson, Dyer, Fayette, Greene, Hamilton, Knox, Loudon, Madison, Maury, Montgomery, Moore, Putnam, Roane, Robertson, Rutherford, Sevier, Shelby, Stewart, Sullivan, Sumner, Washington, Williamson, and Wilson

The Child Care Certificate Program Provider Reimbursement Rate Schedule (see link

below) includes the rates for both top tier and lower tier counties. Top tier counties are those with the 20 highest average populations and highest per capita incomes as determined by the market rate study. The yearly effective date on the reimbursement rate schedule is applicable to both the general reimbursement rates and any changes in county tier level that might impact the amount agencies within that county are paid.

l) Provide the citation or link, if available, to the payment rates.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Reimbursement%20Rate%20Chart%20effective%20July%201%202019.pdf>

m) If the payment rates are not set by the Lead Agency for the entire state/territory, describe how many jurisdictions set their own payment rates (98.16(i)(3)).

NA

4.3.2 Lead Agencies can choose to establish tiered rates, differential rates, or add-ons on top of their base rates as a way to increase payment rates for targeted needs (i.e., a higher rate for special needs children as both an incentive for providers to serve children with special needs and as a way to cover the higher costs to the provider to provide care for special needs children).

Check and describe the types of tiered reimbursement or differential rates, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement. In the description of any tiered rates or add-ons, at a minimum, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates, including if the rates were based on the MRS and/or an alternative methodology, and the amount of the rate. Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

Differential rate for *non-traditional hours*.

Describe:

Differential rate for *children with special needs*, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

- Differential rate for *infants and toddlers*. Note: Do not check if the Lead Agency has a different base rate for infants/toddlers with no separate bonus or add-on.

Describe:

- Differential rate for *school-age programs*. Note: Do not check if the Lead Agency has a different base rate for school-age children with no separate bonus or add-on.

Describe:

The Lead Agency is establishing care for school-aged children of essential workers via contracts during the COVID-19 pandemic. TDHS established and is funding a network of temporary sites with the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs for the provision of temporary/emergency care for school-aged children of essential workers. Through these arrangements the Lead Agency is increasing the capacity of school-age care options for children of essential workers statewide. However, these contract arrangements are not associated with specifically paying for child care slots at these locations. A uniform daily rate of payment is issued based upon specific children served at each location. The rate was set higher than a typical subsidy rate to compensate for the additional expense of creating/establishing locations in order to meet the urgent demand. The provisions associated with these contracts are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020. or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

- Differential rate for higher quality, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned.

Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

Other differential rates or tiered rates.

Describe:

The Lead Agency is exploring differential rates for several aspects of care such as non-traditional hours, longevity, infant/toddler care, and services within child care deserts.

Tiered or differential rates are not implemented.

4.4 Summary of Facts Used To Determine That Payment Rates Are Sufficient To Ensure Equal Access

4.4.1 Lead Agencies must certify that CCDF payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services comparable to those provided by families not receiving CCDF assistance (98.16(a)). Certify that payment rates reported in 4.3.1 are sufficient to ensure equal access by providing the following summary of facts (98.45(b)):

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe how a choice of the full range of providers eligible to receive CCDF is made available; the extent to which eligible child care providers participate in the CCDF system; and any barriers to participation, including barriers related to payment rates and practices.

The child care certificate can be used at any regulated, or authorized agency (exception - non-TANF can only be used at a licensed child care agency). Approximately, ninety-five percent of agencies that that care for children receiving child care assistance are regulated center, group, or family agencies. Approximately, sixty-eight percent of DHS licensed or Department of Education approved agencies participate in the child care certificate program. The Lead Agency has not increased the subsidy rates since 2008. This may be a barrier for some providers and families to participate in the subsidy program.

b) Describe how payment rates are adequate and have been established based on the **most recent MRS or alternative methodology** . Note: Per the preamble (81 FR 67512), in instances where a MRS or alternative methodology indicates that prices or costs have

increased, Lead Agencies must raise their rates as a result.

Seventy percent of child enrollments are in agencies with a 1, 2, or 3 quality star rating. These agencies are eligible for bonus payments beyond the base rate per DHS policy. Current subsidy rates may be adequate for a basic level of care. However, the Lead Agency is moving forward with plans to increase subsidy rates to better support basic care and quality enhancements for providers. The 2017-2018 MRS demonstrated that current subsidy rates have not kept up with market rates.

c) Describe how base payment rates enable providers to meet health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements under CCDF.

Current subsidy rates may be adequate for a basic level of care. The Lead Agency increased subsidy rates to better support basic care and quality enhancements for providers and to support providers in meeting the expectations of the new child care rules that went into effect on July 30, 2018. The 2017-2018 MRS demonstrated that current subsidy rates have not kept up with market rates.

An overall subsidy rate increase of 35% for infant/toddlers and 20% for preschool and school-age was implemented April 1, 2019. Additional increases were implemented July 1, 2019 to provide a 15% incentive to areas identified as child care deserts or economically distressed and a 15% incentive to child care programs that offer non-traditional hours of care. Targeted rate increases occurred July 1, 2019 for care levels that fell below the 25th percentile of the most recent Market Rate Survey to increase above that threshold. In addition, we have determined a methodology for a cost of care analysis. A Cost of Care analysis was added to the contract (effective 10-1-19) scope for completing the Market Rate Survey in the summer of 2020. This timeframe is within the period prior to our next scheduled State Plan submission. We will be using the Estimating Cost of Care approach provided through the Office of Child Care and the Toolkit for States and Communities provided by the Center for American Progress. Strategies for ongoing incremental increase procedures have been explored and will become effective by October 31, 2019.

d) Describe how the Lead Agency took the cost of higher quality into account, including how payment rates for higher-quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a QRIS or other system of quality indicators, relate to the estimated cost of care at each level of

quality. Note: For States without a QRIS, the States may use other quality indicators (e.g. provider status related to accreditation, Pre-K standards, Head Start performance standards, or State defined quality measures).

The quality bonus payments established through the tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) support standards that exceed minimum licensing requirements and promote demonstration by providers of higher-quality care. Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS as a way to support the cost of providing higher quality care. The Lead Agency wants to incentivize providers to deliver a higher quality of care. As part of planning for increasing subsidy rates the Lead Agency is considering an annual bonus payment to support agencies that maintain and increase their quality rating level.

e) How will the Lead Agency ensure that the family contribution/co-payment, based on a sliding-fee scale, is affordable and is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds (98.16 (k))? Check all that apply.

Limit the maximum co-payment per family.

Describe: .

Limit the combined amount of co-payment for all children to a percentage of family income. List the percentage of the co-payment limit and

The current co-pay fees are calculated so that a family receiving subsidized child care pays between 1-8% of their income toward that expense (not applicable if more than one child is receiving assistance).

Minimize the abrupt termination of assistance before a family can afford the full cost of care ('the cliff effect') as part of the graduated phase-out of assistance discussed in 3.1.7.

Other.

Describe:

f) To support parental choice and equal access to the full range of child care options, does the Lead Agency choose the option to allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment in instances where the provider's price exceeds

the subsidy payment (98.45(b)(5))?

No

Yes. If yes:

i. Provide the rationale for the Lead Agency's policy to allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment, including a demonstration of how the policy promotes affordability and access for families.

This policy allows parents the most flexibility in choosing the care that will best meet their needs.

ii. Provide data (including data on the size and frequency of such amounts) on the extent to which CCDF providers charge additional amounts to families.

Of 861 top tier child care centers caring for infants, 81.2% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 971 top tier child care centers caring for toddlers, 85.9% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 1,071 top tier child care centers caring for 2 year olds, 92.7% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 1,212 top tier child care centers caring for 3 year olds, 87.1% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 1,255 top tier child care centers caring for 4 year olds, 84.1% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 1,115 top tier child care centers caring for 5 year olds, 83.4% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 558 top tier child care centers caring for School Age-Out children, 47.3% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 154 top tier group homes caring for infants, 78.5% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 168 top tier group homes caring for toddlers, 85.7% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 179 top tier group homes caring for 2 year olds, 93.9% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 193 top tier group homes caring for 3 year olds, 91.7% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 189 top tier group homes caring for 4 year olds, 88.9% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 173 top tier group homes caring for 5 year olds, 84.4% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 65 top tier group homes caring for School Age-Out children, 66.2% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 207 top tier family homes caring for infants, 84.1% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 212 top tier family homes caring for toddlers, 84.9% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 207 top tier family homes caring for 2 year olds, 89.8% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 213 top tier family homes caring for 3 year olds, 83.1% collect more than the state

reimbursement rate. Of 207 top tier family homes caring for 4 year olds, 80.7% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 193 top tier family homes caring for 5 year olds, 72.5% collect more than the state reimbursement rate. Of 67 top tier family homes caring for School Age-Out children, 53.7% collect more than the state reimbursement rate.

iii. Describe the Lead Agency's analysis of the interaction between the additional amounts charged to families with the required family co-payment, and the ability of current subsidy payment rates to provide access to care without additional fees.

Based upon the analysis, the Lead Agency is recommending an increase to the subsidized child care payment rates to reduce the charges to families served.

g) Describe how Lead Agencies' payment practices described in 4.5 support equal access to a range of providers.

The payment process described in 4.5 allows for flexibility in payment intervals to the provider based on their size and cash flow needs. The Lead Agency ensures timeliness of payments by paying within 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services and strives to issue the majority of payments within 10 business days. The Lead Agency also supports the fixed costs of providing child care services by paying based upon a child's enrollment rather than attendance. In addition, the Lead Agency issues payments on a part-time or full-time basis rather than paying for specific hours of services or smaller increments of time. Accordingly, 1 through 19 hours of care is paid at the part-time rate and 20 or more hours of care is paid at the full-time rate.

h) Describe how and on what factors the Lead Agency differentiates payment rates. Check all that apply.

Geographic area.

Describe:

Payment rates are established for Top Tier and Lower Tier counties. The Top Tier Market is comprised of Tennessee counties that are one of the top 20 highest in population, or have one of the top 20 highest per capita personal income averages. The Lower Tier Market includes all those counties not in the Top Tier Market

Type of provider.

Describe:

Payment rates are established for the following four agency types: Child Care Centers, Child Care Group Homes, Child Care Family Homes, and Authorized Professionals

Age of child.

Describe:

Payment rates are established for the following are levels: Infants (6 wks-12 mos), Toddlers (12 mos - 24 mos), PreSchool (24 mos - 5 yrs), School-Age In, School-Age Out.

Quality level.

Describe:

Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

Other.

Describe:

i) Describe any additional facts that the Lead Agency considered in determining its payment rates to ensure equal access. Check all that apply and describe:

Payment rates are set at the 75th percentile benchmark or higher of the most recent MRS.

Describe:

NA

Based on the approved alternative methodology, payments rates ensure equal access.

Describe:

NA

Feedback from parents, including parent surveys or parental complaints.

Describe:

NA

Other.

Describe:

NA

4.5 Payment Practices and the Timeliness of Payments

Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate that they have established payment practices applicable to all CCDF child care providers that include ensuring the timeliness of payments by either (1) paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services or (2) paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services. To the extent practicable, the Lead Agency must also support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by (1) paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance, (2) providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time, (3) providing full payment if a child is absent for 5 or fewer days in a month, or (4) using an alternative approach for which the Lead Agency provides a justification in its Plan (658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(l)(2)).

Lead Agencies are required to use CCDF payment practices that reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers who serve children who do not receive CCDF-funded assistance. Unless a Lead Agency is able to demonstrate that the following policies are not generally accepted in its particular state, territory, or service area or among particular categories or types of providers, Lead Agencies must (1) pay providers based on established part-time or full-time rates rather than paying for hours of service or smaller increments of time and (2) pay for reasonable, mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents (658E(c)(2)(S); 98.45(l)(3)).

In addition, there are certain other generally accepted payment practices that are required. Lead Agencies are required to ensure that child care providers receive payment for any services in accordance with a payment agreement or an authorization for services, ensure that child care providers receive prompt notice of changes to a family's eligibility status that could impact payment, and establish timely appeal and resolution processes for any payment inaccuracies and disputes (98.45(l)(4) through (6); 658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(l)(4); 98.45(l)(5); 98.45(l)(6)).

4.5.1 Certify by identifying and describing the payment practices below that the Lead Agency has implemented for all CCDF child care providers.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) Ensure the timeliness of payments by either (Lead Agency to implement at least one of the following):

Paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

Paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

As best practice, we try to issue payment within 10 business days.

b) To the extent practicable, support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by: (Note: The Lead Agency is to choose at least one of the following):

Paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance.

Describe the policy or procedure.

Effective October 1, 2019, Lead Agency program staff were trained on revised policy to delink provider payment from occasional absences by paying based upon enrollment rather than attendance. Absences would not impact payment for a given child unless the child was absent for more than 20 days in a row. After an absence of 20 consecutive days, the Lead Agency would reach out to the family to confirm that the child was not returning to care before stopping the payments to the provider.

The Lead Agency temporarily removed the limit on absences in order to continue payment to providers who are closed due to the impacts of COVID-19 (until June 30, 2020) and in circumstances where the provider is open but the child is not attending (until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period). These provisions went into effect on March 3, 2020.

- Providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time.

Describe the policy or procedure.

- Providing full payment if a child is absent for five or fewer days in a month.

Describe the policy or procedure.

- Use an alternative approach for which the Lead Agency provides a justification in its Plan.

If chosen, please describe the policy or procedure and the Lead Agency's justification for this approach.

The Lead Agency established the Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance Program for a defined time period and may elect to pay the provider for the entire period of the program for each child that is enrolled and receiving care, regardless of when the essential employee payment assistance application was received and regardless of when the child care provider enrolled in the certificate program. These provisions are effective from March 3, 2020 until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

c) The Lead Agency's payment practices reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers who serve children who do not receive CCDF subsidies. These payment practices must include the following two practices unless the Lead Agency provides evidence that such practices are not generally accepted in its state (658E(c)(2)(S); 98.45(l)(3)).

- i. Paying on a part-time or full-time basis (rather than paying for hours of service or smaller increments of time).

Describe the policy or procedure and include a definition of the time increments (e.g., part time, full-time).

The Lead Agency issues payments on a part-time or full-time basis rather than paying

for specific hours of services or smaller increments of time. Accordingly, 1 through 19 hours of care is paid at the part-time rate and 20 or more hours of care is paid at the full-time rate.

ii. Paying for reasonable mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents.

Describe the policy or procedure.

The Lead Agency collects information on registration and application fees through the annual report process for all licensed providers. Effective September 30, 2019, Lead Agency program staff were trained on revised policy to allow for payment of reasonable mandatory registrations fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents by paying for registrations fees of up to \$100 two times per year and also paying for an annual registration fee of up to \$100 each year (if the provider charges such a fee).

d) The Lead Agency ensures that providers are paid in accordance with a written payment agreement or an authorization for services that includes, at a minimum, information regarding provider payment policies, including rates, schedules, any fees charged to providers, and the dispute-resolution process. Describe:

The Lead Agency maintains a contract with each provider that participates in the Child Care Certificate Program. The contract includes provisions regarding Payment Terms and Conditions (payment methodology, payment rates, payment and attendance, payment reductions, deductions, methods of collection of overpayments).

e) The Lead Agency provides prompt notice to providers regarding any changes to the family's eligibility status that could impact payments, and such a notice is sent no later than the day that the Lead Agency becomes aware that such a change will occur.

Describe:

Effective May 30, 2019, Lead Agency program staff were trained on revised policy to provide same day provider notification of any changes to the families eligibility status that could impact payments.

f) The Lead Agency has a timely appeal and resolution process for payment inaccuracies and disputes. Describe:

The contract provides that the Lead Agency is the final decision maker of any payment disputes and can deny payments. Effective August 30, 2019, the Lead Agency revised policy to include a payment dispute resolution process that allows providers to request an administrative review related to adverse administrative actions such as disallowed costs, refused payments, or payment reductions.

g) Other. Describe:

The Lead Agency is currently exploring strategies to adopt a system, including technology design and equipment purchasing that would allow providers and parents to electronically track and submit child attendance information. Goals for such a system would be to allow more accurate, timely, and efficient reporting of child attendance and to support timely payments to providers. In pursuing technology solutions, the Lead Agency hopes to move away from predominantly paper processes for tracking attendance.

4.5.2 Do payment practices vary across regions, counties, and/or geographic areas?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

No, the practices do not vary across areas.

Yes, the practices vary across areas.

Describe:

4.6 Supply-Building Strategies to Meet the Needs of Certain Populations

Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and to improve the quality of child care services for children in underserved areas; infants and toddlers; children with disabilities, as defined by the Lead Agency; and children who receive care during non-traditional hours (658 E(c)(2)(M); 98.16 (x)).

4.6.1 Lead Agencies must identify shortages in the supply of high-quality child care providers. List the data sources used to identify shortages, and describe the method of tracking progress to support equal access and parental choice.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

In licensed family child care.

Currently, the Lead Agency reviews Child Care Certificate Program data to determine the needs for children in underserved areas. The Lead Agency implements an annual survey of child care agencies licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services to collect data related to agencies service of children and families. As of September 30, 2017, aggregated data indicates that approximately 5,800 children identified as infants and toddlers, 1,600 children identified as having special needs were in the care of child care agencies licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

In licensed child care centers.

Currently, the Lead Agency reviews Child Care Certificate Program data to determine the needs for children in underserved areas. The Lead Agency implements an annual survey of child care agencies licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services to collect data related to agencies service of children and families. As of September 30, 2017, aggregated data indicates that approximately 5,800 children identified as infants and toddlers, 1,600 children identified as having special needs were in the care of child care agencies licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

Other.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

Effective Date: 10-1-19

a) Children in underserved areas. Check and describe all that apply.

Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

Family child care networks.

Describe:

The Lead Agency and its partners are providing statewide pre-licensing/orientation and new rules training for new and existing family child care providers who also receive on-site coaching and mentoring supports to improve child care quality through the Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) program provided by the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance (TFCCA). Family child care providers have professional development opportunities statewide through the CCR&R and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA). Family child care providers across the state have additional opportunities to participate in the TFCCA, a statewide network of family and group home child care providers committed to high quality care, children, and families. TOPSTAR and TECTA provide support for professional development, business practices, family engagement, child care advocacy, and annual Environment Rating Scales Assessments. TOPSTAR and TECTA also collaborate with family child care providers and other partners to develop quality enhancement and professional development plans with each family child care provider. TOPSTAR and TECTA under the guidance of the Lead Agency will target growth of family home providers in child care deserts by promoting entrepreneurship and small business ownership opportunities.

Start-up funding.

Describe:

Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Lead Agency through its licensing unit provides direct technical assistance. The Lead Agency also leverages its partnerships with Child Care Resource and Referral, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance to deliver effective on-site technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching.

[Recruitment of providers.](#)

[Describe:](#)

Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) under the guidance of the Lead Agency will target growth of family home providers in child care deserts by promoting entrepreneurship, small business ownership opportunities, and the benefits of licensure. TECTA-TOPSTAR advisors/mentors participate in Pre-licensing and Orientations for potential family child care providers and assist them with the licensing requirement process. Advisors/mentors go on-site and provide technical assistance through peer-to-peer mentoring.

[Tiered payment rates \(as discussed in 4.3.2\).](#)

[Describe:](#)

Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned. Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

[Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.](#)

[Describe:](#)

Effective September 15, 2019, the Lead Agency is providing a portfolio of shared services at no cost to all child care agencies through a contract with the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee that includes:

- Business management tools;
- Human resource tools;
- Program administration tools;
- Classroom resources; and
- Group purchasing (national, state, and local levels)

Effective October 1, 2019, the Lead Agency is creating small business academies through a contract with Child Care Resource & Referral to support, strengthen, and improve small business practices among child care providers.

[Accreditation supports.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) offers technical assistance and financial support for child care providers seeking accreditation by either the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[Child Care Health Consultation.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches, who are located throughout the state to promote the health and safety practices in early care and education, promote developmental monitoring and screening, resources and supports for children with disabilities, and information on social and emotional development of children in child care agencies, teachers and families.

[Mental Health Consultation.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators, including consultation and technical assistance.

[Other.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency was selected to participate in the ACF's strengthening family child care quality peer learning groups.

[4.6.2 Describe what method\(s\) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.](#)

[b\) Infants and toddlers. Check and describe all that apply.](#)

[Grants and contracts \(as discussed in 4.1.3\).](#)

Describe:

Family child care networks.

Describe:

The Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance (TFCCA) and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) closely collaborate with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R) to ensure intensive, developmentally appropriate infant-toddler coaching is available to family providers statewide. Peer-to-peer mentoring through the Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) program relies on additional specialized coaching delivered by a team of 15 CCR&R Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches who are extensively trained in caring for infants and toddlers in group settings through the WestEd Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC).

Start-up funding.

Describe:

Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Lead Agency through its licensing unit provides direct technical assistance. The Lead Agency also leverages its partnerships with Child Care Resource and Referral, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance to deliver effective on-site technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching. The Lead Agency contracts with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R) to provide intensive and developmentally appropriate infant-toddler coaching statewide through its specialized team of 15 Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches who are extensively trained in caring for infants and toddlers in a group setting through the WestEd Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC).

Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) under the

guidance of the Lead Agency will target growth of family home providers in child care deserts by promoting entrepreneurship, small business ownership opportunities, and the benefits of licensure. TECTA-TOPSTAR advisors/mentors participate in Pre-licensing and Orientations for potential family child care providers and assist them with the licensing requirement process. Advisors/mentors go on-site and provide technical assistance through peer-to-peer mentoring.

[Tiered payment rates \(as discussed in 4.3.2\) .](#)

[Describe:](#)

Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned.

Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

[Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency is exploring opportunities to implement local shared services that may be scaled statewide, including professional and vendor services, substitute pools, and paid substitutes promoting educator professional development and continuing education.

[Accreditation supports.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) offers technical assistance and financial support for child care providers seeking accreditation by either the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[Child Care Health Consultation.](#)

Describe:

The Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches, who are located throughout the state to promote the health and safety practices in early care and education, promote developmental monitoring and screening, resources and supports for children with disabilities, and information on social and emotional development of children in child care agencies, teachers and families.

Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators, including consultation and technical assistance.

Other.

Describe:

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

c) Children with disabilities. Check and describe all that apply.

Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

Family child care networks.

Describe:

The Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance (TFCCA) and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) collaborate with the Child Care Resource & Referral Network (CCR&R) who employs 15 Health, Safety, and Well-Being Coaches to provide on-site technical assistance and coaching in early care and education environments and specialized resources and supports for child care agencies and families caring for children with developmental delays/special needs and or disabilities.

Start-up funding.

Describe:

Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Lead Agency through its licensing unit provides direct technical assistance. The Lead Agency also leverages its partnerships with Child Care Resource and Referral, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance to deliver effective on-site technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching. The Child Care Resource & Referral Network (CCR&R) employs 15 Health, Safety, and Well-Being Coaches on-site technical assistance and coaching in early care and education environments and specialized resources and supports for child care agencies and families caring for children with developmental delays/special needs and or disabilities.

Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) under the guidance of the Lead Agency will target growth of family home providers in child care deserts by promoting entrepreneurship, small business ownership opportunities, and the benefits of licensure. TECTA-TOPSTAR advisors/mentors participate in Pre-licensing and Orientations for potential family child care providers and assist them with the licensing requirement process. Advisors/mentors go on-site and provide technical assistance through peer-to-peer mentoring.

Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2).

Describe:

Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned.

Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

- [Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency is exploring opportunities to implement local shared services that may be scaled statewide, including professional and vendor services, substitute pools, and paid substitutes promoting educator professional development and continuing education.

- [Accreditation supports.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) offers technical assistance and financial support for child care providers seeking accreditation by either the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

- [Child Care Health Consultation.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches, who are located throughout the state to promote the health and safety practices in early care and education, promote developmental monitoring and screening, resources and supports for children with disabilities, and information on social and emotional development of children in child care agencies, teachers and families.

- [Mental Health Consultation.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators, including consultation and technical assistance.

Other.

Describe:

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

d) Children who receive care during non-traditional hours. Check and describe all that apply

Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

Family child care networks.

Describe:

The Lead Agency and its partners are providing statewide pre-licensing/orientation and new rules training for new and existing family child care providers who also receive on-site coaching and mentoring supports to improve child care quality through the Tennessee's Outstanding Providers Supported Through Available Resources (TOPSTAR) program provided by the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance (TFCCA). Family child care providers have professional development opportunities statewide through the CCR&R and TECTA. Family child care providers across the state have additional opportunities to participate in the TFCCA, a statewide network of family and group home child care providers committed to high quality care, children, and families. TOPSTAR and TECTA provide support for professional development, business practices, family engagement, child care advocacy, and annual Environment Rating Scales Assessments. TOPSTAR and TECTA also collaborate with family child care providers and other partners to develop quality enhancement and professional development plans with each family child care provider. TOPSTAR and TECTA, under the guidance of the Lead Agency, will target accessibility and availability of quality child care services locally by promoting nontraditional hours of operations.

Start-up funding.

Describe:

[Technical assistance support.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency through its licensing unit provides direct technical assistance. The Lead Agency also leverages its partnerships with Child Care Resource and Referral, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance to deliver effective on-site technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching.

[Recruitment of providers.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The lead agency is increasing the number of statewide pre-licensing/orientation trainings to recruit providers who will provide non-traditional hours of care.

[Tiered payment rates \(as discussed in 4.3.2\) .](#)

[Describe:](#)

Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned.

Bonus payments are available for agencies that earn One (5%), Two (15%), or Three (20%) Stars through the QRIS.

[Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency is exploring opportunities to implement local shared services that may be scaled statewide, including professional and vendor services, substitute pools, and paid substitutes promoting educator professional development and continuing education.

[Accreditation supports.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) offers technical

assistance and financial support for child care providers seeking accreditation by either the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

The Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches, who are located throughout the state to promote the health and safety practices in early care and education, promote developmental monitoring and screening, resources and supports for children with disabilities, and information on social and emotional development of children in child care agencies, teachers and families.

Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators, including consultation and technical assistance.

Other.

Describe:

Through participation in ACF's strengthening family child care quality peer learning groups, the Lead Agency is developing strategies for increasing the supply of care during non-traditional hours.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

e) Other. Check and describe all that apply:

Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

NA

Family child care networks.

Describe:

NA

Start-up funding.

Describe:

NA

Technical assistance support.

Describe:

NA

Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

NA

Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2).

Describe:

NA

Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

NA

Accreditation supports.

Describe:

NA

Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

NA

Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

NA

Other.

Describe:

NA

4.6.3 Lead Agencies must prioritize investments for increasing access to high-quality child care and development services for children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and do not currently have sufficient numbers of such programs.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) How does the Lead Agency define areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment?

Concentrations of poverty and unemployment are identified based upon U.S. Census Bureau data on county poverty rates to determine the percentage of persons below the poverty level and Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development data on unemployment by county. The Lead Agency also utilizes a GIS application to map distribution of child care agencies statewide by Star Quality rating.

Example of data sources:

<https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/tennessee/percent-of-people-of-all-ages-in-poverty#table>

<https://www.tn.gov/workforce/general-resources/news/2018/3/15/tennessee-begins-2018-with-county-unemployment--rates-lower-than-january-2017.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/workforce/documents/LaborForceEstimates,Jan18.pdf>

<https://ccaoa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=536b03860f1f4da8815206b336f16eaa>

b) Describe how the Lead Agency prioritizes increasing access to high-quality child care and development services for children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have high-quality programs. The Lead Agency in collaboration with CCR&R is developing an outreach plan in areas of significant poverty and unemployment to encourage more opportunities and training for potential high quality child care providers. These providers will receive pre-licensing training and technical assistance and coaching until they reach and maintain the two or three star quality level.

5 Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes To Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings

Lead Agencies are required to certify that there are in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services in the state/territory, which supports the health and safety of all children in child care. States and territories may allow licensing exemptions. Lead Agencies must describe how such licensing exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of CCDF children in license-exempt care (98.16 (u)).

Lead Agencies also must certify that there are in effect health and safety standards and training requirements applicable to providers serving CCDF children, whether they are licensed or license-exempt. These health and safety requirements must be appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served, must include specific topics and training on those topics, and are subject to monitoring and enforcement procedures.

The organization of this section begins with a description of the licensing system for providers of child care in a state or territory and then moves to focus in on CCDF providers who may be licensed, exempt from licensing, or relative providers. The section then covers the health and safety requirements and training, and monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that CCDF child care providers comply with licensing and health and safety requirements (98.16(n)). Lead Agencies are also asked to describe any exemptions for relative providers (98.16(l)). This section also addresses group size limits; child-staff ratios; and required qualifications for caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.16(m)) serving CCDF children.

Note: When responding to questions in this section, the OCC recognizes that each

State/Territory identifies and defines its own categories of care. The OCC does not expect States/Territories to change their definitions to fit the CCDF-defined categories of care. For these questions, provide responses that closely match the CCDF categories of care.

Criminal background check requirements are included in this section (98.16(o)). It is important to note that these requirements are in effect for all child care staff members that are licensed, regulated or registered under state/territory law and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services.

5.1 Licensing Requirements

Each state/territory must certify it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services provided within the state/territory (not restricted to providers receiving CCDF funds) and provide a detailed description of these requirements and how the requirements are effectively enforced (658E(c)(2)(F)). If any types of providers are exempt from licensing requirements, the state/territory must describe those exemptions and describe how these exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, or development of children. The descriptions must also include any exemptions based on provider category, type, or setting; length of day; and providers not subject to licensing because the number of children served falls below a Lead Agency-defined threshold and any other exemption to licensing requirements (658E(c)(2)(F); 98.16(u); 98.40(a)(2)(iv)).

5.1.1 To certify, describe the licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the state/territory by identifying the providers in your state/territory that are subject to licensing using the CCDF categories listed below? Check all that apply and provide a citation to the licensing rule.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Center-based child care.

Describe and Provide the citation:

In Tennessee, an entity that provides care for three (3) or more hours per day for at least five (5) children not related to the primary caregiver must be licensed/regulated by the Lead Agency.

Department of Human Services (Licensed Agencies)

In Tennessee, approximately 2,311 agencies are licensed by the Department of Human Services and receive regular monitoring visits to determine compliance with a defined set of standards: >• Child Care Centers (1,699);

- Group Child Care Homes (359);

- Family Child Care Homes (253):The requirements for the above categories seek to maintain adequate health, safety and supervision of children in a group setting and to promote developmentally appropriate care. Requirements include standards for equipment, ratios, staffing, program, health and safety, transportation, food, physical facilities, and care of children with disabilities/special needs. • Drop-In Child Care

- Centers (9): Although the requirements for Drop-in Centers also seek to maintain adequate health, safety and supervision of children in a group setting, these centers are designed to provide short-term care. Attendance for any given child may be short and erratic. Therefore, there is no expectation that this type of care makes a significant contribution to the overall development of the child. This type of care is more like a regulated version of casual care than standard child care. As a result, this type of care is not eligible to participate in the Child Care Certificate Program.

Department of Education (Approved Agencies)

In addition, there are approximately 1,928 agencies regulated by the Department of Education. These programs receive a certificate of approval rather than a license. In accordance with T.C.A. §§49-1-1101-1109, the Department of Education is mandated to inspect and approve all programs subject to the State Board's jurisdiction pursuant to T.C.A. §49-1-302(l).

All public and private school-administered infant/toddler, preschool, before and after school programs, as well as, approved Montessori programs, TEIS early intervention programs, school-based and community-based Lottery Education Afterschool Programs and 21st Century Community Learning Centers must be in compliance with Standards for Infant/Toddler, Preschool, and School-Age Extended Care Programs, Rules of the State Board of Education Office of the Commissioner Chapter 0520-12-01 Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs, adopted by the State Board of Education as defined in T.C.A. § 49-1-302(l) and certified by the Department of Education and verified through inspection by the Department's child care program evaluators.

Approximately 300 of these agencies participate in the Child Care Certificate Program.
Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapter 1240-04-01

Family child care.

Describe and Provide the citation:

In Tennessee, an entity that provides care for three (3) or more hours per day for at least five (5) children not related to the primary caregiver must be licensed/regulated by the Lead Agency.

Department of Human Services (Licensed Agencies)

In Tennessee, approximately 2,311 agencies are licensed by the Department of Human Services and receive regular monitoring visits to determine compliance with a defined set of standards:

- Child Care Centers (1,699);
- Group Child Care Homes (359);
- Family Child Care Homes (253):

The requirements for the above categories seek to maintain adequate health, safety and supervision of children in a group setting and to promote developmentally appropriate care. Requirements include standards for equipment, ratios, staffing, program, health and safety, transportation, food, physical facilities, and care of children with disabilities/special needs.

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapter 1240-04-01

In-home care (care in the child's own home).

Describe and provide the citation (if applicable):

5.1.2 Describe if any providers are exempted from licensing requirements and how such exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children (658E (c)(2)(F); 98.40(a)(2)).

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

Note: Additional information about exemptions related to CCDF providers is required in 5.1.3.

Boys and Girls Clubs exempt by statute, are the only exempt entities that are eligible to participate in the Child Care Certificate Program. The Boys and Girls Clubs organization structure includes personnel dedicated to helping Clubs establish best practices that create and maintain safe settings for the children in their care. Care is also limited to older school-age children. Clubs generally have ratio guidelines in the 1:15 to 1:20 range. The Department has developed a health and safety checklist to monitor Boys and Girls Clubs that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program for compliance with CCDBG requirements.

Authorized Professionals There are approximately 43 individuals who do not meet the threshold for licensing (i.e. care for less than five children related to the primary educator) that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program due to parental choice. Although not specifically licensed, these individuals are monitored by the Department of Human Services for compliance with CCDBG requirements. The Lead Agency uses a health and safety checklist to complete inspections on these entities annually.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Lead Agency established and is funding a network of temporary sites with the YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs for the provision of temporary/emergency care for school-aged children of essential workers. The contract includes health and safety provisions for criminal background checks, ratios, age grouping, accountability procedures, facility safety, medical precautions, and injury/child abuse reporting. Temporary sites meet ratios with staff who have either already been background checked through the TDHS system or who have been subject to the name-based checks that include the following elements:

- Criminal checks utilizing CLEAR investigation software for law enforcement to conduct name-based checks using DOB and Driver license number where available - The CLEAR database includes real time incarceration records, arrests, and warrant information as well as criminal history for many states. - 100% of Tennessee is covered - CLEAR also provides previous addresses for the individual

- TN Vulnerable Persons Registry
- TN Child Abuse Checks
- TN Sex Offender Registry

In addition, the contract associated with the network of temporary/emergency child care for essential workers also includes provisions for injury/child abuse reporting. The minimum health and safety provisions of the contract do not specifically include requirements for immunizations, safe sleep practices, prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions, prevention of shaken baby syndrome - abusive head trauma, precautions in transporting children, or pediatric first aid and CPR. The contract also does not mandate training for the typically required health and safety topics. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

5.1.3 Check and describe any CCDF providers in your state/territory who are exempt from licensing (98.40(2)(i) through (iv))? Describe exemptions based on length of day, threshold on the number of children in care, ages of children in care or any other factors applicable to the exemption

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Center-based child care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

Boys and Girls Clubs Tennessee Code Annotated§ 71-3-503. Program and facilities exempt from licensing, provides:

(A) Any program or facility operated by, or in affiliation with, any Boys and Girls Club that provides care for school-aged children and that holds membership in good standing with Boys and Girls Clubs of America and that is certified as being in compliance with the purposes, procedures, voluntary standards and mandatory requirements of Boys and Girls Clubs of America;

(B) Any such Boys and Girls Club that applies to participate in state or federally funded programs that require child care licensing by the state as a term of eligibility may elect to apply to the department for child care licensing and regulation. Upon meeting departmental standards, the Boys and Girls Club may be licensed as a child care center/provider;

(C) The department is hereby authorized to grant a waiver from any rule concerning grouping of children and adult/child ratios for child care centers to any Boys and Girls Club that falls within both subdivisions (a)(11)(A) and (a)(10)(A) and (B), and that is providing after-school child care to mixed groups of school-aged children;

Approximately eight exempt Boys and Girls Clubs provide care for children participating in the Child Care Certificate Program.

Family child care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

Authorized Professionals There are approximately 43 individuals who do not meet the threshold for licensing (i.e. care for less than five children related to the primary educator) that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program due to parental choice. Although not specifically licensed, these individuals are monitored by the Department of Human Services for compliance with CCDBG requirements.

In-home care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

5.2 Health and Safety Standards and Requirements for CCDF Providers

5.2.1 Standards on ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for CCDF providers.

Lead Agencies are required to establish child care standards for providers receiving CCDF funds, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, that address appropriate ratios between the number of children and number of providers in terms of the age of the children,

group size limits for specific age populations, and the required qualifications for providers (658E(c)(2)(H); 98.41(d); 98.16(m)). For ease of responding, this section is organized by CCDF categories of care, licensing status, and age categories. Respondents should map their Lead Agency categories of care to the CCDF categories.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Licensed CCDF center-based care

1. Infant

-- How does the State/territory define infant (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 defines an infant as: "A child who is six (6) weeks through twelve (12) months of age.

-- Ratio:

The ratio is 1:4

-- Group size:

Group Size is 8

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Each group shall have at least one (1) educator present who has a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by the Department. Pursuant to the rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;
Food allergies;
Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;
Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;
An overview of licensing requirements; and
Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

An Educator must be at least 18 years of age. Exception: Sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) year-old students currently enrolled in a Department-recognized career and technical child care educational program may be used as floaters or assistant teachers provided, however, that they shall always be under the direct supervision of an adult educator and shall not be left alone with a group of children.

2. Toddler

-- How does the State/territory define toddler (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 defines a toddler as: "A child who is thirteen (13) months through thirty (30) months of age."

-- Ratio:

The ratio is 1:6

-- Group size:

The group size is 12

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Each group shall have at least one (1) educator present who has a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by the Department. Per the rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;

Food allergies;

Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;

Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;

An overview of licensing requirements; and

Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

An Educator must be at least 18 years of age. Exception: Sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) year-old students currently enrolled in a Department-recognized career and technical child care educational program may be used as floaters or assistant teachers provided, however, that they shall always be under the direct supervision of an adult educator and shall not be left alone with a group of children.

3. Preschool

-- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 defines a pre-school child as: "A child who is thirty one (31) months of age and who has not entered kindergarten to school-age".

-- Ratio:

The ratios are 1:7, 1:9, 1:13, 1:16

-- Group size:

The group size is 14, 18, 20, 20

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Each group shall have at least one (1) educator present who has a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by the Department. Pursuant to the rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;
Safe sleep procedures;
Meal service and safe food preparation policies;
Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;
Food allergies;
Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;
Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;
An overview of licensing requirements; and
Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

An Educator must be at least 18 years of age. Exception: Sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) year-old students currently enrolled in a Department-recognized career and technical child care educational program may be used as floaters or assistant teachers provided, however, that they shall always be under the direct supervision of an adult educator and shall not be left alone with a group of children.

4. School-age

-- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 defines a school-age child as "a child who has entered kindergarten through seventeen (17) years of age.

-- Ratio:

The ratio is 1:20

-- Group size:

There is no maximum group size

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Each group shall have at least one (1) educator present who has a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by the Department. Per the rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;

Food allergies;

Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;

Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;

An overview of licensing requirements; and

Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

An Educator must be at least 18 years of age. Exception: Sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) year-old students currently enrolled in a Department-recognized career and technical child care educational program may be used as floaters or assistant teachers provided, however, that they shall always be under the direct supervision of an adult educator and shall not be left alone with a group of children.

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe which requirements apply to exempt centers

Boys & Girls Clubs: Care in these facilities is limited to school-age children.

Boys & Girls Club activities require continuous supervision, but the actual ratio may vary somewhat by location and activity based upon the standards adopted by a give site.

Ratios recommended by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America are as follows:

Activity/Program Type and Adult:Youth Ratio

- Drop-in 1:25
- Instructional 1:20
- Group Clubs 1:15
- Teams 1:15
- Day Camp 1:10
- Day Trips 1:8
- Overnight 1:6 (with minimum of 2 adults present)
- Swimming 1 Lifeguard: 25 Swimmers
- Swimming 1 Spotter: 10 Swimmers

6. Describe, if applicable, ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for classrooms with mixed age groups.

Six (6) weeks - Thirty (30) months - Ratio: 1:5, Group Size: 10

Two (2) - Four (4) Years - Ratio: 1:4, Group Size: 16

Two and One-Half (2 1/2) - Three (3) Years - Ratio: 1:9, Group Size: 18

Two and One-Half (2 1/2) - Five (5) Years - Ratio: 1:11, Group Size: 20

Two and One-Half (2 1/2) - Twelve (12) Years - Ratio: 1:10, Group Size: 10

Three (3) - Five (5) Years - Ratio: 1:13, Group Size: 22

Four (4) - Five (5) Years - Ratio: 1:16, Group Size: 24

Five (5) - Twelve (12) Years - Ratio: 1:20, Group Size: No Max

Qualifications are the same as for regular classrooms described in item 1-4 above.

7. Describe the director qualifications for licensed CCDF center-based care, including any variations based on the ages of children in care.

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01, director qualifications include the following requirements:

High school diploma (or equivalent as recognized by state law), and Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) certificate for completing thirty (30) clock hours of the Administrator Orientation training or the equivalent as recognized by the Department. Four (4) years of full-time (paid or unpaid) experience with children in a group setting.

The director of a single-site child care center shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

In lieu of education: Continuously employed as an on-site child care director or a child care agency owner since July 1, 2000.

b) Licensed CCDF family child care provider

1. Infant

-- How does the State/territory define infant (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 Rules, an Infant is "A child who is six (6) weeks through twelve (12) months of age."

-- Ratio:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- Group size:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present

under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- [Teacher/caregiver qualifications:](#)

Family Home:

Primary educators that received an initial license on or after the effective date of these rules shall be required to have earned a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

Family and Group Home:

Primary Educators must be at least 18 years of age. Exception:

Educators/Assistants sixteen (16) through seventeen (17) years of age may assist an educator and be counted as an adult in the adult:child ratio if the individual is: Never left alone with children; and Always under the direct supervision of a primary educator.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;

Food allergies;

Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;

Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;

An overview of licensing requirements; and

Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

Group Home:

Primary educators shall have a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

2. Toddler

-- How does the State/territory define toddler (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01, a Toddler is "A child who is thirteen (13) months through thirty (30) months of age."

-- Ratio:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- Group size:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Family Home:

Primary educators that received an initial license on or after the effective date of these rules shall be required to have earned a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

Family and Group Home:

Primary Educators must be at least 18 years of age. Exception:

Educators/Assistants sixteen (16) through seventeen (17) years of age may assist an educator and be counted as an adult in the adult:child ratio if the individual is: Never left alone with children; and Always under the direct supervision of a primary educator.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;

Food allergies;

Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;

Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;

An overview of licensing requirements; and

Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

Group Home:

Primary educators shall have a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

3. Preschool

-- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01, a Pre-school Child is "A child who is thirty-one (31) months of age and who has not entered kindergarten to school-age."

-- Ratio:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- Group size:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- [Teacher/caregiver qualifications:](#)

Family Home:

Primary educators that received an initial license on or after the effective date of these rules shall be required to have earned a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

Family and Group Home:

Primary Educators must be at least 18 years of age. Exception:

Educators/Assistants sixteen (16) through seventeen (17) years of age may assist an educator and be counted as an adult in the adult:child ratio if the individual is: Never left alone with children; and Always under the direct supervision of a primary educator.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;
Safe sleep procedures;
Meal service and safe food preparation policies;
Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;
Food allergies;
Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;
Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;
An overview of licensing requirements; and
Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

Group Home:

Primary educators shall have a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

4. School-age

-- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range):

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01, a School-Age Child is "A child who has entered kindergarten through seventeen (17) years of age."

-- Ratio:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- Group size:

Ratio and Group Size Family Home: Maximum Number of Children and Ages (including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age)

Seven (7) or fewer children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - One Educator

Seven (7) or fewer children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and No more than four (4) under two (2) years - Two Educators

More than seven (7) children; and Five (5) or more under two (2) years - Three Educators

Ratio and Group Size Group Home (repeat for all care levels):

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older - One Educator

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and No more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age - Two Educators

Twelve (12) - Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age) Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age - Three Educators

-- [Teacher/caregiver qualifications:](#)

Family Home:

Primary educators that received an initial license on or after the effective date of these rules shall be required to have earned a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

Family and Group Home:

Primary Educators must be at least 18 years of age. Exception:

Educators/Assistants sixteen (16) through seventeen (17) years of age may assist an educator and be counted as an adult in the adult:child ratio if the individual is:

Never left alone with children; and Always under the direct supervision of a primary educator.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall receive orientation in, and have a working knowledge of the following items:

Program philosophy and policies;

Job description;

Emergency health and safety procedures;

Behavior management procedures;

Detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse;

Procedures for receiving and releasing children;

Safe sleep procedures;

Meal service and safe food preparation policies;

Supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play;

Food allergies;

Expectations for communications with parent/guardian;

Disease control and health promotion, including childhood obesity and the beneficial health impacts of physical activity;

An overview of licensing requirements; and

Information on risks of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to female employees of childbearing age.

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee shall complete training in the following areas:

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma; and

A minimum of two (2) hours pre-service training as recognized by the Department.

The child care agency shall provide orientation on safe sleep practices before allowing any educator to assume infant-caregiving duties;

Group Home:

Primary educators shall have a high school diploma or equivalent educational credential as recognized by state law.

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt family child care homes, please describe which requirements apply to exempt homes

Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

c) In-home CCDF providers:

1. Describe the ratios

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals. Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and there are no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

2. Describe the group size

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals. Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who

may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and there are no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

3. Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time.

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals. Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and there are no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

4. Describe if the state/territory requires related children to be included in the child-to-provider ratio or group size

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals. Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and there are no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

5. Describe any limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals. Authorized Child Care Professionals are identified as individuals who may care for up to 6 children (four not related to the individual and up to two additional related children). There are no rules or restrictions regarding providing care for a maximum number of children under a particular age and there are no specific educational requirements for this category of provider.

5.2 Health and Safety Standards and Requirements for CCDF Providers

5.2.2 Health and safety standards for CCDF providers.

States and territories must establish health and safety standards for programs (e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, etc.) serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to the topics listed below, as appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served (98.41(a)). This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving CCDF funds regardless of licensing status (i.e., licensed or license-exempt). The only exception to this requirement is for providers who are caring for their own relatives because Lead Agencies have the option of exempting relatives from some or all CCDF health and safety requirements (98.42(c)).

a) To certify, describe how the following health and safety standards for programs serving children receiving CCDF assistance are defined and established on the required topics (98.16(l)). Note: This question is different from the health and safety training requirements, which are addressed in question 5.2.3.

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Handwashing shall occur at least at the following times but not limited to:

- After toileting and diapering.
- After handling bodily fluids.
- Prior to and after eating.
- Prior to and after food preparation.
- Routine cleaning and sanitizing of tables, chairs, high chairs and toys that children place in their mouth, dishes and utensils, and the floor.

Children must be appropriately immunized with limited exceptions for medical reasons or religious tenets and practices and a grace period for children of homeless families. These standards are applicable to all CCDF providers.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the immunization requirements for temporary sites established by contract. Immunizations are not

specifically required for children in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt programs

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01

Rules of the Department of Education - Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs Chapter 0520-12-01

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 2895

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 3256

Authorized Child Care Professional Contract

Approved Child Care Agency Contract

Exempt Child Care Agency Contract

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Health and safety standards applicable to non-licensed categories are contained in the following documents:

Rules of the Department of Education - Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs - Chapter 0520-12-01:

<https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.20180801.pdf>

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 2895:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/hs-2895.pdf>

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 3256:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/hs-3256.pdf>

Authorized Child Care Professional Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Authorized-Child-Care-Professional-Contract.pdf>

Approved Child Care Agency Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Approved-Child-Care-Agency-Contract.pdf>

Exempt Child Care Agency Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Exempt-Child-Care-Agency-Contract.pdf>

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Infants should be placed on their backs for sleeping. Infants should be touched every 15 minutes to check for breathing. No soft bedding, blankets or pillows (Soft bedding that is prohibited includes, but is not limited to, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys, and other soft items). Infants shall only sleep in a safety approved crib or other equipment approved by CPSC and ASTM safety standards for infant sleep (play pens, cribs, play yards). Infants shall not sleep in any other equipment, such as, but not limited to, a car safety seat, bouncy seat, highchair, swing or the floor. Infants who arrive at the facility asleep or fall asleep in such equipment or on the floor shall be transferred to a safety approved crib or other equipment approved for infant sleep. Staff training on prevention of SIDS and safe sleep practices prior to working with infants.

Additional Information Communicated to Licensed Child Care Agencies:

The purpose of this memo is to provide information on licensing rules and regulations and best practices regarding Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Safe Sleep Practices and Procedures in the early care education setting. This memo was developed to ensure that child care educators are knowledgeable of child care licensing rules and best practices in the protection and health and safety of children in licensed child care agencies.

LICENSING RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Infants shall be positioned on their backs for sleeping.
2. Infants shall not be wrapped tightly or swaddled in blankets.
3. Any practice that is an exception to the above procedures shall not be used without written authorization from a physician.
4. Infants shall sleep in cribs/pack-n-plays. Each infant/child will have his/her own individual crib and the crib must only have a firm mattress and clean fitted crib sheet.
5. Any cribs not meeting current federal standards or any other sleeping equipment prohibited by federal product safety regulations, shall not be permitted.
6. No infant shall be allowed to sleep on a sofa, soft mattress, adult bed, or in a car seat, swing or other restraining devices.
7. Bibs shall be removed prior to placing infants in a crib for sleeping.
8. Soft bedding that is prohibited in cribs includes but is not limited to: pillows, bumper pads, blankets, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys, and other soft items.
9. Mobiles and other toys that are attached to any part of the crib are prohibited.
10. Areas where a child sleeps shall have adequate lighting which allows the educator to see each child with a quick glance and respond appropriately to each child's physical and emotional needs.
11. It is not necessary to reposition infants once they have demonstrated the ability to turn front to back and back to front independently.
12. Infants shall be touched by an educator every fifteen (15) minutes in order to check breathing, body temperature, and position.
13. If a child appears not to be breathing, the agency shall immediately begin CPR and immediately call for emergency medical assistance.
14. Before an educator can assume duties in any type of infant classroom this educator shall receive orientation on safe sleep practices and SIDS procedures.
15. All infant educators shall practice safe sleep/SIDS procedures.

16. Infants that arrive asleep in car seats or fall asleep in any piece of equipment other than a crib, must be immediately removed and placed on their back in a crib.

17. For infants and toddlers, a portion of the day shall include supervised floor time to optimize adult-infant and toddler interactions for activities that develop physical, social, language, and cognitive experiences. This includes direct supervised tummy time for all infants in care. It does not matter what position the infant is in on floor, direct supervision at floor level is required. The floor shall be clean and safe and may have a soft, comfortable surface since the child is awake.

BEST PRACTICES

Caring for infants is one of the most challenging yet rewarding experiences that child care agencies provide. The American Academy of Pediatrics, Keeping Babies Safe While Sleeping, and other research based evidence supports the following best practices:

- Infants should be dressed according to weather conditions and inside temperatures to prevent overheating which is a verified risk factor of SIDS.
- Remember the ABC's of safe sleep, Alone, on their Back, and in a Crib.
- An Alternate Safe Sleep Waiver Form signed only by a Health Care Professional, not a parent, must be maintained in the child file in order for a child to be placed to sleep other than on his/her back. The waiver will describe the position the child is to be placed in for sleep, how long, and the medical condition for this placement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department recommends the following:

- SIDS policy

All Child Care agencies will develop and implement a safe sleep policy for infants with parents. This will be reviewed and explained to parents prior to the child/children being placed in attendance at the agency. A statement of understanding will then be signed by the agency representative and the parent. The parent will receive a copy of the signed document and one will be placed in the child's file.

- Emergency procedures with drills

All Child Care Educators must be trained on Emergency Procedures for an unresponsive Infant/child. A drill must be recorded every 3 months on emergency procedures for an unresponsive infant/child.

- Documentation

Educators must be sure that an infant has enough directly supervised tummy time while awake to develop skills for proper head and neck control to become proficient at rolling from front to back and back to front (proficient means to develop the ability to

roll from front to back and back to front). These observations must be in a 2 week period and documented with dates of observation. This documentation is to be available in the infant file.

- Posting labels

Agencies will post near the crib if the child is proficient at rolling from front to back and from back to front. This child will be described as a roller. If an infant/ child cannot roll from back to front after rolling from front to back, they will be identified as a flipper and this also will be posted near the child's crib.

Standards for Children Over 12 Months of Age

- Individual cots or two-inch (2") mats shall be provided for children ages twelve (12) months through five (5) years.
- Each crib, cot, bed or mat shall be labeled with the child's name or a corresponding code to ensure that each child sleeps on his or her own bedding.

1. If a cot or mat is used by more than one child throughout the day, it shall be properly labeled and sanitized between uses, with a solution appropriate for general cleaning.

- Cribs and play yards must comply with CPSC requirements.
- Nesting beds are prohibited.
- Original manufacturers' mattresses and sleep surfaces upholstered with a safe, waterproof material shall be used in each crib and play yard.
- A clean sheet shall be used to cover each child's sleeping surface.
- A blanket or covering shall be available to each child age thirteen (13) months or older.
- Positioning of cots, cribs and sleeping mats.

1. In order to avoid the spread of airborne diseases children shall be positioned on mats in a face to feet alternating pattern, unless they are separated by an appropriate solid barrier.
2. Cots, cribs, and mats shall be positioned at least eighteen inches (18") apart to allow an adult to walk between them, unless they are separated by a solid barrier.
3. If barriers are used, they shall be arranged to permit staff to observe and have immediate access to each child.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the safe sleep requirements for temporary sites established by contract for school aged children of essential workers. Safe sleep training/standards are not specifically required in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys &

Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Safe-sleep practices are limited to children 0 through 12 months of age.

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Each agency shall develop written procedures regarding the administration, handling, and storage of medication. Each agency shall obtain a written authorization to administer medication from medical provider and/ or parent / guardian. The authorization shall include the name of the medication, the dosage, the method of administration and the time when the medication is to be administered. When medication is administered to a child, the designated person shall list the date, time, dosage, side effects and the administering party's signature on the medication log. The medication log shall be reviewed with parent each day medication is administered and the parent shall sign. Medication shall be kept in a locked container / area unless it is deemed emergency medication. All staff members shall receive training regarding administration of medication.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

4. Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

A written plan of action or treatment plan shall include the name of medication, dosage of medication, method of administration of medication and specific symptoms that indicate the need for medications. The file of any child with an allergy should contain written instructions from the parent / guardian or physician about special diets such as dietary restrictions or dietary modifications. The agency should develop and implement written policy on response to emergencies due to food allergies.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions requirements for temporary sites established by contract. These requirements are not specifically required in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury, such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Identify safety hazards and concerns and immediately remove, repair or prohibit use to protect children. Maintain records of inspections and repairs. Comply with building and fire codes. Unstable and heavy equipment, furniture and any items that could tip over or be pulled over should be securely anchored such as televisions, cubbies, shelves, etc. The outdoor play area shall be fenced to prevent children from wandering onto busy streets and highways. Hazardous materials such as cleaning supplies, poisonous materials, medicines, alcoholic beverages or hazardous personal care items shall be inaccessible to children. Hazardous materials shall not be stored with food and food related materials.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Programs should implement practices to identify and prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma. All educators, directors, substitutes and volunteers should receive training on preventing shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; recognition of potential signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; strategies for coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child; and the development and vulnerabilities of the brain in infancy and early childhood.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma requirements for temporary sites established by contract. These requirements are not specifically required in temporary child care

arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Although Shaken Baby or Abusive Head Trauma are most applicable to infants, it can happen in children up to five years of age.

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1)). Emergency preparedness and response planning (at the child care provider level) must also include procedures for evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place and lockdown; staff and volunteer training and practice drills; communications and reunification with families; continuity of operations; and accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Each agency should have an emergency preparedness plan on file. All staff shall receive training on the emergency preparedness plan so that they will know the proper procedures to take in the event of any disaster or emergency situation. Evacuation routes posted and emergency drills conducted using evacuation routes. Emergency numbers shall be posted in all classrooms. Parents shall be made aware of

emergency procedures and evacuation routes.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All toxic substances should be inaccessible to children and should not be used when children are present. Toxic substances should be used as recommended by the manufacturer and stored in the original labeled containers. The telephone number for the poison control center should be posted and readily accessible in emergency situations. Wear disposable gloves when handling blood and body excretions or secretions and for diapering and toileting when blood is visible. Gloves should also be worn when assisting with oral care and whenever the care provider has open cuts or broken skin that drains. Use bio hazard bags or plastic bags when handling blood, soiled diapers, vomit or any other type of bodily fluids other disposable articles soiled with body secretions and excretions. Wash toys, furniture and any other articles soiled with blood and bodily excretions with a cleaning agent.

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

9. Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

The agency shall have a written plan on how to communicate emergencies during transportation.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed requirements to have a written plan on how to communicate emergencies during transportation for temporary sites established by contract. These requirements are not specifically required in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

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NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

10. Pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

First aid and CPR should be current and on file. At least one person shall be on the premises at all times with certification in CPR and First Aid. All Staff shall be trained in CPR and First Aid requirements.

During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the training requirements for first aid and CPR certification until it is safe to attend in person training necessary to acquire certification.

Licensed providers were not required to acquire certification during the first few

months of the pandemic and one person with certification was not required to be on site. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, this temporary provision was effective from March 3, 2020 until June 1, 2020 when a blended online/in-person course option that includes a certification component became available.

First aid and CPR training/certification is not specifically required for staff in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide support so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

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-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All child care agency staff must receive documented training on proper procedures to report child abuse and neglect annually. Agencies are required to develop reporting policy that is compliant with our state child welfare agency (DCS) requirements. The DCS Central Intake Child Abuse Hotline number must be posted at each telephone at the child care agency. Suspicions of child abuse and neglect must be reported directly to DCS or law enforcement. Documentation of any injuries or obvious marks must be made by the receiving educator upon child's arrival at the child care facility.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01

Rules of the Department of Education - Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs Chapter 0520-12-01

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 2895

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 3256

Authorized Child Care Professional Contract

Approved Child Care Agency Contract

Exempt Child Care Agency Contract

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Health and safety standards applicable to non-licensed categories are contained in the following documents:

Rules of the Department of Education - Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs - Chapter 0520-12-01:

<https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.20180801.pdf>

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 2895:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/hs-2895.pdf>

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 3256:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/hs-3256.pdf>

Authorized Child Care Professional Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Authorized-Child-Care-Professional-Contract.pdf>

Approved Child Care Agency Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Approved-Child-Care-Agency-Contract.pdf>

Exempt Child Care Agency Contract:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/Exempt-Child-Care-Agency-Contract.pdf>

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

NA

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

b) Does the Lead Agency include any of the following optional standards?

No, if no, skip to 5.2.3.

Yes, if yes provide the information related to the optional standards addressed.

1. Nutrition

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All meals and snacks served by the child care agency should be in accordance with USDA Child and Adult Care Food program nutrition guidelines. All staff should receive training on proper nutrition guidelines. During meal time and snacks, educators should have discussions with children about nutrition and healthy eating.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

NA

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

NA

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

2. Access to physical activity

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All educators/staff should receive training regarding the benefits of physical activity. An opportunity for all children in care 3 hours or more for all children of all ages. Children should have indoor and outdoor physical activity on a daily basis and have opportunities to experience a variety of weather conditions between 32 degrees and 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Specifications for outdoor play and moderate to vigorous indoor or outdoor physical activity is specified as follows: Weather permitting, infants shall be taken outside at least once per day, Toddlers and preschoolers shall have sixty (60) to ninety (90) minutes of outdoor play per day (Exception: Indoor activity can be increased if adverse weather does not permit outdoor play), Toddlers shall have sixty (60) to ninety (90) minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per eight (8) hour day, Preschoolers shall have ninety (90) to one hundred and twenty (120) minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per eight (8) hour day. Children shall be properly dressed and the length of time outside adjusted according to the weather conditions and the age of the children.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapter 1240-04-01

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

-Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

NA

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

NA

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

3. Caring for children with special needs

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Agency staff should receive training that is relevant to the special needs of each child in care. Agency staff should consult with parents and the appropriate service providers regarding techniques used in the home to ensure the safety of any child identified with special needs. The file of each child should contain documentation relevant to special needs. All agency staff should receive training on special needs and inclusion.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01"

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

NA

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

NA

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

4. Any other areas determined necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety (98.44(b)(1)(iii)).

Describe:

NA

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

NA

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

NA

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

NA

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

NA

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

NA

5.2.3 Health and safety training for CCDF providers on required topics.

Lead Agencies are required to have minimum pre-service or orientation training requirements (to be completed within 3 months), as appropriate to the provider setting and the age of children served, that address the health and safety topics described in 5.2.2, and child development. Lead Agencies must also have ongoing training requirements on the health and safety topics for

caregivers, teachers, and directors of children receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(I)(i); 98.44(b)(1)(iii)). The state/territory must describe its requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing training. These trainings should be part of a broader systematic approach and progression of professional development (as described in section 6) within a state/territory. Lead Agencies have flexibility in determining the number of training hours to require, but they may consult with Caring for our Children Basics for best practices and the recommended time needed to address these training requirements.

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

Pre-Service or Orientation Training Requirements

a) Provide the minimum number of pre-service or orientation training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following:

1. Licensed child care centers:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee must complete training in Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma and a minimum of two (2) hours of recognized preservice training and orientation in specific areas. The length of the available recognized preservice options varies, and the Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma training is only applicable to educators who care for children of less than school-age. Additional training on transportation requirements are mandated for drivers. Therefore, the total minimum numbers of hours of preservice training can range from approximately three (3) to approximately eight (8) hours depending upon the duties of an educator.

2. Licensed FCC homes:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee must complete training in Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma and a minimum of two (2) hours of recognized pre-service training and orientation in specific areas. The length of the available recognized pre-service options varies, and the Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma training is only applicable to educators who care for children of less than school-age. Additional training on transportation requirements are mandated for drivers. Therefore, the total minimum numbers of hours of pre-service training can range from approximately three (3) to approximately eight (8) hours depending upon the duties of

an educator.

3. In-home care:

NA

4. Variations for exempt provider settings:

Prior to having contact with children, each new employee must complete training in Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma and a minimum of two (2) hours of recognized pre-service training and orientation in specific areas. The length of the available recognized pre-service options varies, and the Shaken Baby/Abusive Head Trauma training is only applicable to educators who care for children of less than school-age. During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the pre-service orientation training requirements for temporary care sites. Pre-service orientation training is not specifically required for staff in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs, for school age children of essential workers. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs-4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state- declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide technical assistance, as needed, so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

b) Provide the length of time that providers have to complete trainings subsequent to being hired (must be 3 months or fewer)

The Lead Agency has defined pre-service as occurring prior to the educator having any

contact with children. Therefore, educators must complete orientation and pre-service training, including Shaken Baby and Abusive Head Trauma, prior to being in the classroom and having contact with children. There are no provisions for an educator to be in the classroom/have contact with children without first having completed the required orientation and pre-service training. Drivers must additionally complete training on transportation requirements prior to assuming duties as a driver.

c) Explain any differences in pre-service or orientation training requirements based on the ages of the children served

The pre-service or orientation requirements do not differ based upon ages served.

d) Describe how the training is offered, including any variations in delivery (e.g. across standards, in rural areas, etc.) Note: There is no federal requirement on how a training must be delivered

Training is offered through statewide network that includes Child Care Resource & Referral and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance through a variety of formats that include web-based, face to face, and DVD options.

e) Identify below the pre-service or orientation training requirements for each topic (98.41(a)(1)(i through xi)).

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(12) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(7) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(8-10) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)(1).

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(3) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(3) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h) 2.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care

for children unsupervised?

- Yes
 No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
 No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)(2) and 1240-04-01-.17(10)(f).

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
 No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
 No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training

requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)(2) and 1240-04-01-.12(10-11) The pre-service portion of this training is required before caregivers, teachers, or directors have contact with children. First Aid and CPR training must be completed within the first 90 days.

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(g)(5) and 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)(2).

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.06(3)(h)(2).

Provider Contract

Health and Safety Checklist

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Relatives are not exempt from the pre-service or orientaiton training requirements and the training topics apply to both child care centers and homes.

5.2.3e 13.

Describe other training requirements, such as nutrition, physical activities, caring for children with special needs, etc..

Additional requirements include three (3) hours on applicable developmental learning standards.

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters:

Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(c);

Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(b);

Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(c);

Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1);

Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(5); and

Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22 (5)(d)(1).

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

This requirement is applicable to both licensed child care centers and homes, but it does not apply to relatives or exempt agencies.

Ongoing Training Requirements

5.2.4 Provide the minimum number of annual training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following.

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

a) Licensed child care centers:

A Director will receive at minimum six (6) training hours annually and Educators will receive at minimum six (6) training hours annually on health and safety topics per the rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii) and 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

b) Licensed FCC homes:

A Primary Educator will receive at minimum six (6) training hours annually and Educators will receive at minimum six (6) training hours annually on health and safety topics per the rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i).

c) In-home care:

The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same training requirements as licensed providers: A minimum of six (6) training hours annually on health and safety topics.

d) Variations for exempt provider settings:

There are no variations for exempt providers. They are required to have a minimum of six(6) training hours annually on health and safety topics. During the COVID-19 emergency the Lead Agency has relaxed the annual training requirements for temporary care sites. Annual training is not specifically required for staff in temporary child care arrangements established by contract with YMCAs and Boys & Girls Clubs. As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA-4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021. The Lead Agency will continue to provide technical assistance, as needed, so that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver. During the waiver period, the Lead Agency will continue to provide support, technical assistance, and consultation and to provide a reasonable level of protection for children in temporary care sites.

5.2.5 Describe the ongoing health and safety training for CCDF providers by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by

caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for

Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1)(i); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1)(i); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1)(i); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4)(iii); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1)(vi).

Health and Safety Checklist

Provider Contract

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually for Primary Educators, Educators, Directors, etc. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

A minimum of six (6) hours of health and safety training is required annually. It is recommended that agency staff cycle through each topic every three (3) years.

13. Describe other requirements such as nutrition, physical activities, caring for children with special needs, etc..

Additional trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is required every five (5) years and three (3) hours annual training is required for pre-literacy skills, literacy skills, and education implementation for licensed child care agencies.

Gold Sneaker Initiative

Requirements for participation in the Gold Sneaker Initiative were incorporated in the Report Cards and Rated Licensing for Child Care Agencies Rule Chapter 1240-04-07.

Gold Sneaker facilities will:

Offer children at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day;

Limit television and video viewing to 60 minutes per day of educational programs;

Not allow children to remain sedentary or passive for more than 60 minutes continuously;

Ensure physical activity is a positive experience;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including breastfeeding;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including adequate time for meal consumption;

Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including appropriate portion sizes;

Promote a positive attitude toward food; and

Maintain a tobacco free campus.

Offer children at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day;

Limit television and video viewing to 60 minutes per day of educational programs;

Not allow children to remain sedentary or passive for more than 60 minutes continuously;

Ensure physical activity is a positive experience;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including breastfeeding;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including adequate time for meal consumption;

Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including appropriate portion sizes;

Promote a positive attitude toward food; and

Maintain a tobacco free campus.

[Provide the citation for other training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers](#)

Rules of the Department of Human Services -Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies
Chapters: Primary Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(2)(d)(1); Educator Family Home: 1240-04-01-.20(3)(c)(1); Primary Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(2)(d)(1); Educator Group Home: 1240-04-01-.21(3)(b)(1); Child Care Center Director: 1240-04-01-.22(3)(b)(4); and Child Care Center Educator: 1240-04-01-.22(5)(d)(1).

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

Additional trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is required every five (5) years and three (3) hours annual training is required for pre-literacy skills, literacy skills, and education implementation.

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

Annually

Other

Describe:

Not applicable for license exempt CCDF programs

5.3 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices for CCDF Providers

5.3.1 Enforcement of licensing and health and safety requirements

Lead agencies must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements, including those described in 98.41 (98.42(a)). This may include, but is not limited to, any systems used to ensure that providers complete health and safety trainings, any documentation required to be maintained by child care providers or any other monitoring procedures to ensure compliance. Note: Inspection requirements are described starting in 5.3.2.

To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements

Child care centers, group homes, and family homes licensed by the Department of Human Services, centers regulated by the Department of Education, exempt Boys and Girls Clubs and Authorized Child Care Professionals are monitored annually for compliance with

applicable state/local fire and environmental facility requirements, and completion of health and safety training requirements.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

5.3.2 Inspections for licensed CCDF providers.

Lead agencies must require licensing inspectors to perform inspections-with no fewer than one pre-licensure inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards-of each child care provider and facility in the state/territory. Licensing inspectors are required to perform no fewer than one annual, unannounced inspection of each licensed CCDF provider for compliance with all child care licensing standards; it shall include an inspection for compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards; inspectors may inspect for compliance with all three standards - health, safety, and fire - at the same time (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(II); 98.16 (n); 98.42(b)(2)(i)). Certify by responding to the questions below to describe your state/territory's monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that licensed child care providers comply with licensing standards, including compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) Licensed CCDF center-based child care

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed child care center providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

A temporary or an annual license shall not be issued unless all of the following requirements are met:

An initial and annual inspection verifying compliance with all applicable state and local fire and environmental requirements which includes:

Inspection by the State Fire Marshal's Division of the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance and/or local fire authority; and

The General Environmental Division of the Tennessee Department of Health.

The physical facilities (indoor and outdoor) present no apparent hazards; and

The physical facilities are otherwise deemed appropriate by the Department for the safe care of children.

The agency shall maintain documentation of required inspections and the approvals. All agencies shall continue to maintain compliance with all applicable codes throughout the licensing year and any updated standards issued by the Department of Health and the State Fire Marshal.

The agency shall not be located in a building used for purposes which would be hazardous to the children.

The agency shall not be located in a building that would prohibit outdoor play.

An inner-city agency may request an exception from the Department pursuant to the requirements for "Outdoor Play" found in 1240-04-01-.15(3).

All licensed child care agencies shall ensure that the physical facilities are safe, clean, in good repair and free from hazards and clutter. Each agency shall have at least one working telephone available at the agency and the number shall be made available to parents.

Outdoor play areas shall have a minimum of fifty (50) square feet of usable play space per child, be properly maintained and be enclosed by a fence or barrier that is at least four (4) feet in height.

The pre-licensure inspection process includes inspections by the following:

- Lead Agency Child Care Program Evaluator - Determines compliance with all applicable standards including CCDF health and safety requirements and documents compliance with any required external inspections (fire and health).
- State Fire Marshal's Division of the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance and/or local fire authority - Conducts fire inspections according to state

and local requirements.

- General Environmental Division of the Tennessee Department of Health - Conducts general health facility and food service (if applicable) inspections.

From the start of pandemic until August, when a new program opened, the inspection/walk through was conducted during the evening or at times when children were not present to minimize risk to all involved. During a few instances where an existing facility changed ownership, a virtual visit or recent visit to the existing agency may have been utilized to meet the prelicensure inspection requirement.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic some licensed child care agencies have needed to establish operations at temporary locations for a variety of reasons, such as the need to have adequate space to serve their pre-pandemic capacity while operating under CDC pandemic guidelines. In response, the Lead Agency has streamlined the approval process for allowing licensed agencies to safely establish care at temporary locations. The process includes provisions for:

- A virtual or on-site walk-through by the Licensing Program Evaluator to determine that the space is appropriate and has no apparent hazards
- Verifying insurance coverage for each site
- Utilization of a current fire inspection or scheduling one within 30 days

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

[2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF child care center providers](#)

All licensed child care facilities must receive a minimum of one (1) announced evaluation visit during the licensing year. Announced re-evaluation visits must cover all areas of the child care licensing rules. Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits are determined by an agency's star rating. Licensed child care centers receive a minimum of three (3) to six (6) unannounced visits annually based upon the agency's star rating and licensing year.

Effective March 2020, the Lead Agency is suspending routine monitoring visits during this time to reduce stress on agencies and our staff pertaining to health risks and social distancing. Our Licensing Staff continue to be available to offer Technical

Assistance and Guidance and to track impact on agencies due to COVID-19. We will continue to monitor when a complaint is received and perform the necessary actions related to that complaint. To the extent possible, we avoid entering the facility by using surveillance, phone contacts (including technology such as facetime), or conducting interviews outside the facility. In addition, TDHS licensing staff conduct desk reviews when agencies are due for monitoring, but our ability to monitor for all aspects of CCDBG requirements is limited. During the impacts of COVID-19, it is possible that an on-site inspection might not be conducted within the annual timeframe. Effective March 3, 2020 the Lead Agency received a waiver for conducting inspections of child care agencies impacted by COVID-19. In-person, virtual, or a combination of virtual and in-person visits resumed during the last week of July 2020. The visit structure is tailored to each provider setting to mitigate risk for the provider, children, and TDHS staff. This combination of technology assisted visits will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to resume regular in-person visits.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- Once a year
- More than once a year

Describe:

Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits are determined by an agency's star rating as follow:

Full Year Programs*:

Zero star, new agencies and agencies declining to participate in the star rating - Six (6) unannounced visits

One (1) star agencies - Five (5) unannounced visits

Two (2) star and three (3) star agencies - Four (4) unannounced visits

Nine (9) and ten (10) month programs*:

Zero star, new agencies and agencies declining to participate in star rating - Four (4) unannounced visits

One (1) star agencies - Four (4) unannounced visits

Two (2) star and three (3) star agencies - Three (3) unannounced visits

*Any agency that provides transportation will receive an additional unannounced agency visit.

*Any agency on a Safety Plan will receive weekly unannounced agency visits until the Safety Plan is lifted. It is at the discretion of the Program Supervisor to alter this schedule.

*An agency may receive additional visits based on complaints, legal enforcement actions and follow-up visits related to violations.

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that child care center providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

Child Care Program Evaluators monitor licensed child care agencies for compliance with the rules of the Department of Human Services and statutes and to provide technical assistance to ensure the health and safety of children in licensed child care agencies. All licensed child care facilities must receive a minimum of one (1) announced evaluation visit during the licensing year. Announced re-evaluation visits must cover all areas of the child care licensing rules.

All licensed child care centers receive an annual fire inspection conducted by the

State Fire Marshal's Division of the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance and/or local fire authority.

All licensed child care centers receive an annual general health and food service (if applicable) inspection annually by the General Environmental Division of the Tennessee Department of Health.

Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits is determined by an agency's star rating. The frequency of visits is outlined in Item 3 above.

During each unannounced agency visit, Program Evaluators must, at a minimum, review all of the major high-risk areas and be observant for safety hazards. The high-risk areas include:

Failure to follow any rule related to the proper transportation of children by employees, substitutes, volunteers, agents or contractors of the agency;

(II) Adult: Child Ratios;

(III) Failure to complete required background checks on staff;

(IV) Corporal punishment/inappropriate discipline;

(V) Lack of Insurance;

(VI) Failure to report suspicion of abuse or neglect;

(VII) Falsification of documents required by the Department;

(VIII) Failure to have CPR/First Aid certification as required by the Department;

(IX) Lack of proper supervision of children;

(X) Failure to properly dispense or store medications;

(XI) Failure to remove persons from access to children following notification of a prohibited criminal background or pending criminal charge or following notification of the person's validated status as a perpetrator of child abuse;

(XII) Failure to properly store hazardous items such as, but not limited to, cleaning products, pesticides, hazardous chemicals, or other poisonous items; and

(XIII) Failure to properly remove or secure firearms within the child care agency area which are under the ownership or control of the agency, or its staff substitutes or other persons permitted access to the children, or failure to prevent exposure of children in the agency's care to firearms which are under the control of the agency, or its staff,

substitutes or other persons who have been permitted by the agency to have access to the children.

If violations are observed during any agency visit, the Program Evaluator will assist the child care agency staff in completing a Plan of Corrective Action.

Any major high-risk violations that are not corrected during the visit require a five (5) day follow-up visit.

[5. List the citation\(s\) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF center providers](#)

Tennessee Department of Human Services Administrative Policies and Procedures
13.02 Monitoring for Compliance

[b\) Licensed CCDF family child care home](#)

[1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed family child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards](#)

A temporary or an annual license shall not be issued unless all of the following requirements are met:

An initial and annual inspection verifying compliance with all applicable state and local fire and environmental requirements which includes:

Inspection by the State Fire Marshal's Division of the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance and/or local fire authority; and

The General Environmental Division of the Tennessee Department of Health.

The physical facilities (indoor and outdoor) present no apparent hazards; and

The physical facilities are otherwise deemed appropriate by the Department for the safe care of children.

The agency shall maintain documentation of required inspections and the approvals.

All agencies shall continue to maintain compliance with all applicable codes throughout the licensing year and any updated standards issued by the Department of Health and the State Fire Marshal.

The agency shall not be located in a building used for purposes which would be hazardous to the children.

The agency shall not be located in a building that would prohibit outdoor play. An inner-city agency may request an exception from the Department pursuant to the requirements for "Outdoor Play" found in 1240-04-01-.15(3).

All licensed child care agencies shall ensure that the physical facilities are safe, clean, in good repair and free from hazards and clutter. Each agency shall have at least one working telephone available at the agency and the number shall be made available to parents.

Outdoor play areas shall have a minimum of fifty (50) square feet of usable play space per child, be properly maintained and be enclosed by a fence or barrier that is at least four (4) feet in height.

From the start of pandemic until August, when a new program opened, the inspection/walk through was conducted during the evening or at times when children were not present to minimize risk to all involved. During a few instances where an existing facility changed ownership, a virtual visit or recent visit to the existing agency may have been utilized to meet the precensure inspection requirement.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

[2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF family child care providers](#)

All licensed child care facilities must receive a minimum of one (1) announced evaluation visit during the licensing year. Announced re-evaluation visits must cover

all areas of the child care licensing rules. Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits is determined by an agency's star rating. Licensed agencies receive a minimum of three(3) to six (6) unannounced visits annually based upon the agency's star rating and licensing year.

Effective March 2020, the Lead Agency is suspending routine monitoring visits during this time to reduce stress on agencies and our staff pertaining to health risks and social distancing. Our Licensing Staff continue to be available to offer Technical Assistance and Guidance and to track impact on agencies due to COVID-19. We will continue to monitor when a complaint is received and perform the necessary actions related to that complaint. To the extent possible, we avoid entering the facility by using surveillance, phone contacts (including technology such as facetime), or conducting interviews outside the facility. In addition, TDHS licensing staff conduct desk reviews when agencies are due for monitoring, but our ability to monitor for all aspects of CCDBG requirements is limited. During the impacts of COVID-19, it is possible that an on-site inspection might not be conducted within the annual timeframe. . Effective March 3, 2020 the Lead Agency received a waiver for conducting inspections of child care agencies impacted by COVID-19. In-person, virtual, or a combination of virtual and in-person visits resumed during the last week of July 2020. The visit structure is tailored to each provider setting to mitigate risk for the provider, children, and TDHS staff. This combination of technology assisted visits will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to resume regular in-person visits.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- Once a year
- More than once a year

Describe:

Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits are determined by an agency's star rating as follow:

Full Year Programs*:

Zero star, new agencies and agencies declining to participate in the star rating - Six (6) unannounced visits

One (1) star agencies - Five (5) unannounced visits

Two (2) star and three (3) star agencies - Four (4) unannounced visits

Nine (9) and ten (10) month programs*:

Zero star, new agencies and agencies declining to participate in star rating - Four (4) unannounced visits

One (1) star agencies - Four (4) unannounced visits

Two (2) star and three (3) star agencies - Three (3) unannounced visits

*Any agency that provides transportation will receive an additional unannounced agency visit.

*Any agency on a Safety Plan will receive weekly unannounced agency visits until the Safety Plan is lifted. It is at the discretion of the Program Supervisor to alter this schedule.

*An agency may receive additional visits based on complaints, legal enforcement actions and follow-up visits related to violations.

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that CCDF family child care providers comply with the

[applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.](#)

Child Care Program Evaluators monitor licensed child care agencies for compliance with the rules of the Department of Human Services and statutes and to provide technical assistance to ensure the health and safety of children in licensed child care agencies. All licensed child care facilities must receive a minimum of one (1) announced evaluation visit during the licensing year. Announced re-evaluation visits must cover all areas of the child care licensing rules. Licensed facilities also receive a state fire inspection annually, in addition to the monitoring visits conducted by the Child Care Program Evaluators.

Unannounced agency visits are conducted based on the agency's licensing year and the number of unannounced visits is determined by an agency's star rating. The frequency of visits is outlined in Item 3 above.

During each unannounced agency visit, Program Evaluators must, at a minimum, review all of the major high-risk areas and be observant for safety hazards. The high-risk areas include:

Failure to follow any rule related to the proper transportation of children by employees, substitutes, volunteers, agents or contractors of the agency;

(II) Adult: Child Ratios;

(III) Failure to complete required background checks on staff;

(IV) Corporal punishment/inappropriate discipline;

(V) Lack of Insurance;

(VI) Failure to report suspicion of abuse or neglect;

(VII) Falsification of documents required by the Department;

(VIII) Failure to have CPR/First Aid certification as required by the Department;

(IX) Lack of proper supervision of children;

(X) Failure to properly dispense or store medications;

(XI) Failure to remove persons from access to children following notification of a prohibited criminal background or pending criminal charge or following notification of the person's validated status as a perpetrator of child abuse;

(XII) Failure to properly store hazardous items such as, but not limited to, cleaning products, pesticides, hazardous chemicals, or other poisonous items; and

(XIII) Failure to properly remove or secure firearms within the child care agency area

which are under the ownership or control of the agency, or its staff substitutes or other persons permitted access to the children, or failure to prevent exposure of children in the agency's care to firearms which are under the control of the agency, or its staff, substitutes or other persons who have been permitted by the agency to have access to the children.

If violations are observed during any agency visit, the Program Evaluator will assist the child care agency staff in completing a Plan of Corrective Action.

Any major high-risk violations that are not corrected during the visit require a five (5) day follow-up visit.

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF family child care providers

Tennessee Department of Human Services Administrative Policies and Procedures
13.02 Monitoring for Compliance

c) Licensed in-home CCDF child care

N/A. In-home CCDF child care (care in the child's own home) is not licensed in the State/Territory. Skip to 5.3.2 (d).

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed in-home child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF in-home child providers

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

Once a year

More than once a year

Describe:

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that in-home CCDF child care providers comply with

the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed in-home CCDF providers

d) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting pre-licensure inspections and unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers

Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance (fire safety inspections)

Tennessee Department of Education (licensing/approval requirements)

Tennessee Department of Health (environmental inspections)

Tennessee Department of Human Services (licensing requirements)

5.3.3 Inspections for license-exempt CCDF providers

Lead Agencies must have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) to perform an annual monitoring visit of each license-exempt CCDF provider for compliance with health, safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41), and fire standards (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(IV); 98.42(b)(2)(ii)). Lead Agencies have the option to exempt relative providers (as described in section (658P(6)(B)) from this requirement. To certify, respond to the questions below to describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of:

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

a) License-exempt center-based CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used

Child care centers regulated by the Department of Education that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are subject to rules that are substantially the same as the rules for child care centers regulated by the Department of Human Services. Link to rules for school-based programs: <http://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.20180201.pdf> These agencies receive one announced and one unannounced visit

annually. Additional unannounced visits are conducted in response to complaints and violations as needed. Fire and health inspections for school-administered child care are conducted according to the Department of Education requirements, which is once per year.

Effective March 2020, TDOE paused in-person visits and began using virtual visits to monitor for compliance where possible. Virtual visits are documented in the databased shared with TDHS and a note about the program being closed and that a spring visit is not possible due to COVID-19 is being added to the records where applicable. These provisions are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, not to exceed one year initially, as per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020.

Effective March 2020, the Lead Agency is suspending routine monitoring visits for exempt Boys and Girls Clubs during this time to reduce stress on agencies and our staff pertaining to health risks and social distancing. Our Licensing Staff continue to be available to offer Technical Assistance and Guidance and to track impact on agencies due to COVID-19. We will continue to monitor when a complaint is received and perform the necessary actions related to that complaint. To the extent possible, we avoid entering the facility by using surveillance, phone contacts (including technology such as facetime), or conducting interviews outside the facility. In addition, TDHS licensing staff conduct desk reviews when agencies are due for monitoring, but our ability to monitor for all aspects of CCDBG requirements is limited. During the impacts of COVID-19, it is possible that an on-site inspection might not be conducted within the annual timeframe.

Effective March 2020 the Lead Agency received a waiver for conducting inspections of child care agencies impacted by COVID-19. In-person, virtual, or a combination of virtual and in-person visits resumed during the last week of July 2020. The visit structure is tailored to each provider setting to mitigate risk for the provider, children, and TDHS staff. This combination of technology assisted visits will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to resume regular in-person visits.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

[Provide the citation\(s\) for this policy or procedure](#)

Rules of the State Board of Education Office of the Commissioner Chapter 0520-12-01
Standards for School Administered Child Care Programs.

[b\) License-exempt family child care CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring is used](#)

Authorized Professionals (individuals that care for up to four children who are not related to the educator). In order to participate in Child Care Certificate Program these entities enter into a contract with the Lead Agency that includes compliance with all CCDF requirements including monitoring. Authorized Professionals There are approximately 43 individuals who do not meet the threshold for licensing (i.e. care for less than five (5) children related to the primary educator) that are currently participating in the Child Care Certificate Program. These individuals are either related or unrelated to the child and are selected based on parental choice. Although not specifically licensed, these individuals are monitored by the Department of Human Services for compliance with CCDF requirements annually. The Lead Agency uses a health and safety checklist that includes fire safety elements to complete inspections on these entities annually.

Effective March 2020, the Lead Agency is suspending routine monitoring visits for Authorized Professionals during this time to reduce stress on agencies and our staff pertaining to health risks and social distancing. Our Child Care Certificate Program staff will continue to be available to offer Technical Assistance and Guidance and to track impact on Authorized Professionals due to COVID-19. We will continue to monitor when a complaint is received and perform the necessary actions related to that complaint. To the extent possible, we avoid entering the facility by using surveillance, phone contacts (including technology such as facetime), or conducting interviews outside the facility. In addition, TDHS licensing staff conduct desk reviews when agencies are due for monitoring, but our ability to monitor for all aspects of CCDBG requirements is limited. During the impacts of COVID-19, it is possible that a non-site inspection might not be conducted within the annual timeframe.

Effective March 2020 the Lead Agency received a waiver for conducting inspections of child care agencies impacted by COVID-19. In-person, virtual, or a combination of virtual

and in-person visits resumed during the last week of July 2020. The visit structure is tailored to each provider setting to mitigate risk for the provider, children, and TDHS staff. This combination of technology assisted visits will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to resume regular in-person visits.

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from March 3, 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

Health and Safety Checklist-HS 2895:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/human-services/documents/hs-2895.pdf>

[Provide the citation\(s\) for this policy or procedure](#)

Tennessee Department of Human Services Administrative Policies and Procedures
11.32 Authorized Child Care Professional Home Visits.

[c\) License-exempt in-home CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, if relative care is exempt from monitoring, and if differential monitoring is used](#)

Not Applicable - The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals.

[Provide the citation\(s\) for this policy or procedure](#)

Not Applicable - The Lead Agency currently does not have any in-home providers. However, if they existed, they would need to meet the same requirements as Authorized Child Care Professionals.

[d\) Lead Agencies have the option to develop alternate monitoring requirements for care provided in the child's home \(98.42\(b\)\(2\)\(iv\)\(B\)\). Does your state use alternate monitoring procedures for monitoring in-home care?](#)

No

Yes. If yes,

describe:

e) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers

Program Evaluators/Program Specialists under the Department of Human Services and
Program Evaluators under the Department of Education

5.3.4 Licensing inspectors.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Lead Agencies will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) are qualified to inspect child care providers and facilities and have received health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served. Training shall include, but is not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41(a)(1) and all aspects of the State's licensure requirements (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(I); 98.42(b)(1-2)).

a) To certify, describe how the Lead Agency ensures that licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) are qualified to inspect child care facilities and providers and that those inspectors have received training on health and safety requirements that are appropriate to the age of the children in care and the type of provider setting (98.42(b)(1-2)).

The Lead Agency's Office of Talent Management-Learning and Development (Community and Social Services Division) is responsible for providing New Employee Training for new Child Care Services licensing staff, including Program Evaluators and Supervisors. New licensing employees are required to successfully complete a three-week academy that covers the policies and procedures that Program Evaluators and Supervisors need be aware of in order to monitor child care agencies according to Departmental requirements. This academy includes systems training on BacTrak and the Tennessee Licensed Care System (TLCS) as well as fundamental professional skills. Each employee is required to undergo assessments throughout training and a final comprehensive assessment at the conclusion of the academy to gauge knowledge

retention. Child Care Services licensing staff must also complete a retention assessment approximately six months after the initial new employee training. The Office of Talent Management also provides ongoing and refresher trainings upon request. Among the Child Care Services licensing policies included in the new employee academy are:

Chapter 1-Legal Authority and the Organization of the Law

Chapter 2-Ethics and Customer Service

Chapter 3-The Licensing Process

Chapter 4-Child Care Report Card & Star Quality Program

Chapter 5 (13.02) -Monitoring for Compliance

Chapter 6-Criminal Background Checks and State Registry Reviews

Chapter 7 (13.03) -Investigation Complaints at Child Care Agencies

Chapter 8-General Enforcement Tools and the Legal Enforcement Process

Chapter 9-Clarifications

Chapter 10-Case Record Documentation, Organization and Forms

b) Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

Tennessee Department of Human Services Administrative Policies and Procedures 13 and Child and Adult Care Licensing Policy and Procedures Manual (Feb 2013).

5.3.5 The states and territories shall have policies and practices that require the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers and facilities in the state/territory to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the state/territory to conduct effective inspections of child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with

federal, state, and local laws (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(III); 98.42(b)(3)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) To certify, describe the state/territory policies and practices regarding the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers (i.e. number of inspectors per number of child care providers) and facilities in the state/territory and include how the ratio is sufficient to conduct effective inspections on a timely basis.

Licensing Program Evaluators maintain average caseloads of between 25 to 35 cases per evaluator. These caseload averages allow Program Evaluators to conduct sufficient number of annual visits ranging from 4-6 visits per year depending on the child care providers licensure type and star rating.

b) Provide the policy citation and state/territory ratio of licensing inspectors

The caseload ratios are based upon available staffing, coverage requirements, and goals as determined by management.

5.3.6 States and territories have the option to exempt relatives (defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles (98.42(c)) from inspection requirements. Note: This exception only applies if the individual cares only for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from the inspection requirements listed in 5.3.3?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Yes, relatives are exempt from all inspection requirements.

If the state/territory exempts relatives from all inspection requirements, describe how the state ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

N/A

Yes, relatives are exempt from some inspection requirements.

If the state/territory exempts relatives from the inspection requirements, describe which inspection requirements do not apply to relative providers (including which relatives may be exempt) and how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

N/A

No, relatives are not exempt from inspection requirements.

5.4 Criminal Background Checks

The CCDBG Act requires states and territories to have in effect requirements, policies and procedures to conduct criminal background checks for all child care staff members (including prospective staff members) of all child care programs that are 1) licensed, regulated, or registered under state/territory law; or, 2) all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers) (98.43(a)(1)(i)). Background check requirements apply to any staff member who is employed by a child care provider for compensation, including contract employees and self-employed individuals; whose activities involve the care or supervision of children; or who has unsupervised access to children (98.43(2)). For FCC homes, this requirement includes the caregiver and any other adults residing in the family child care home who are age 18 or older (98.43(2)(ii)(C)). This requirement does not apply to individuals who are related to all children for whom child care services are provided (98.43(2)(B)(ii)).

A criminal background check must include 8 specific components (98.43(2)(b)), which encompass 3 in-state checks, 2 national checks, and 3 inter-state checks

Components	In-State	National	Inter-State
1. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency	x		
2. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency	x		
3. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency	x		
4. FBI fingerprint check		x	
5. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)		x	
6. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional			x
7. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years			x
8. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years			x

In recognition of the significant challenges to implementing the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) background check requirements, all States applied for and received

extensions through September 30, 2018. The Office of Child Care (OCC)/Administration for Children and Families (ACF)/U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is committed to granting additional waivers of up to 2 years, in one year increments (i.e., potentially through September 30, 2020) if significant milestones for background check requirements are met.

In order to receive these time-limited waivers, states and territories will demonstrate that the milestones are met by responding to questions 5.4.1 through 5.4.4 and then apply for the time-limited waiver by completing the questions in Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form. By September 30, 2018, states and territories must have requirements, policies and procedures for four specific background check components, and must be conducting those checks for all new (prospective) child care staff, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o):

--The national FBI fingerprint check; and,	
--The three in-state background check provisions for the current state of residency:	
	--state criminal registry or repository using fingerprints;
	--state sex offender registry or repository check;
	--state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database.

All four components are required in order for the milestone to be considered met.

Components	New (Prospective) Staff	Existing Staff
1. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
2. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
3. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
4. FBI fingerprint check	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
5. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	
6. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	
7. Sex offender registry or repository in	Possible Time Limited Waiver for:	

any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years	--Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff
8. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff

Use the questions below to describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for background check requirements. These descriptions must provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the milestone prerequisites are being met and the status of the other components that are not part of the milestone. Lead Agencies have the opportunity to submit a waiver request in Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form, for components not included in the milestones. Approval of these waiver requests will be subject to verification that the milestone components have been met as part of the CCDF Plan review and approval process.

In-state Background Check Requirements

5.4.1 In-State Criminal Registry or Repository Checks with Fingerprints Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(i)).

Note: A search of a general public facing judicial website does not satisfy this requirement. This check is required in addition to the national FBI criminal history check (5.4.4 below) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources.

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

a) Milestone #1 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints required in the state where the staff member resides.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). TBI checks the state criminal registry and forwards the results to the Lead Agency investigation unit. The criminal

background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes provisions for checking the state criminal registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply withall Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

The Lead Agency is using an abbreviated background check process for temporary providers caring for school-age children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Temporary sites meet ratios with staff who have either already been background checked through the TDHS system or who have been subject to name-based checks as outlined below:

- Criminal checks utilizing CLEAR investigation software for law enforcement to conduct name-based checks using DOB and Driver License number where available
 - The CLEAR database includes real time incarceration records, arrests, and warrant information as well as criminal history for many states.
 - 100% of Tennessee is covered
 - CLEAR also provides previous addresses for the individual
- TN Vulnerable Persons Registry
- TN Child Abuse Checks
- TN Sex Offender Registry

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

Checks on new staff associated with licensed agencies continue to include all required elements. Procedures for utilizing and mailing fingerprint cards have been established to accommodate fingerprinting scan sites that are temporarily closed. The option to submit fingerprint cards is not limited to the pandemic and may be utilized for other reasons as needed beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for license-exempt child care providers includes provisions for checking the state criminal registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check. Applicable household members or staff in license-exempt child care agencies are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). TBI checks the state criminal registry and forwards the results to the Lead Agency investigation unit.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable

criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

b) Has the search of the in-state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints, been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply withall Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state criminal registry or repository, using fingerprints for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.2 In-State Sex Offender Registry Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(B)(ii)).

Note: This check must be completed in addition to the national NCIC sex offender registry check (5.4.5 below) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources. Use of fingerprints is optional to conduct this check.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Milestone #2 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state sex offender registry.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). TBI checks the state sex offender registry and forwards the results to the Lead Agency investigation unit. The criminal background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes provisions for checking the state sex offender registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract

T.C.A. §71-3-507

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for license-exempt child care providers includes provisions for checking the state sex offender registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract

T.C.A. §71-3-507

b) Has the search of the in-state sex offender registry been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

Provider Contract

T.C.A. §71-3-507

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state criminal registry or repository, using fingerprints for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.3 In-State Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(B)(iii)).

Note: This is a name-based search.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Milestone #3 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state child abuse and neglect registry.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). TBI checks the state sex offender registry and forwards the results to the Lead Agency investigation unit. Receipt of background check results from TBI results prompts an automated process to check prospective child care educators against the child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS). The criminal background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes an automated process for checking new (prospective) child care staff against the state-based child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-

507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

[ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services \(e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers\), in accordance with 98.43\(a\)\(1\)\(i\) and 98.16\(o\). Describe and provide citations](#)

The criminal background check process for license-exempt child care providers includes an automated process for checking new (prospective) child care staff against the state-based child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

b) Has the search of the in-state child abuse and neglect registry been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply withall Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state child abuse and neglect registry for current

(existing) child care staff including:

- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)
- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

National Background Check Requirements

5.4.4 National FBI Criminal Fingerprint Search Requirements (98.43(b)(1)).

Note: The in-state (5.4.1 above) and the inter-state (5.4.6 below) criminal history check must be completed in addition to the FBI fingerprint check because there could be state crimes that do not appear in the national repository. Also note, that an FBI fingerprint check satisfies the requirement to perform an interstate check of another State's criminal history records repository if the responding state (where the child care staff member has resided within the past five years) participates in the National Fingerprint File program (CCDF-ACF-PIQ-2017-01).

Effective Date: 04/08/2020

a) Milestone #4 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff. Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the National FBI fingerprint check.

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI). TBI uses the fingerprint scan to check the FBI repository using the Next Generation Identification (NGI) system. TBI returns the results to the Lead Agency investigation unit along with the results of the state criminal registry and state sex offender registry results. The criminal background

check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes provisions for checking the FBI repository using the NGI system for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check. The lead agency recognizes the check of the FBI repository as meeting the requirement for conducting the interstate check of the criminal registry if the state where the staff member resided during the last five years participates in the National Fingerprint File program.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

The Lead Agency is using an abbreviated background check process for temporary providers caring for school-age children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Temporary sites meet ratios with staff who have either already been background checked through the TDHS system or who have been subject to name-based checks as outlined below:

- Criminal checks utilizing CLEAR investigation software for law enforcement to conduct name-based checks using DOB and Driver License number where available
- The CLEAR database includes real time incarceration records, arrests, and warrant information as well as criminal history for many states.

- 100% of Tennessee is covered
- CLEAR also provides previous addresses for the individual
- TN Vulnerable Persons Registry
- TN Child Abuse Checks
- TN Sex Offender Registry

As per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020, the temporary provisions described in these amendments are effective from the contract start dates (YMCA- 4/8/20 ; Boys & Girls Clubs- 4/17/20) until December 31, 2020 or up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period, but not to exceed March 3, 2021.

Checks on new staff associated with licensed agencies continue to include all required elements. Procedures for utilizing and mailing fingerprint cards have been established to accommodate fingerprinting scan sites that are temporarily closed. The option to submit fingerprint cards is not limited to the pandemic and may be utilized for other reasons as needed beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for license-exempt child care providers includes provisions for checking the FBI repository using the NGI system for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check. The lead agency recognizes the check of the FBI repository as meeting the requirement for conducting the interstate check of the criminal registry if the state where the staff member resided during the last five years if that state participates in the National Fingerprint File program.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

b) For all current (existing) child care staff, has the FBI criminal fingerprint check been conducted?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply withall Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions

for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

- No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the FBI fingerprint check for current (existing) child care staff including:
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
 - Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)
 - Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
 - Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

National Background Check Requirements

5.4.5 National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) Search Requirements (98.43(b)(2)).

Note: This is a name-based search. Searching general public facing sex offender registries does not satisfy this requirement. This national check must be required in addition to the in-state (5.4.2 above) or inter-state (5.4.7 below) sex offender registry check requirements. This check must be performed by law enforcement.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Has the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff

Yes. If yes,

- i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes provisions for checking the FBI NCIC National Sex Offender registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

[ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services \(e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers\), in accordance with 98.43\(a\)\(1\)\(i\) and 98.16\(o\). Describe and provide citations](#)

The criminal background check process for license-exempt child care providers includes provisions for checking the FBI NCIC National Sex Offender registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed through an arrangement with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as part of a standard child care background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) for new (prospective) child care staff including:

- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)
- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply withall Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

Inter-state Background Check Requirements

Checking a potential employee's history in any state other than that in which the provider's services are provided qualifies as an inter-state check, per the definition of required criminal background checks in 98.43(b)(3). For example, an inter-state check would include situations when child care staff members work in one state and live in another state. The statute and regulations require background checks in the state where the staff member resides and each state where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. Background checks in the state where the staff member is employed may be advisable, but are not strictly required.

5.4.6 Interstate Criminal Registry or Repository Check Requirement (including in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years). (98.43 (b)(3)(i)).

Note: It is optional to use a fingerprint to conduct this check. Searching a general public facing judicial website does not satisfy this requirement. This check must be completed in addition to the national FBI history check (5.4.4 above) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources (unless the responding state participates in the National Fingerprint File program).

Effective Date: 09/30/2020

a) Has the interstate criminal registry or repository check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries. 1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the

Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

Applicants that require an interstate registry check are identified during the electronic fingerprint scan registration process. Thereafter, identified applicant information is forwarded to a contracted entity to complete the out of state criminal registry check. Due to the process variation from state to state, the Lead Agency determined that it was more effective and efficient to utilize a contract agency to complete the interstate criminal registry checks. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any on site review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

Child care educators in contract settings are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI).

Applicants that require an interstate criminal registry check are identified during the electronic fingerprint scan registration process. Thereafter, identified applicant information is forwarded to a contracted entity to complete the out of state criminal registry check. Due to the process variation from state to state, the Lead Agency determined that it was more effective and efficient to utilize a contract agency to complete the interstate criminal registry checks. The check is completed on a case-by-

case basis with each respective state per applicant.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the the interstate criminal registry or repository check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)
- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate criminal registry or repository check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

A system query was utilized to identify the backlog of existing staff that required an interstate criminal registry check based upon the information collected during their most recent electronic fingerprint scan registration process. Thereafter, identified applicant information was forwarded to a contracted entity to complete the out of state criminal registry check. Due to the process variation from state to state, the Lead Agency determined that it was more effective and efficient to utilize a contract agency to complete the interstate criminal registry checks. Full compliance with these requirements was achieved 9-30-20.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate criminal registry or repository check for current (existing) child care staff including:

- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible

providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.7 Interstate Sex Offender Registry or Repository Check Requirements (including in any state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years). (98.43 (b)(3)(ii)).

Note: It is optional to use a fingerprint to conduct this check. This check must be completed in addition to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) (5.4.5 above) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources.

Effective Date: 09/30/2020

a) Has the interstate sex offender registry or repository check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All child care educators are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries. 1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

Applicants that require an interstate sex offender registry check are identified during the electronic fingerprint scan registration process. The Investigation Unit within the Lead Agency utilizes the identified applicant information to manually complete the out of state sex offender registry check. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any on site review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

Child care educators in contract settings are required to complete an electronic fingerprint scan that is submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI).

Applicants that require an interstate sex offender registry check are identified during the electronic fingerprint scan registration process. The Investigation Unit within the Lead Agency utilizes the identified applicant information to manually complete the out of state sex offender registry check. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate sex offender registry or repository check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate sex offender registry or repository check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

A system query was utilized to identify the backlog of existing staff that required an interstate sex offender registry check based upon the information collected during their most recent electronic fingerprint scan registration process. The Investigation Unit within the Lead Agency utilized the identified applicant information to manually complete the out of state sex offender registry check. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant. Full compliance with these requirements was achieved 9-30-20.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate sex offender registry or repository check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.8 Interstate Child Abuse and Neglect Check Registry Requirements (98.43 (b)(3)(iii)).

Note: This is a name-based search.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Has the interstate child abuse and neglect check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered childcare providers includes provisions for conducting an interstate check of the child abuse and neglect registry if the staff member resided in another state(s) during the last five years. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant. Applicants are permitted to begin employment on a provisional basis pending completion of all the background check components once the applicant clears the FBI fingerprint check, the TBI state criminal history check, the sex offender registries, the vulnerable persons registry, and the in-state child abuse and neglect registry. Provisionally employed applicants must be supervised at all times. The Lead Agency website includes instructions and information about any necessary forms/documentation required by each state for completing the interstate child abuse and neglect registry checks. Interstate checks of the child abuse and neglect registry are processed by the background check unit within the Lead Agency.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The criminal background check process for license-exempt childcare providers includes provisions for conducting an interstate check of the child abuse and neglect registry if the staff member resided in another state(s) during the last five years. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant. Applicants are permitted to begin employment on a provisional basis pending completion of all the background check components once the applicant clears the FBI fingerprint check, the TBI state criminal history check, the sex offender registries, the vulnerable persons registry, and the instate child abuse and neglect registry. Provisionally employed applicants must be supervised at all times. The Lead Agency website includes instructions and information about any necessary forms/documentation required by each state for completing the interstate child abuse and neglect registry checks. Interstate checks of the child abuse and neglect registry are processed by the background check unit within the Lead Agency. The following childcare providers are included in this group:

- Authorized Child Care Professionals exempt from licensure that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program
- Boys and Girls Clubs exempt from licensure that participate in the Child Care

Certificate Program

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate child abuse and neglect check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs
- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)
- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements
- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate child abuse and neglect check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The criminal background check process for licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers includes provisions for checking the child abuse and neglect registry for new (prospective) child care staff. The check is completed on a case-by-case basis with each respective state per applicant.

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate child abuse and neglect check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

Provisional Employment

The CCDF final rule states a child care provider must submit a request to the appropriate state/territory agency for a criminal background check for each child care staff member, including prospective staff members, prior to the date an individual becomes a child care staff member and at least once every 5 years thereafter (98.43(d)(1) and (2)). A prospective child care staff member may not begin work until one of the following results have been returned as satisfactory: either the FBI fingerprint check or the search of the state/territory criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the state/territory where the staff member resides. The child care staff member must be supervised at all times pending completion of all the background check components (98.43(d)(4)).

Note: In recognition of the concerns and feedback OCC received related to the provisional hire provision of the CCDF final rule, OCC will allow states and territories to request time-limited waiver extensions for the provisional hire provision. State/territories may submit a waiver request to allow additional time to meet the requirements related to provisional hires (see Appendix A). A state/territory may receive a waiver from this requirement only when:

1. the state requires the provider to submit the background check requests before the staff person begins working; and
2. the staff member, pending the results of the elements of the background check, is supervised at all times by an individual who has completed the background check.

5.4.9 Describe the state/territory requirements related to prospective child care staff members using the checkboxes below. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Check all that apply.

Effective Date: 08/21/2020

- The state/territory allows prospective staff members to begin work on a provisional basis (if supervised at all times) after completing and receiving satisfactory results on either the FBI fingerprint check or a fingerprint check of the state/territory criminal registry or repository in the state where the child care staff member resides.

Describe and include a citation:

The criminal background check process allows applicants to begin employment on a provisional basis pending completion of all the background check components once the applicant clears the FBI fingerprint check, the TBI state criminal history check, the National Sex Offender Registry, the instate sex offender registry, the instate vulnerable persons registry, and the instate child abuse and neglect registry. Provisionally employed applicants must be supervised at all times by someone with a qualifying background check.

Provider Contract -The Provider Contract includes a provision that requires the

Contractor to comply with all Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements (including all CCDBG background check requirements) and cooperate with any onsite review(s) conducted by the Department of Human Services in order to monitor compliance. Background checks, based upon a fingerprint sample, are conducted according to the requirements for child care agencies outlined in statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and the licensure rules for child care agencies (1240-04-01-.07).

T.C.A. §71-3-507- Tennessee Code Annotated requires persons applying to work with children in licensed child care settings regulated by the Lead Agency to submit a fingerprint sample to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the purposes of conducting a comprehensive background check that includes review of applicable criminal/juvenile histories and state registries.

1240-04-01-.07 - Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies - The licensure rules for child care agencies include provisions for background checks that include disclosure of criminal/juvenile and state history, fingerprinting based upon statute (T.C.A. § 71-3-507) and as required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

- The state/territory allows prospective staff members to begin work on a provisional basis (if supervised at all times) after the request has been submitted, but before receiving satisfactory results on either the FBI fingerprint check or a fingerprint check of the state/territory criminal registry or repository in the state where the child care staff member resides. Note: A waiver request is allowed for this provision (see Appendix A).

Describe and include a citation:

- Other.

Describe:

5.4.10 The state/territory must conduct the background checks as quickly as possible and shall not exceed 45 days after the child care provider submitted the request. The state/territory shall provide the results of the background check in a statement that

indicates whether the staff member is eligible or ineligible, without revealing specific disqualifying information. If the staff member is ineligible, the state/territory will provide information about each disqualifying crime to the staff member.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Describe the requirements, policies, and procedures in place to respond as expeditiously as possible to other states', territories', and tribes' requests for background check results to accommodate the 45-day timeframe, including any agencies/entities responsible for responding to requests from other states (98.43(a)(1)(iii)).

Information on requesting a criminal history check or searching the sex offender registry in Tennessee is readily available to the public through the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation website. The Lead Agency does not maintain the child abuse and neglect registry in Tennessee. This registry is maintained by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS). States may submit requests to a DCS email mailbox to initiate this process. The Lead Agency attempts to facilitate this process as needed by verifying DCS contact information and periodically confirming the request process.

5.4.11 Child care staff members cannot be employed by a child care provider receiving CCDF subsidy funds if they refuse a background check, make materially false statements in connection with the background check, or are registered or required to be registered on the state or National Sex Offender Registry. Potential staff members also cannot be employed by a provider receiving CCDF funds if they have been convicted of: a felony consisting of murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crimes involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, or - subject to an individual review (at the state/territory's option)- a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes - child abuse, child endangerment, or sexual assault; or a misdemeanor involving child pornography (98.43(c)(1)).

Note: The Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. It may release aggregated data by crime as long as the data do not include personally identifiable information (98.43(e)(2)(iii)).

Does the state/territory disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for other crimes not specifically listed in 98.43(c)(i)?

No

Yes.

Describe other disqualifying crimes and provide citation:

In addition to crimes listed in 98.43 (c)(1), the Lead Agency also disqualifies child care educators for the following crimes:

- Aggravated cruelty to animals
- Aggravated robbery
- Aggravated Arson
- Aggravated Burglary
- Aggravated Kidnapping
- Aggravated rape
- Arson
- Carjacking
- Criminal exposure to HIV
- Cruelty to animals
- Custodial Interference
- Exploitation of a minor by electronic means
- Incest
- Indecent exposure
- Involuntary labor servitude
- Kidnapping
- Reckless homicide
- Robbery
- Solicitation of a minor
- Stalking
- Vehicular Homicide
- Weapon offenses
- Additional crimes may be added to this list at the discretion of the Lead Agency.

5.4.12 The state/territory has a process for a child care staff member to appeal the the results of his or her background check to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the criminal background report, as detailed in 98.43(e)(3).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Describe how the Lead Agency ensures the privacy of background checks and provides opportunities for applicants to appeal the results of background checks. In addition, describe whether the state/territory has a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment (98.43(e)(2-4)).

Applicants complete a disclosure form to initiate the criminal background check process. The form includes an area for explaining any extenuating circumstances that should be considered in determining whether or not the individual should be allowed to work in a child care agency. The form also includes a detailed statement about the applicant's privacy rights and information about challenging the accuracy or completeness of their criminal history record. The Lead Agency provides for a review process (waiver review committee) that utilizes an advisory group of law enforcement personnel, persons experienced in child protective services, persons experienced in child development issues, and child care providers to consider exemptions from exclusions not prohibited by CCDF requirements based upon extenuating circumstances. After hearing a case the waiver review committee presents its recommendations to the Lead Agency and the Lead Agency has final authority to grant an exemption. Applicants can appeal this decision and request to have a formal hearing before the division of Appeals and Hearings within the Department of Human Services.

5.4.13 The state/territory may not charge fees that exceed the actual costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check (98.43(f)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Describe how the state/territory ensures that fees charged for completing the background checks do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration, regardless of

whether they are conducted by the state/territory or a third-party vendor or contractor. Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable (98.43(f)). The Lead Agency assumes the costs of background checks for child care educators.

5.4.14 Federal requirements do not address background check requirements for relative providers who receive CCDF; therefore, states have the flexibility to decide which background check requirements relative providers must meet, as defined by CCDF in 98.2 under eligible child care provider.

Note: This exception only applies if the individual cares only for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from background checks?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- No, relatives are not exempt from background check requirements.
- Yes, relatives are exempt from all background check requirements.
- Yes, relatives are exempt from some background check requirements. If the state/territory exempts relatives from some background check requirements, describe which background check requirements do not apply to relative providers.

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

This section covers the state or territory framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education (98.44(a)); provides a description of strategies used to strengthen the business practices of child care providers (98.16(z)); and addresses early learning and developmental guidelines.

States and territories are required to describe their framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education for caregivers, teachers, and directors, including those working in school-age care (98.44(a)). This framework is part of a broader systematic approach building on health and safety training (as described in section 5) within a state/territory. States and territories must incorporate their knowledge and application of health and safety standards, early learning guidelines, responses to challenging behavior, and the engagement of families. States and territories are required to establish a progression of

professional development opportunities to improve the knowledge and skills of CCDF providers (658E(c)(2)(G)). To the extent practicable, professional development should be appropriate to work with a population of children of different ages, English-language learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans (98.44(b)(2)(iv)). Training and professional development is one of the options that states and territories have for investing their CCDF quality funds (658G(b)(1)).

6.1 Professional Development Framework

6.1.1 Each state or territory must describe their professional development framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education for caregivers, teachers and directors, which is developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care or similar coordinating body. The framework should include these components: (1) professional standards and competencies, (2) career pathways, (3) advisory structures, (4) articulation, (5) workforce information, and (6) financing (98.44(a)(3)). Flexibility is provided on the strategies, breadth, and depth with which states and territories will develop and implement their framework.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe how the state/territory's framework for training and professional development addresses the following required elements:

-- State/territory professional standards and competencies. Describe:

Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA), as the early care and education professional development hub for the Lead Agency, utilizes the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards for Professional Preparation Programs, which provide a common national framework for all early childhood professional development systems and programs, as the state framework. This builds upon the existing framework established by TECTA and aligns with the Council for Professional Recognition Child Development Associates (CDA) competency areas and NAEYC work with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. A core training and competency review team has been established between training delivery partners to begin analysis of current training and alignment with foundational and advanced knowledge to examine competency alignment with the framework. TECTA will build upon the professional development system in place comprised of eight regional

sites and include additional partnering and collaborating agency training. This progression of professional development system includes:

Tennessee Child Care Online Training System (TCCOTS), an online training portal, with capabilities to support adult learning methods of instruction cross-platformed and supported by most common web browsers to provide online work-related training options. Within each module, activities and content quizzes require user demonstration of recognizing and recalling information included in content. The online training modules include specific early childhood area content, aligned with NAEYC national framework, and the expected competencies upon completion. Pre- and post-test scores are incorporated into some modules to measure learning outcomes. Training evaluations are collected for each module with some modules featuring additional questions to collect anticipated implementation of skills learned. Each module is designed to provide a minimum of two hours of training to meet state training hour requirements. TCCOTS is a freely accessible resource for early childhood educators as well as parents. Training certificates are issued to those who provide specific workplace or higher education student information within Tennessee. TCCOTS includes a help desk feature to facilitate user navigation and success. The Tennessee Child Care Professional Training (TN-CCPT) system managed by CCR&R maintains a parallel face-to-face training system that also provides entry level and ongoing free training access to meet CCDF requirements including caregivers, teachers, and directors. The lead agency is exploring technology supports to update the TCOTTS system and enhance the user experience.

TECTA 30-clock hour Orientation training is designed to provide foundational knowledge across roles and settings for care and education professionals. Orientation trainings include such content areas as Administration, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Center-based Care, Family Child Care, Infant-Toddler Care, and School-Age Care, and skills related to the core competencies of the CDA credential aligned with NAEYC:

- Establishing and maintaining a safe, healthy, learning environment;
- Advancing physical and intellectual competence;
- Supporting social and emotional development and provide positive guidance;
- Establishing positive and productive partnerships with families;
- Ensuring a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs; and
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.

TECTA manages the Tennessee Early Childhood Administrator Credential (TECPAC) which uses NAEYC standards:

- Promoting child development and learning;
- Building Family and Community Relationships;
- Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families;
- Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families;
- Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum; and
- Maintaining a commitment to Professionalism.

These competencies are documented and measured as identified in the Program Administration Scale Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management or Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care from the McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership specifically designed for directors. The TECTA management office is responsible for scheduling the TECPAC Academy which serves as the capstone requirement for earning the TECPAC credential. The TECPAC Academy is comprised of content-specific sessions related to early childhood program administration. Candidates receive information and assistance related to individual professional development and program improvement goals and objectives.

TECTA manages the new Infant-Toddler Credential using the aforementioned NAEYC standards. This credential includes NAEYC standards:

- Promoting child development and learning;
- Building Family and Community Relationships;
- Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families;
- Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families;
- Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum; and
- Maintaining a commitment to Professionalism.

The credential features a combination of formal education and coaching/mentoring provided by the CCR&R Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches with focus on core competencies related to the state QRIS that are documented and measured. A required capstone academy training will be developed for earning the credential.

-- Career pathways. Describe:

The TECTA 30-clock hour Orientation training provides the gateway to accessing academic tuition support and career advancement from Associate degree through graduate degrees, including earning the Tennessee Early Childhood Administrator Credential for administrators and the new Tennessee Infant-Toddler Credential.

The academic pathway for earning the CDA is a key first stepping stone on the career advancement lattice and fully articulates into the Early Childhood Education Associate of

Applied Science (AAS) or Associate of Science (AS) degree at 11 two-year Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institutions statewide.

State credentials also include academic preparation that articulates into academic technical certificates and degrees statewide. The TBR Early Childhood Education AAS programs are accredited by NAEYC/CAEP. Regional articulated pathways toward earning an Early Childhood Education or Child Development Bachelor of Science (BS) degree are in place at some institutions and additional articulation pathways are in development.

-- **Advisory structure. Describe:**

The TECTA advisory structure is designed by the Tennessee State University Center of Excellence for Learning Sciences and comprised of various academic, state government, professional agency, and community-based stakeholders, some of whom sit on the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council. Select subcommittees are formed as the TECTA program needs for purposeful strategic planning and implementation of services.

-- **Articulation. Describe:**

TECTA continues to provide leadership in the development and revision of courses within the Early Childhood Education AAS degree as well as ongoing evaluation and effectiveness of curriculum including textbook adoption for the academic courses used for CDA qualifications. TECTA supports the development and student utilization of articulation agreements across the state through a faculty institute held twice annually for two- and four-year early childhood administrators and faculty. TECTA staff at the two-year academic institutions provide statewide academic advisement for students.

-- **Workforce information. Describe:**

As the early care and education professional development hub for the Lead Agency, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) is developing and will implement in 2019 a statewide Training and Workforce Registry supporting early care and education professionals under the direction of the Lead Agency. This registry builds upon existing data systems that include extensive information about the educator workforce in licensed child care facilities who have participated in TECTA professional development training or received academic assistance and supports. The Training and Workforce Registry is being designed to support the training and professional development needs of educators, child care agencies and homes, and the Lead Agency and its partners in order to

strengthen quality child care services.

TECTA is also introducing individualized professional development plans for educators to further empower educators to identify and pursue professional development and continuing education opportunities. To further enhance the application of these individualized professional development plans, the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R) will work with child care agencies and homes, the Lead Agency, and other partners to further strengthen quality child care services through the implementation of enhanced quality improvement plans designed to identify potential deficiencies, apply corrective action, or achieve program goals.

The Lead Agency is also coordinating with the University of Tennessee Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (UT SWORPS) to design and implement a series of surveys to collect and improve data about workforce characteristics, professional development needs, and other provider-focused topics to ensure the Lead Agency's system of training and technical assistance continues to meet the needs of educators and providers in order to promote high quality child care services.

-- Financing. Describe:

In order to qualify for TECTA financial assistance, a student must meet the following requirements:

- Meet the eligibility requirements for in-state tuition.
- Be currently employed or volunteer on a consistent basis at a state-regulated early care and education program. Applicants must provide proof of employment or consistent volunteer time when requested by a TECTA site.
- Have completed a TECTA Orientation course, received a TECTA Orientation Certificate via the High School Equivalency Program, or be a declared major in an early childhood education, child development or related degree program, and have earned 3 credits of early childhood coursework with a minimum grade of C.
- Be admitted to a college or university and be enrolled in a required academic course leading to a credential or degree in early childhood education or child development.
- Have completed and submitted the appropriate TECTA application forms and a signed "Release of Academic Information" form permitting the college or university at the end of the semester to release the student's grades to a local TECTA coordinator and TECTA Management.

TECTA provides financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in academic courses leading to CDA preparation and academic credentials or degrees in Early Childhood

Education/Child Development. This financial assistance may include full or partial in-state tuition costs. Based on availability of annual grant funds, TECTA Management will determine the percentage of financial assistance to be awarded for CDA preparation, academic credentials, and degrees.

Textbooks for CDA preparation courses may be borrowed from TECTA sites as funding allows. The amount of financial assistance an individual may receive per semester, per funding year, shall be determined by availability of annual grant funds through the guidance of TECTA Management with site participation. Funding consideration may also be given to students enrolled in degree programs in a related field when an early childhood major is not accessible and the student's program of study is designed to meet the early childhood professional career goals of the student. Student tuition is paid directly to the institution of credit through a tuition-only contractual agreement with the TECTA Management and institution in collaboration with the local TECTA site for verification of student eligibility. Students must request financial assistance from the local TECTA contract institution. Students are not eligible to receive financial support from multiple TECTA contract institutions within a given semester.

TECTA also provides scholarships to individuals seeking the CDA credential. The scholarship pays for the application fee and assessment due to the Council for Professional Recognition upon application. TECTA Management identifies stipends or incentive awards for each student completing the CDA credential, TECPAC, or other identified credential incentives contingent on availability of annual grant funds.

b) The following are optional elements, or elements that should be implemented to the extent practicable, in the training and professional development framework.

Continuing education unit trainings and credit-bearing professional development to the extent practicable

Describe:

Placement of Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) sites within higher education institutions as well as relationships with the Tennessee Board of Regents and Department of Education enable and support strengthened partnerships with professional development organizations to align with college credit-bearing opportunities. The career lattice framework of TECTA allows for implementing comprehensive pathways and multiyear timelines for transitioning to a bachelor's degree and beyond.

TECTA coordinating institutions, which may change as local needs and other factors change, currently include: Austin Peay State University, Chattanooga State Community College, Dyersburg State Community College, East Tennessee State University, Roane State Community College, Southwest Tennessee Community College, Tennessee State University, and Tennessee Technological University.

Engagement of training and professional development providers, including higher education, in aligning training and educational opportunities with the state/territory's framework

Describe:

TECTA hosts its Higher Education Institute twice each year bringing Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECED) Program Directors and Faculty together from partnering two and four-year institutions of higher learning across the state to promote coursework for ECED credentials, certificate programs, and degrees. Based upon new research, state initiatives and/or new federal guidelines the faculty institute provides for continuing infusions of new best practices and updating course alignments.

Other

Describe:

6.1.2 Describe how the state/territory developed its professional development framework in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (if applicable) or similar coordinating body if there is no SAC that addresses the professional development, training, and education of child care providers and staff.

It has been the policy that whenever revisions of curricula may be indicated, Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) Management will solicit input and suggestions from all TECTA Orientation instructors and coordinators. Focus groups comprised of the TECTA Management Curriculum Coordinator, providers, staff, and consultants will meet to review the proposed revisions and make recommendations if possible. The Curriculum Coordinator will review all suggestions and recommendations and propose any needed revisions to the curriculum. TECTA staff and original authors will review the proposed revisions and generate a final product when possible. All revisions that result from this process must be incorporated into the curriculum used throughout the TECTA Program.

Whenever revisions of the TECPAC Academy curricula are needed, the TECPAC Program Manager will coordinate a group following the guidelines in the NAEYC Standards and Guidelines for Professional Development and finalize curricula in collaboration with TECTA Management.

TECTA Management responsible for curricula development participate in meetings of the Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

6.1.3 Describe how the framework improves the quality, diversity, stability, and retention of caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.44(a)(7)).

Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) provides financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in academic courses leading to CDA preparation and academic credentials or degrees in Early Childhood Education/Child Development. The financial assistance may include full or partial in-state tuition costs. Based on availability of annual grant funds, TECTA Management will determine the percentage of financial assistance to be awarded for CDA preparation, academic credentials, and degrees.

TECTA provides scholarships to individuals seeking the CDA credential. The scholarship pays for the application fee and assessment due to the Council for Professional Recognition upon application. TECTA Management identifies stipends or incentive awards for each student completing the CDA credential, TECPAC, or other identified credential incentives.

As funding is available, TECTA provides financial incentives to individuals who have completed academic preparation in successfully earning a CDA credential.

TECTA provides a Center-based Orientation equivalency certificate to high school students who have successfully completed two classes within the Early Childhood Education Careers Track. This satisfies the high school students' eligibility for obtaining TECTA academic

advisement, technical assistance and college tuition assistance in earning certificates and/or degrees. A pilot program was conducted by TECTA in providing a scholarship for the application fee and assessment due to the Council for Professional Recognition upon application for the CDA credential to high school students who successful completed all four classes within the Early Childhood Education Careers Track. This pilot will be expanded to accommodate additional high school students across Tennessee regions.

The recently revised child care rules require all administrative and teaching staff to receive training and consultation the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The Lead Agency is in partnership with the Department of Mental health to participate in the Zero to Three Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health consultation to support providers in the classroom and outside of the classroom with stress reduction techniques such as mindfulness and health and wellness activities.

Effective September 15, 2019, the Lead Agency is implementing the Child Care Wage\$ Tennessee program through Signal Centers to further support the child care workforce by providing biannual salary supplements based upon educational achievements to reduce turnover and encourage educational advancement.

Effective Date: 9-15-19

6.2 Training and Professional Development Requirements

The Lead Agency must describe how its established health and safety requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing professional development requirements--as described in Section 5 for caregivers, teachers, and directors in CCDF programs--align, to the extent practicable, with the state/territory professional development framework. These requirements must be designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce. Such requirements shall be applicable to child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF funds across the entire age span, from birth

through age 12 (658E(c)(2)(G)). Ongoing training and professional development should be accessible and appropriate to the setting and age of the children served (98.44(b)(2)).

6.2.1 Describe how the state/territory incorporates the knowledge and application of its early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable); its health and safety standards (as described in section 5); and social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models, which can include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in section 2) in the training and professional development framework (98.44(b)).

This information is incorporated in web-based trainings available through the Tennessee Child Care Online Training System (TCCOTS) and trainings provided by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R).

Incorporating these elements begins with the application process to become a child care agency. At the child care center level, individuals or groups that wish to provide care must participate in pre-application and pre-orientation training. New agency staff are required to have an initial orientation and instruction that includes some of these items. Thereafter, trainings offered through TECTA and CCR&R to fulfill annual training requirements would provide instruction on these elements. Several examples of trainings offered through the TCCOTS and CCR&R were outlined in the response to section 6.1.2 and 6.2.1. For example, CCR&R and TECTA both provide training on the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards and trainings that support children's social and emotional development and they provide detailed instruction on health and safety requirements.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

6.2.2 Describe how the state/territory's training and professional development are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF funds (as applicable) (98.44(b)(2)(vi)).

Not Applicable

6.2.3 States/territories are required to facilitate participation of child care providers with limited English proficiency and disabilities in the subsidy system (98.16 (dd)). Describe how the state/territory will recruit and facilitate the participation of providers:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) with limited English proficiency

The Lead Agency continues to ensure translations of licensing documents are available in languages other than English, including Spanish, Somali, and Arabic on the basis of demand.

b) who have disabilities

The Lead Agency seeks guidance from its Division of Rehabilitation Services on recruitment efforts for persons with disabilities.

6.2.4 Describe how the state/territory's training and professional development requirements are appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers who care for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups (such as specialized credentials for providers who care for infants and/or school-age children); English-language learners; children with developmental delays and disabilities; and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians (98.44(b)(2)(iii--iv)).

Training is available through the Tennessee Child Care Online Training System and Child Care Resource and Referral includes provisions for addressing these areas. Provisions for providing training and resources for specialized services that target focal impact areas such as homelessness, health and safety and limited English proficiency or other specializations have been added to the FY 2019 contracts with these partners.

6.2.5 The Lead Agency must provide training and technical assistance to providers and appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving children and families experiencing homelessness (658E(c)(3)(B)(i)).

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe the state/territory's training and TA efforts for providers in identifying and serving homeless children and their families (relates to question 3.2.2).

The Lead Agency provides training for Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) on serving children and families experiencing homelessness. CCR&R provides statewide training to child care agencies on identifying and providing resources for children experiencing homelessness statewide. The Lead Agency and CCR&R Family Engagement Quality Coaches provide outreach services to families experiencing homelessness by implementing strategies to increase networks to families experiencing homelessness and support effective cross-sector collaboration.

b) Describe the state/territory's training and TA efforts for Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff in identifying and serving children and their families experiencing homelessness (connects to question 3.2.2).

The Lead Agency provides training to its Child Care Services staff on identifying and serving homeless children and families. CCR&R provides training to child care agencies on identifying and serving homeless children and their families to child care agencies.

6.2.6 States and territories are required to describe effective internal controls that are in place to ensure program integrity and accountability (98.68(a)). Describe how the state/territory ensures that all providers for children receiving CCDF funds are informed and trained regarding CCDF requirements and integrity (98.68(a)(3)). Check all that apply

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Issue policy change notices

- Issue new policy manual
 - Staff training
 - Orientations
 - Onsite training
 - Online training
 - Regular check-ins to monitor the implementation of CCDF policies
- Describe the type of check-ins, including the frequency.

- Other
- Describe:

6.2.7 Lead Agencies must develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply and to improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (z)). Describe the state/territory's strategies to strengthen provider's business practices, which can include training and/or TA efforts.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe the strategies that the state/territory is developing and implementing for training and TA.

Each Tennessee Early Childhood Program Administrator Credential Academy consists of ten (10) two-hour sessions of instruction. The sessions are comprised of direct instruction, interactive assignments, and participation in online discussion boards. See Tennessee Early Childhood Program Administrator Credential mentioned above in 6.1. Child Care Resource and Referral will work closely with providers through the development of continuous Quality Improvement Plans that will target specific areas to strengthen a provider's level of quality, business practices, accessibility and availability impact to supply, and the general improvement of child care services.

b) Check the topics addressed in the state/territory's strategies. Check all that apply.

- Fiscal management
- Budgeting

- Recordkeeping
- Hiring, developing, and retaining qualified staff
- Risk management
- Community relationships
- Marketing and public relations
- Parent-provider communications, including who delivers the training, education, and/or technical assistance
- Other

Describe:

6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

6.3.1 States and territories are required to develop, maintain, or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children in a forward progression from birth to kindergarten entry (i.e., birth-to-three, three-to-five, birth-to-five), describing what children should know and be able to do and covering the essential domains of early childhood development. These early learning and developmental guidelines are to be used statewide and territory-wide by child care providers and in the development and implementation of training and professional development (658E(c)(2)(T)). The required essential domains for these guidelines are cognition, including language arts and mathematics; social, emotional, and physical development; and approaches toward learning (98.15(a)(9)). At the option of the state/territory, early learning and developmental guidelines for out-of-school time may be developed. Note: States and territories may use the quality set-aside, discussed in section 7, to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are research-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and aligned with kindergarten entry

The Tennessee Early Childhood Education Early Learning Developmental Standards, or TN-ELDS, were first developed in 2004 to provide documentation of the continuum of developmental milestones from birth through age five based on the research about the processes, sequences, and long term consequences of early learning and development.

The TN-ELDS are designed to promote developmentally appropriate, research-based best practice utilizing the fundamental philosophy, cognitive, emotional, and social capacities are inextricably intertwined especially in early childhood and continue throughout life. The original design and each revision considered research based peer reviewed references from the Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Division of Early Childhood, American Academy of Pediatrics, and others.

b) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are appropriate for all children from birth to kindergarten entry.

The major vision of the TN ELDS in 2012 originated with the Common Core State Standards Initiative state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in college courses and in workforce training programs. As Tennessee moved forward with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics, it was imperative to revise and align the TN-ELDS for Four Year-Olds with the Common Core State Standards. This then prompted revisions of the TN-ELDS at all ages in order to provide a consistent framework to support the work of teachers, caregivers and families who plan and provide learning experiences for young children.

c) Verify by checking the domains included in the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines. Responses for "other" is optional

- Cognition, including language arts and mathematics
- Social development
- Emotional development
- Physical development
- Approaches toward learning
- Other

Describe:

Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts

d) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are implemented in consultation with the educational agency and the State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body.

The Lead Agency collaborates with the Tennessee Department of Education and with other early care and education partners in the development of the early learning and developmental guidelines that are adopted by the Tennessee State Board of Education.

e) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are updated and include the date first issued and/or the frequency of updates

The standards for four-year-olds initially developed and approved in 2005 were revised and adopted by the Tennessee State Board of Education in August 2012 and were revised again in 2017 by the Tennessee Department of Education (DOE). Revisions are initiated by DOE and/or the Lead Agency in response to revisions in state academic updates as well as ongoing review and implementation aligned with best practices. The recent revised standards provide a direct association and alignment with content areas found in Tennessee's state academic state standards for kindergarten readiness and kindergarten standards. The birth-48 month standards initially developed and approved in 2005 were revised in 2013 and adopted by the State Board of Education in January 2014. These revised standards continue to be a resource for educators, child care providers, and families who work with children in this age range. It is expected that these standards will be under review for revision in 2018-2019 for precursor pathway toward developmental learning aligned with kindergarten readiness and best practice.

f) If applicable, discuss the state process for the adoption, implementation and continued improvement of state out-of-school time standards

The Tennessee Afterschool Network is in the process of developing out-of-school time standards and expects to have them completed in 2018.

g) Provide the Web link to the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/academic-standards/early-learning-development-standards.html>

6.3.2 CCDF funds cannot be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that:

- Will be the primary or sole basis to determine a child care provider ineligible to participate in the CCDF,
- Will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider,
- Will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness,
- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF (658E(c)(2)(T)(ii)(I); 98.15(a)(2)).

Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are used.

Tennessee embeds the early learning and developmental guidelines in a variety of approaches in the preparation of and ongoing professional development for the child care workforce and in classroom practice. Child Care Resource and Referral and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance train providers so the early learning guidelines content is included in higher education coursework, technical assistance services to early care and education practitioners, classroom instruction and supports the improvement of program quality.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to reserve and use a portion of their Child Care and Development Fund program expenditures for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and to increase parental options for and access to high-quality child care (98.53). The quality activities should be aligned with a statewide or territory-wide assessment of the state's or territory's need to carry out such services and care. States and territories are required to report on these quality improvement investments through CCDF in three ways:

1. In the Plan, states and territories will describe the types of activities supported by quality investments over the 3-year period (658G(b); 98.16(j)).
2. ACF will collect annual data on how much CCDF funding is spent on quality activities using the expenditure report (ACF-696). This report will be used to determine compliance with the required quality and infant and toddler spending requirements (658G(d)(1); 98.53(f)).
3. For each year of the Plan period, states and territories will submit a separate annual Quality Progress Report that will include a description of activities to be funded by quality expenditures and the measures used by the state/territory to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory (658G(d); 98.53(f)).

States and territories must fund efforts in at least one of the following 10 activities:

- Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce
- Improving on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines
- Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services
- Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers
- Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services
- Supporting compliance with state/territory requirements for licensing, inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety (as described in section 5)
- Evaluating the quality of child care programs in the state/territory, including evaluating how programs positively impact children
- Supporting providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation
- Supporting the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development
- Performing other activities to improve the quality of child care services, as long as outcome measures relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry are possible.

Throughout this Plan, states and territories will describe the types of quality improvement activities where CCDF investments are being made, including but not limited to, quality set-aside funds and will describe the measurable indicators of progress used to evaluate state/territory progress in improving the quality of child care services for each expenditure (98.53(f)) These activities can benefit infants and toddlers through school age populations.

This section covers the quality activities needs assessment and quality improvement activities and indicators of progress for each of the activities undertaken in the state or territory.

7.1 Quality Activities Needs Assessment for Child Care Services

7.1.1 Lead Agencies must invest in quality activities based on an assessment of the state/territory's needs to carry out those activities. Lead Agencies have the flexibility to design an assessment of their quality activities that best meet their needs, including how often they do the assessment. Describe your state/territory assessment process, including the frequency of assessment (658G(a)(1); 98.53(a)).

The Lead Agency conducts its assessment of need utilizing methodologies that include annual and periodic analyses by the institutions of higher education, research studies that focus on the impact of the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), market rate and supply and demand studies, public focus groups and information sessions with partners, consumers, and providers of child care services, and review of contracts and services.

The Lead Agency is currently partnering with the TN Department of Education to engage consultation from the Policy Equity Group. As part of this consultation, the Policy Equity Group is reviewing the current landscape of child care governance and administration in Tennessee, including the Quality Rating Improvement System, and developing recommendations for stronger alignment between the Lead Agency and DOE child care systems. These recommendations will be considered as Tennessee moves through a transition in gubernatorial administration.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.1.2 Describe the findings of the assessment and if any overarching goals for quality improvement were identified.

Below is an example of recommendations that resulted from the statewide focus group, informational meetings, and rulemaking hearings: Strengthen provider understanding of the QRIS through delivery of trainings, quality improvement supports, and mock assessments. Reevaluation of the current QRIS. Increase funding for professional development. Implement social, emotional, behavioral, and special needs supports for children, families, and teaching staff. Increase access to online and in-person training with a wider variety of topics. Strengthen peer learning through coaching, mentoring, and hands-on application of trainings. Introduce parenting classes on such practical subjects as childhood obesity/nutrition, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), budgeting, nutrition, physical fitness, and tobacco cessation.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.2 Use of Quality Funds

7.2.1 Check the quality improvement activities in which the state/territory is investing

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce If checked, respond to section 7.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Developing, maintaining, or implementing early learning and developmental guidelines. If checked, respond to section 6.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system. If checked, respond to 7.4 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. If checked, respond to 7.5 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Establishing or expanding a statewide system of CCR&R services, as discussed in 1.7. If checked, respond to 7.6 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Facilitating compliance with state/territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety standards (as described in section 5). If checked, respond to 7.7 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the state/territory. If checked, respond to 7.8 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Supporting accreditation. If checked, respond to 7.9 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Supporting state/territory or local efforts to develop high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. If checked, respond to 7.10 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

Other activities determined by the state/territory to improve the quality of child care services and which measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry is possible. If checked, respond to 7.11 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply

CCDF funds

Other funds

Describe:

The Lead Agency is distributing financial assistance/grants to impacted child care agencies, including those that closed and those that have continued operations. The Lead Agency is using CARES Act funds and/or quality dollars to provide immediate assistance to impacted families/providers, even if they are not on CCDF. Through a waiver, the Lead Agency has relief from the requirement to utilize 70% of funds on direct services for FY2020, as per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020. This provision is effective from March 3, 2020 until the end of FY2020. This gives the Lead

Agency more flexibility to respond to provider and family needs and allows an option if more resources are needed to open or expand child care capacity.

7.3 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce With CCDF Quality Funds

Lead Agencies can invest in the training, professional development, and post-secondary education of the child care workforce as part of a progression of professional development activities, such as those included at 98.44 in addition to the following (98.53(a)(1)).

7.3.1 Describe how the state/territory funds the training and professional development of the child care workforce

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Check and describe which content is included in training and professional development activities and describe who or how an entity is funded to address this topic. Check all that apply.

- Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those efforts related to nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically based, developmentally appropriate, and age-appropriate strategies

Describe:

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) provide training, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring to providers on a number of early care and education topics through a quality contract with the Lead Agency such as: Abusive Head Trauma Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Assessing Children's Learning: How Children Learn and Develop Basic Skills for Brain Smart Classroom Management Brain Development Childhood Obesity Conscious Discipline Defining the Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers Developmental Standards: The Building Blocks for Stronger Families Food Portions (by age groups) Inclusion Race and Culture in Early Childhood Settings Tennessee Early Intervention System Transforming Aggression into Healthy

- ☑ Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models that promote positive social-emotional development and early childhood mental health and that reduce challenging behaviors, including a reduction in expulsions of preschool-age children from birth to age five for such behaviors. (See also section 2.5.)

Describe:

The Lead Agency has adopted a suspension and expulsion policy that promotes positive social-emotional development and provides strategies and resources to reduce challenging behaviors and support for early childhood mental health for educators and families. CCR&R and TECTA provide training, technical assistance, coaching and peer mentoring to providers on classroom guidance, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) 30-hour training series, and Center for Social and Emotional Foundation for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid model.

- ☑ Engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children's positive development

Describe:

CCR&R and TECTA provide training, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring to providers on a number of early care and education topics through a quality contract with the Lead Agency.

- ☑ Implementing developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction, and evidence-based curricula and designing learning environments that are aligned with state/territory early learning and developmental standards.

Describe:

The Lead Agency Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS) training provides an introduction to and exploration of the Tennessee early learning developmental standards for early care and educators. TN-ELDS provides early care and educators with developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive instructions focusing on a framework of developmental milestones for all children inclusive of diverse cultures and languages.

- ☑ Providing onsite or accessible comprehensive services for children and developing community partnerships that promote families' access to services that

support their children's learning and development

Describe:

2 Generation Strategy

The Overarching Strategy for Creating Cycles of Success for Tennessee Families

The Tennessee Department of Human Services has adopted a service delivery model that is consistent with the 2 Generation Approach as an organization. Our goal is to develop a foundational framework for the Department, where all programs are aligned - ensuring 2 Generation tactics are applied when working with all customers in all aspects of case management and service delivery.

2 Generation approaches can be found along a continuum. Whole-family approaches focus equally and intentionally on services and opportunities for the parent and the child. Child-parent approaches focus first or primarily on the child but are moving toward a 2 Generation approach and also include services and opportunities for the parent. Parent-child approaches focus first or primarily on the parent but are moving toward a two-generation approach and also include services and opportunities for children. This includes innovative state programs and initiatives as the Lead Agency's partnership with the Governor's Books From Birth Foundation and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Read to be Ready summer literacy camps with the Tennessee Department of Education (DOE), and increasing access to quality care through the Child Care Certificate Program Smart Steps initiative.

Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement

Describe:

Caring for children of families in geographic areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment

Describe:

Caring for and supporting the development of children with disabilities and developmental delays

Describe:

Through a contract with the Lead Agency, Signal Centers, Inc. as described in section 1.7 fulfills a scope of services which improves the overall quality of child care, strengthens the training and technical assistance system for the state, and assures quality and consistent practices among the CCR&R Network.

Supporting the positive development of school-age children

Describe:

The Lead Agency, in collaboration with DOE and other partners, has recently revised the School-Age Early Learning Developmental Standards. CCR&R and TECTA provide training, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring to providers to support the positive development of school-age children through a quality contract with the Lead Agency.

Other

Describe:

b) Check how the state/territory connects child care providers with available federal and state/territory financial aid or other resources to pursue post-secondary education relevant for the early childhood and school-age workforce. Check all that apply

- Coaches, mentors, consultants, or other specialists available to support access to post-secondary training, including financial aid and academic counseling
- Statewide or territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e., an online calendar, a listing of opportunities) of relevant post-secondary education opportunities
- Financial awards, such as scholarships, grants, loans, or reimbursement for expenses, from the state/territory to complete post-secondary education
- Other

Describe:

In order to qualify for financial assistance through the TECTA, a student must meet the following requirements:

Meet the eligibility requirements for in-state tuition.

Be currently employed or volunteer on a consistent basis at a state-regulated early

care and education program. Applicants must provide proof of employment or consistent volunteer time when requested by a TECTA site.

Have completed a TECTA Orientation course, received a TECTA Orientation Certificate via the High School Equivalency Program, or be a declared major in an early childhood education, child development or related degree program and have earned three credits of early childhood coursework with a minimum grade of C.

Be admitted to a college or university and be enrolled in a required academic course leading to a credential or degree in early childhood education or child development.

Have completed and submitted the appropriate TECTA application forms and a signed "Release of Academic Information" form permitting the college or university at the end of the semester to release the student's grades to a local TECTA site coordinator and to TECTA Management.

TECTA provides financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in academic courses leading to CDA preparation and academic credentials or degrees in Early Childhood Education/Child Development. The financial assistance may include full or partial in-state tuition costs. Based on availability of annual grant funds, the TECTA Management Office will determine the percentage of financial assistance to be awarded for CDA preparation, academic credentials, and degrees. Textbooks for CDA preparation courses may be borrowed from TECTA sites. The amount of financial assistance an individual may receive per semester, per funding year, shall be determined by availability of contract funds through the guidance of TECTA Management with TECTA site participation. Funding consideration may also be given to students enrolled in degree programs in a related field when an early childhood major is not accessible and the student's program of study is designed to meet the early childhood professional career goals of the student. Student tuition is paid directly to the institution of credit through tuition only contractual agreement with the TECTA Management Office and institution in collaboration with the TECTA site for verification of student eligibility. Students must request financial assistance from the TECTA site contract institution. Students are not eligible to receive financial support from multiple TECTA contract institutions within a given semester.

TECTA provides scholarships to individuals seeking the CDA Credential. The scholarship pays for the application fee and assessment due to the Council for Professional Recognition upon application. Based on annual funding, the TECTA Management Office will identify stipends or incentive awards for each student completing the CDA credential, TECPAC, or other identified Credential incentives.

7.3.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency is continually evaluating indicators and measurements relevant to these activities which may include but are not limited to: Scoring components of QRIS; Professional development delivered to early care and educators; Child care agency participation in the Gold Sneaker initiative; Delivered trainings, technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.4 Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

Lead Agencies may respond in this section based on other systems of quality improvement, even if not called a QRIS, as long as the other quality improvement system contains the elements of a QRIS. QRIS refers to a systematic framework for evaluating, improving and communicating the level of quality in early childhood programs and contains five key elements:

1. Program standards
2. Supports to programs to improve quality
3. Financial incentives and supports
4. Quality assurance and monitoring
5. Outreach and consumer education

7.4.1 Does your state/territory have a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality improvement?

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

- No, but the state/territory is in the QRIS development phase. If no, skip to 7.5.1.
- No, the state/territory has no plans for QRIS development. If no, skip to 7.5.1.
- Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS operating statewide or territory-wide

Describe how the QRIS is administered (e.g., statewide or locally or through CCR&R entities) and any partners and provide a link, if available.

The Lead Agency administers the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) in Tennessee. The Lead Agency is supported by the University of Tennessee Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (UT SWORPS) to provide quality checks of the Child Care Assessment staff on use of [Environment Rating Scales](#) (ERS™) tools. The following information below describes how the QRIS is administered in the State of Tennessee and can also be accessed directly from the website links listed directly below this description.

Child Care Assessment staff are highly trained professionals who conduct classroom observations and provider assessments objectively and without bias utilizing ERS™ tools. Reliability checks and careful communication ensure that all child care agencies participating in the QRIS are assessed fairly.

Assessors have experience in the child development field and are extensively trained and evaluated for use of [ERS™](#) tools. This training begins with a series of workshops conducted by UT SWORPS where Assessors learn about using these scales to evaluate the quality of child care programs. This training continues with the completion of multiple practice observations where Assessors use the scales in actual child care agencies under the direction of trained UT SWORPS Assessment Specialists and other training staff to ensure Assessors interpret scales consistently.

As an Assessor uses a particular scale, an Assessment Specialist accompanies the

Assessor on an observation or assessment where each independently (and without sharing information with each other) assess a child care program and compare notes afterward. For the Assessor to be determined "reliable", the assessment must closely match the Assessment Specialist's version. Such activities are referred to as Reliability Checks.

Anchors hold the Child Care Assessment program to a common standard. As their title implies, they are responsible for "anchoring" the interpretation and use of the scales. Anchors have the "last word" whenever questions arise about the meaning of something on a scale and are also responsible for writing [Additional Notes](#) to the Scales which clarify and interpret the scales where needed. Additional Notes are sent to all Child Care Assessment staff to ensure each person performing assessments uses the same interpretations. In all their decisions, Anchors consult with an Advisory Team and find consensus and agreement before making any decision about a specific interpretation or question. Anchors also play a role in Reliability Checks: They make certain Assessment Specialists and their fellow Anchors all remain reliable in their use of the scales.

Links provided below:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-care-services/child-care-report-card-star-quality-program.html>

<http://tnstarquality.org>

TDHS suspended routine assessments for licensed providers in March 2020 to reduce stress on agencies and our staff pertaining to health risks and social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Scheduling of assessments resumed in August 2020. Assessments will rely on technology and submitted documentation to conduct virtual assessments whenever possible to mitigate risk for the provider, children, and TDHS staff. This combination of technology assisted assessments will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to conduct in-person assessments. These provisions are effective from March 2020 until up to 60 days beyond the duration of the state-declared emergency period.

- Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS initiative operating as a pilot-test in a few localities or only a few levels but does not have a fully operating initiative on a statewide or territory-wide basis.

Provide a link, if available.

- Yes, the state/territory has another system of quality improvement

If the response is yes to any of the above, describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures.

7.4.2 QRIS participation

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Are providers required to participate in the QRIS?

- Participation is voluntary
- Participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving a subsidy. If checked, describe the relationship between QRIS participation and subsidy (e.g., minimum rating required, reimbursed at higher rates for achieving higher ratings, participation at any level).

These choices do not adequately describe our QRIS system. Therefore, we are selecting this item that includes a description box to more adequately describe our system. The QRIS system in Tennessee includes both mandatory and voluntary aspects. After the first year of operation, all licensed child care providers are evaluated annually as part of the QRIS system and must post a report card detailing the evaluation results within their facility. Providers earning a 1, 2, or 3 Star Rating may elect to participate in the Star Quality program. Providers in the Star Quality program that participate in the Child Care Certificate Program are eligible for bonus payments based upon the Star Rating earned.

Participation is required for all providers.

b) Which types of settings or distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care participate in the state/territory's QRIS? Check all that apply

- Licensed child care centers
- Licensed family child care homes
- License-exempt providers
- Early Head Start programs
- Head Start programs
- State prekindergarten or preschool programs
- Local district-supported prekindergarten programs
- Programs serving infants and toddlers
- Programs serving school-age children
- Faith-based settings
- Tribally operated programs
- Other

Describe:

Licensed Group Homes and Selected Department of Education approved sites.

7.4.3 Support and assess the quality of child care providers.

The Lead Agency may invest in the development, implementation, or enhancement of a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services. Note: If a Lead Agency decides to invest CCDF quality dollars in a QRIS, that agency can use the funding to assist in meeting consumer education requirements (98.33). If the Lead Agency has a QRIS, respond to questions 7.4.3 through 7.4.6.

Do the state/territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- No
- Yes. If yes, check the type of alignment, if any, between the state/territory's quality standards and other standards. Check all that apply.

- Programs that meet state/territory preK standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, there is a reciprocal agreement between preK programs and the quality improvement system) .
- Programs that meet federal Head Start Program Performance Standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, there is a reciprocal agreement between Head Start programs and the quality improvement system).
- Programs that meet national accreditation standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, an alternative pathway exists to meeting the standards).
- Programs that meet all or part of state/territory school-age quality standards.
- Other.

Describe:

7.4.4 Do the state/territory's quality standards build on its licensing requirements and other regulatory requirements?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- No
- Yes. If yes, check any links between the state/territory's quality standards and licensing requirements
 - Requires that a provider meet basic licensing requirements to qualify for the base level of the QRIS.
 - Embeds licensing into the QRIS
 - State/territory license is a "rated" license
 - Other.

Describe:

7.4.5 Does the state/territory provide financial incentives and other supports designed to expand the full diversity of child care options and help child care providers improve the quality of services that are provided through the QRIS

- No
- Yes. If yes, check all that apply
 - One time grants, awards, or bonuses.
 - Ongoing or periodic quality stipends
 - Higher subsidy payments
 - Training or technical assistance related to QRIS.
 - Coaching/mentoring.
 - Scholarships, bonuses, or increased compensation for degrees/certificates
 - Materials and supplies
 - Priority access for other grants or programs
 - Tax credits (providers or parents)
 - Payment of fees (e.g., licensing, accreditation)
 - Other

Describe:

7.4.6 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency is in the beginning stages of working with numerous outside agencies to educate providers with training and a commitment to promoting safe, stable, nurturing relationships with children and their families. The Lead Agency is also discussing the need to determine the feasibility of strengthening and scaling-up its monitoring of early childhood teacher/provider professional development trainings through the introduction of such resources as a training and workforce registry to further enhance the availability of high quality child care in Tennessee.

7.5 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the needs assessment to systematically review and improve the overall quality of care that infants and toddlers receive, the systems in place or needed to support and enhance the quality of infant and toddler providers, the capacity of the infant and toddler workforce to meet the unique needs of very young children, and the methods in place to increase the proportion of infants and toddlers in higher quality care, including any partnerships or coordination with Early Head Start and IDEA Part C programs. Lead Agencies are required to spend 3 percent of their total CCDF expenditures on activities to improve the supply and quality of their infant and toddler care. This is in addition to the general quality set-aside requirement.

7.5.1 What activities are being implemented by the state/territory to improve the supply (see also section 4) and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers? Check all that apply and describe

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Establishing or expanding high-quality community- or neighborhood-based family and child development centers. These centers can serve as resources to child care providers to improve the quality of early childhood services for infants and toddlers from low-income families and to improve eligible child care providers' capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to infants and toddlers from low-income families

Describe:

- Establishing or expanding the operation of community- or neighborhood-based family child care networks.

Describe:

- Providing training and professional development to enhance child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers

Describe:

Lead Agency partners with the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies to provide training, technical assistance, and coaching to child care agencies and

professionals who care for infants and toddlers to increase the quality of care for this age group. Infant/Toddler professionals are required to attend Tennessee Child Care Professional Training (TN-CCPT) trainings and increase their knowledge through technical assistance, targeted technical assistance, and TN-CCPT trainings.

CCR&R Quality Coaches work in collaboration with the Lead Agency Child Care Assessment program by reviewing and comparing scales scores from the previous year to the current year to identify variables, if any, and meet with the child care agency or professional to provide clarity on the formal and informal notes as well as to discuss areas of improvement. This meeting is called an informal notes meeting and usually consist of a CCR&R Quality Coach, Child Care Assessment supervisor, child care agency and/or education staff typically weeks after the annual assessment. Should more training be required or requested, the CCR&R Quality Coach will develop a quality improvement plan with the child care agency or professional to deliver more interactive and hands-on trainings in order to achieve implementation of best practices within the classroom(s).

- Providing coaching, mentoring, and/or technical assistance on this age group's unique needs from statewide or territory-wide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists

Describe:

- Coordinating with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.).

Describe:

- Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's QRIS, including classroom inventories and assessments

Describe:

Rules of the Department of Human Services - Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies Chapter 1240-04-01 require the following:

For infants/toddlers, a portion of the day shall include floor time for activities that develop physical, social, language and cognitive skills.

Each caregiver shall be responsible for providing consistent care for a specific infant(s)/toddler(s). "Consistent care" includes, but is not limited to: planning and record-keeping for the child, communication, general interaction with and routine care of the child.

In infant/toddler rooms, equipment and space shall be provided for climbing, crawling, and pulling without the restraint of playpens or cribs.

Toys, educational materials, and play materials shall be organized and displayed within children's reach so that they can select and return items independently. Toys and teaching aids that are small or that have small parts that can be inhaled or swallowed shall be inaccessible to infants and toddlers.

Because of the importance of language development and communication skills infants and toddlers shall have language experiences with adults on a daily basis.

The licensing regulations requires the management of the agency shall maintain a system that enables all children in the agency's care to receive a level of supervision of their status and activities that is appropriate to their age and their developmental, physical and mental status to ensure children's health and safety. For children six week of age through nine years of age, an adult must be able to hear the child at all times, must be able to see the child with a quick glance, and must be able to physically respond immediately. When infants are cared for in a center with older children, they shall not be grouped with children older than thirty (30) months of age, and a separate area shall be provided for them. Infant and toddler groups may never exceed the required ratios and group sizes; for a single grouping of 8 infants ages weeks to 15 months, the ratio should be 1:4 (one adult per 4 infants/toddlers). For a single grouping of 10 infant/toddlers ages 6 weeks to 30 months, the ratio should be 1:5.

Staff members are required to be well trained in Early Childhood Development including safe sleep practices, shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma, supervision during high risk activities such as eating and outdoor play. Staff members are also required to have ongoing training for the prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices and prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head

trauma.

- Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's child care licensing regulations

Describe:

- Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and developmental guidelines

Describe:

- Improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy-to-understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care that includes information on infant and toddler language, social-emotional, and both early literacy and numeracy cognitive development

Describe:

- Carrying out other activities determined by the state/territory to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided within the state/territory and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, cognitive and physical development, and/or well-being

Describe:

Infant and Toddler Quality Coaching Growing research continues to reflect that the first three years of life are the most important in terms of brain development. Because so many children under the age of three spend time in child care while their parents work or attend school, it is imperative that the child care workforce be trained to provide high quality care for these children and their families. Child Care Resource and Referral Infant and Toddler Quality Coaches provide training, on-site technical assistance, and coaching to child care professionals in the areas of child development, health and safety, behavior management and early childhood education focusing on those children aged three years and under.

- Coordinating with child care health consultants.

Describe:

The Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches, who are located throughout the state to promote the health and safety practices in early care and education, promote developmental monitoring and

screening, resources and supports for children with disabilities, and information on social and emotional development of children in child care agencies, teachers and families. In addition the lead agency coordinates monthly meetings with the Department of Health to coordinate services, develop policy, and standardized health and safety training.

[Coordinating with mental health consultants.](#)

[Describe:](#)

The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators.

[Other](#)

[Describe:](#)

7.5.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency has significantly increased the number of Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches available through Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Network beginning FY 2019. Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches provide intense technical assistance and coaching for infant and toddler educators. Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) is providing additional coursework, financial assistance, and professional development enhancing support for infant/toddler teachers, including the introduction of the Tennessee Infant-Toddler Credential. The CCR&R Infant-Toddler Quality Coaches will collaborate with TECTA to convene local peer learning groups for infant and toddler educators across the state and assist TECTA through its partnership with the Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance with further strengthening the quality of infant-toddler care in family and group child care settings.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.6 Child Care Resource and Referral

A Lead Agency may expend funds to establish or expand a statewide system of child care resource and referral services (98.53(a)(5)). It can be coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the Lead Agency, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based, or regionally based lead child care resource and referral organization (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii)). This effort may include activities done by local or regional child care and resource referral agencies, as discussed in section 1.7.

7.6.1 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency is continually evaluating indicators and measurements relevant to these activities and may include but are not limited to:

Quantity of Tennessee Child Care Professional Trainings (TN-CCPT) offered

Quantity of Tennessee Child Care Professional Trainings (TN-CCPT) hours delivered.

Quantity of Continuous Quality Improvement Plans developed.

Quantity of families participating Quantity of Technical Assistance (TA) delivered to families.

Quantity of Technical Assistance (TA) delivered to child care agencies.

Quantity of Pre and Post Evaluations completed.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.7 Facilitating Compliance With State Standards

7.7.1 What strategies does your state/territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers' compliance with state/territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety and with state/territory licensing standards? Describe:

The Lead Agency supports compliance with standards by covering the costs of such necessary health and safety components as background checks, fire inspections, environmental inspections, and immunization audits. Additionally, the Lead Agency provides access to free training, technical assistance, coaching, and peer mentoring that enable providers to achieve and maintain compliance through grants and contracts.

Effective September 15, 2019, the Lead Agency is implementing a small grants initiative to provide support and enhancement grants for child care providers to increase capacity, strengthen quality, and/or promote compliance with State licensing standards. The grants may include supports for items such as but not limited to:

- Meeting safety standards or achieving ADA compliance (including health and safety supports such as carbon monoxide/smoke detectors, emergency preparedness kits, etc.);
- Furnishing existing space to increase capacity;
- Materials to support learning and educational enrichment (including educationally rich curriculum, curriculum coaches/consultants), promote wellness/physical activity/good nutrition/family engagement, etc.

Effective Date: 9-15-19

7.7.2 Does the state/territory provide financial assistance to support child care providers in complying with minimum health and safety requirements?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

No

Yes. If yes, which types of providers can access this financial assistance?

Licensed CCDF providers

Licensed non-CCDF providers

License-exempt CCDF providers

Other

Describe:

7.7.3 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency's measurable indicators may include, but are not limited to:

The number of high-quality child care agencies;

Complaints validated;

Legal enforcements;

Delivery of targeted technical assistance, coaching, and peer mentoring; and

Violations.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.8 Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Programs and Services

7.8.1 Describe how the state/territory measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services in both child care centers and family child care homes currently being offered, including any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the state/territory evaluates how those tools positively impact children

The Lead Agency is continually evaluating indicators and measurements relevant to these activities and may include but are not limited to:

To measure the program assessment component of the report card for all licensed approved child care agencies, Lead Agency Child Care Assessment staff observes each child care home or selected classrooms in each child care center for at least 3 hours using the appropriate Environment Rating Scale (ERS) ® to assess its physical environment, basic care, curriculum, schedule, program structure, and the child care professional's conversations and other interactions with the children. The Lead Agency Child Care Assessor then submits the rating score sheet and explanatory notes to University of Tennessee Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (UT SWORPS), where a software system calculates the overall program assessment score from the classroom/home observation scores using the Lead Agency's scoring logic.

The observation score is the score obtained when an assessor uses one of the four rating scales (ITERS-R™, ECERS-R™, SACERS-U™, or FCCERS-R™) to assess a classroom or family/group home. In the case of a family/group home, the Lead Agency Child Care Assessor completes only one observation to determine the score. For a child care center, the number of observations depends on the size of the center and the number of classrooms. At each center, Lead Agency Child Care Assessors observe at least one third of all classrooms (and at least one of each age group served by the center). The overall agency score is based on the average of the classroom observation scores unless the program has a classroom with a score of 2.99 or lower. In that case, the lowest classroom score is used as the overall program assessment score. If a classroom scores below 3.00, the scale authors

consider that classroom to be providing inadequate child care.

UT SWORPS evaluators analyze the results of all report card component scores to identify trends in quality over time and across the state. For the program assessment component, data are analyzed at two levels: the overall program assessment score, also called the “agency score,” for centers is the average of the ERS® scores used in the assessment of the appropriate classrooms and for family/group homes is the equivalent of the FCCERS-R™ scale score; and the observation score, sometimes called the “classroom score,” for centers is the score earned on the ERS® (ITERS-R™, ECERS-R™, and SACERS™) in the selected classrooms of centers; for family/group homes, the observation score is the score earned on the FCCERS-R™. Additionally, evaluators analyzed the overall program assessment results in two ways: group scores and paired scores. The group score analysis included scores for all agencies evaluated during the program year in which their license expired. Since agencies constantly open and close, the compared groups (Year 1 compared to each current year, or the previous year compared to the current) were dissimilar in composition and size. The paired score analysis, used to analyze movement of star levels for individual programs, examined only the agencies evaluated in the group of years which are being reviewed. In the paired score analysis, the compared groups were identical in composition and size. These analyses are shared with administrators at the Lead Agency, CCR&R, and TECTA to inform decisions about targeting technical assistance, program planning, workload distribution and resource allocation.

The Lead Agency is open to exploring online tools and technology resources that can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of providers in the child care system. Other strategies such as shared service models can also be explored as possible resources to strengthen provider capacity.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.8.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the State/Territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in child care centers and family child care homes within the

state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency is in the planning stages of working with numerous external agencies and partners to educate providers with training and a commitment to promoting safe, stable, nurturing relationships with children and their families. The Lead Agency is also discussing the need to determine the feasibility of scaling-up the tracking of early childhood teacher/provider professional development trainings, etc., which in turn will enhance the quality of childcare provided.

The quality of child care in Tennessee has improved since Program Year 1 of the Report Card and Star Quality Program. The statistically significant improvements in quality between Year 1 and Year 15 were dramatic. The proportion of agencies receiving an overall report card rating of 3 stars in Year 15 (72.7%) was more than twice the proportion of agencies receiving a 3-star overall rating in Year 1 (30.3%).

To support the ongoing quality improvement underpinning of the Tennessee Report Card and Star Quality Program, report card component data for all licensed and/or approved child care agencies are reported to the Lead Agency, Child Care Resource and Referral, and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance regularly throughout the year. Timely reporting of individual agency results and statewide and regional trends are used to inform program improvement efforts. These component scores are used to measure progress overtime and identify child care agencies in need of technical assistance.

These findings indicate that many child care agencies in Tennessee understand all aspects of high-quality care. As a result of this knowledge, they are able to offer higher quality, developmentally appropriate child care that provides the children in their care with the tools the children need to succeed in life.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.9 Accreditation Support

7.9.1 Does the state/territory support child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality?

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for both child care centers and family child care homes

Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to child care centers and family child care homes to achieve accreditation

Limited support for accreditation is incorporated within the statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System. Licensed child care centers and homes that are accredited by a recognized entity receive two bonus points when the components scores are calculated.

The Lead Agency will provide accreditation support through Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) for programs involved in National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation self-study in collaboration with the Nashville Area Association for the Education of Young Children (NAAEYC) and Ready, Set, Grow! in Memphis.

TECTA will provide scholarships for child care agencies to enroll in NAEYC accreditation self-study. In addition to any professional development that staff may need in acquiring higher education tuition support, TECTA will provide available staff time to working with programs in attaining and maintaining NAEYC accreditation status.

The new TECTA/Tennessee Family Child Care Alliance (TFCCA) Collaborative will seek to increase the number of TFCCA networks and member programs seeking and maintaining National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) program accreditation. The TECTA/TFCCA Collaborative will also promote and support a professional development CDA® pathway and Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS™) through the mentoring aspect of the collaborative with TECTA support.

- Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for child care centers only. Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to child care centers.

Describe:

- Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for family child care homes only. Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to family child care

Describe:

- Yes, the state/territory has supports operating as a pilot-test or in a few localities but not statewide or territory-wide

- Focused on child care centers

Describe:

- Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

- No, but the state/territory is in the accreditation development phase

- Focused on child care centers

Describe:

- Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

- No, the state/territory has no plans for accreditation development

7.9.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Tennessee Report Card & Star Quality Program Program Year Report examines the relationship between Accreditation and Program Assessment Scores. It also allows us to monitor whether or not the number of accredited agencies is increasing or decreasing each

year.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.10 Program Standards

7.10.1 Describe how the state/territory supports state/territory or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards, including standards for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and/or school-age children

Health. Describe the supports: The Lead Agency works collaboratively with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) to strengthen and increase the availability of and access to health-related programs and services for children, families, and child care agencies. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is implementing a new specialist team of Health, Safety, and Well-Being Quality Coaches who provide direct support for child care agencies on health training and health-related activities.

Mental health. Describe the supports: The Lead Agency works with Tennessee the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN), Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, and CCR&R to promote social emotional and behavioral health supports for children, families, and early childhood educators.

Nutrition. Describe the supports: The Lead Agency works collaboratively with TDH to strengthen and increase the availability of and access to nutrition-related programs and services for children, families, and child care agencies. CCR&R is implementing a new specialist team of Health, Safety, and Well-Being Quality Coaches who provide direct support for child care agencies on nutrition training and nutrition-related activities.

Requirements for participation in the Gold Sneaker Initiative were incorporated in the Rules of the Department of Human Services Report Card and Rated Licensing for Child Care Agencies Rule Chapter 1240-04-07.

Gold Sneaker facilities will:

Offer children at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day;

Limit television and video viewing to 60 minutes per day of educational programs;

Not allow children to remain sedentary or passive for more than 60 minutes continuously;

Ensure physical activity is a positive experience;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including breastfeeding;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including adequate time for meal consumption;

Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including appropriate portion sizes;

Promote a positive attitude toward food; and

Maintain a tobacco free campus.

Physical activity. Describe the supports: Requirements for participation in the Gold Sneaker Initiative were incorporated in the Rules of the Department of Human Services Report Card and Rated Licensing for Child Care Agencies Rule Chapter 1240-04-07.

Gold Sneaker facilities will:

Offer children at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day;

Limit television and video viewing to 60 minutes per day of educational programs;

Not allow children to remain sedentary or passive for more than 60 minutes continuously;

Ensure physical activity is a positive experience;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including breastfeeding;

Ensure appropriate feeding patterns, including adequate time for meal consumption;

Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including appropriate portion sizes;

Promote a positive attitude toward food; and

Maintain a tobacco free campus.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.10.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency is continually evaluating indicators and measurements relevant to these activities that may include but are not limited to: Scoring components of QRIS; Professional development delivered to early care and educators; Child care agency participation in the Gold Sneaker initiative; Delivered trainings, technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.11 Early Learning and Development Guidelines and Other Quality Improvement Activities

7.11.1 If quality funds are used to develop, maintain, or implement early learning and development guidelines, describe the measureable indicators that will be used to evaluate the state/territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services and the data on the extent to which the state/territory has met these measures (98.53(f)(3)).

The lead agency funds the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS) elearning system through a contract with the Tennessee State University, Center of Excellence for Learning Sciences. The training has been designed to provide an introduction to and exploration of the TN-ELDS to meet the TN-ELDS training requirements within the licensing rules and the Quality Rating and Improvement System. Analysis of classroom assement scores is the measurable indicator of progress in improving quality based upon knowledge of the Developmental Standards.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

7.11.2 List and describe any other activities that the state/territory provides to improve the quality of child care services for infants and toddlers, preschool-aged, and school-aged children, which may include consumer and provider education activities, and also describe the measureable indicators of progress for each activity relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. Describe:

The Lead Agency is evaluating and planning for health and safety professional development, financial assistance supporting early care and education, and other shared services models. The Lead Agency is also evaluating and assessing its current Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

The Lead Agency is distributing financial assistance/grants to impacted child care agencies, including those that closed and those that have continued operations. The Lead Agency is using CARES Act funds and/or quality dollars to provide immediate assistance to impacted

families/providers, even if they are not on CCDF. Through a waiver, the Lead Agency has relief from the requirement to utilize 70% of funds on direct services for FY2020, as per waiver approval letter dated June 8, 2020. This provision is effective from March 3, 2020 until the end of FY2020. This gives the Lead Agency more flexibility to respond to provider and family needs and allows an option if more resources are needed to open or expand child care capacity.

Effective Date: 03/03/2020

8 Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability

Program integrity and accountability activities are integral to the effective administration of the CCDF program. Lead Agencies are required to describe in their Plan effective internal controls that ensure integrity and accountability while maintaining the continuity of services (98.16(cc)). These accountability measures should address reducing fraud, waste, and abuse, including program violations and administrative errors.

This section includes topics on internal controls to ensure integrity and accountability and processes in place to investigate and recover fraudulent payments and to impose sanctions on clients or providers in response to fraud. Respondents should consider how fiscal controls, program integrity and accountability apply to:

- Memorandums of understanding within the Lead Agency's various divisions that administer or carry out the various aspects of CCDF
- MOU's, grants, or contracts to other state agencies that administer or carry out various aspects of CCDF
- Grants or contracts to other organizations that administer or carry out various aspects of CCDF such as professional development and family engagement activities
- Internal processes for conducting child care provider subsidy

8.1 Internal Controls and Accountability Measures To Help Ensure Program Integrity

8.1.1 Check and describe how the Lead Agency ensures that all its staff members and any staff members in other agencies who administer the CCDF program through MOUs, grants and contracts are informed and trained regarding program requirements and integrity. Check all that apply:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Train on policy manual

Describe:

Train on policy change notices

Describe:

All Lead Agency staff are trained annually and periodically as new policies or procedures are implemented to ensure program integrity and program controls.

Ongoing monitoring and assessment of policy implementation

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of Inspector General Audit Services Division conducts monitoring reviews of a sample child care providers and vendors serving as the lead agency's principal quality partners.

Other

Describe:

8.1.2 Lead Agencies must ensure the integrity of the use of funds through sound fiscal management and must ensure that financial practices are in place (98.68 (a)(1)). Describe the processes in place for the Lead Agency to ensure sound fiscal management practices for all expenditures of CCDF funds. Check all that apply:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Verifying and processing billing records to ensure timely payments to providers

Describe:

The Lead Agency will be developing a payment schedule in the issuance of funds to ensure proper and consistent billing cycles .

- Fiscal oversight of grants and contracts

Describe:

The Lead Agency fiscal and child care services work in collaboration to provide oversight to grants and contracts.

- Tracking systems to ensure reasonable and allowable costs

Describe:

The Lead Agency fiscal and child care services program has developed tracking systems to ensure expenditures are earmarked for allowable costs.

- Other

Describe:

8.1.3 Check and describe the processes that the Lead Agency will use to identify risk in their CCDF program. Check all that apply:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Conduct a risk assessment of policies and procedures

Describe:

The Lead Agency conducts an annual risk assessment of the CCDF Program.

- Establish checks and balances to ensure program integrity

Describe:

- Use supervisory reviews to ensure accuracy in eligibility determination

Describe:

Quality Assurance eligibility reviews of cases are performed by the Quality Improvement

and Strategic Solution (QISS) Division. Monthly sampled results are disseminated to Child Care Certificate Program Management for review.

Other

Describe:

8.1.4 Lead Agencies conduct a wide variety of activities to fight fraud and ensure program integrity. Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud and other program violations to ensure program integrity. Program violations can include both intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations, as defined by the Lead Agency. These violations and errors, identified through the error-rate review process may result in payment or nonpayment (administrative) errors and may or may not be the result of fraud, based on the Lead Agency definition. Check and describe any activities that the Lead Agency conducts to ensure program integrity.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent fraud or intentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of fraud and intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS)).

Describe

Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Agency daily attendance sign-in documents are compared with the the Electronic Attendance Verification documents submitted by the agency to identify unintentional

errors or potential fraud.

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Audit provider records.

Describe:

The DHS Audit Services Division conducts audit of provider based on periodic risk assessments, recommendations from Program Management, and/or complaints. The numbers vary from one year to another due to the size of and number of providers and available resources. Audit Services performs onsite and/or desk reviews of provider's record. Audit Services also interviews appropriate staff to evaluate internal controls and the risk of fraud, waste or abuse.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Other

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of Inspector General investigates fraud and intentional program violations. The recovery of funds associated with fraud or intentional program violations is joint effort between the lead agencies' CCDF program, fiscal and legal staff in coordination with the State of Tennessee Attorney General's Office.

b) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Describe:

Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Agency daily attendance sign-in documents are compared with the the Electronic Attendance Verification documents submitted by the agency to identify unintentional errors or potential fraud.

Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Audit provider records.

Describe:

The DHS Audit Services Division conducts audits of providers based on periodic risk assessments, recommendations from Program Management, and/or complaints. The numbers vary from one year to another due to the size of and number of providers and available resources. Audit Services performs onsite and/or desk reviews of provider's record. Audit Services also interviews appropriate staff to evaluate internal controls and the risk of fraud, waste or abuse.

Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Other

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of Inspector General investigates fraud and intentional program violations. The recovery of funds associated with fraud or intentional program violations is joint effort between the lead agencies' CCDF program, fiscal and legal staff in coordination with the State of Tennessee Attorney General's Office.

c) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent agency errors. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and

prevention of agency errors.

- Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Describe:

- Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

- Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

- Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

- Audit provider records.

Describe:

- Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

- Other

Describe:

Administrative errors are detected through the ACF-404 Error review conducted by the Lead Agency's QISS Division in accordance with its ACF approved sample plan and reporting requirements.

8.1.5 The Lead Agency is required to identify and recover misspent funds as a result of fraud, and it has the option to recover any misspent funds as a result of errors.

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency uses to investigate and recover

improper payments due to fraud. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payment due to fraud or intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

Amounts > \$100

- Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

- Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

In some instances, fiscal services may establish a repayment plan that allows the agency to repay funds over a designated period of time.

- Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

If an agency continues to receive payments through their participation in the Child Care Certificate program, deducting a designated amount/percentage from each pay period may be an option in some instances that allows the lead agency to recoup the money while lessening the financial impact on the day to day operations of the agency.

- Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

- Recover through other means.

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of General Counsel refers uncollectible improper payments to the state Attorney General Office for collection efforts.

- Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

- Other

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of Inspector General (OIG) determines the appropriateness of engaging the ACFOIG and/or Tennessee Office of the Comptroller in cases of fraud, waste, or abuse.

b) Check any activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

Amounts > \$100

- Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

- Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

In some instances, fiscal services may establish a repayment plan that allows the agency to repay funds over a designated period of time.

- Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

If an agency continues to receive payments through their participation in the Child Care Certificate program, deducting a designated amount/percentage from each pay period may be an option in some instances that allows the lead agency to recoup the money while lessening the financial impact on the day to day operations of the

agency.

Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

Recover through other means.

Describe:

Lead Agency's Office of General Counsel refers uncollectible improper payments to the state Attorney General Office for collection efforts.

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

Other

Describe:

The Lead Agency's Office of Inspector General monitors for unintentional program violations. The recovery of funds is joint effort between the Lead Agencies' CCDF program, fiscal and legal staff in coordination with the State of Tennessee Attorney General's Office.

c) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to agency errors. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to administrative errors. Include a description of the results of such activity.

Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

Amounts > \$100

Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

Recover through repayment plans.

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

In some instances, fiscal services may establish a repayment plan that allows the agency to repay funds over a designated period of time.

Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

If an agency continues to receive payments through their participation in the Child Care Certificate program, deducting a designated amount/percentage from each pay period may be an option in some instances that allows the lead agency to recoup the money while lessening the financial impact on the day to day operations of the agency.

Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

Recover through other means.

Describe:

Lead Agency's Office of General Counsel refers uncollectible improper payments to the state Attorney General Office for collection efforts.

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

Other

Describe:

8.1.6 What type of sanction will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations? Check and describe all that apply:

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

- Disqualify the client. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified.

Describe:

Clients appeal through the administrative hearing process with the lead agency's Division of Appeals and Hearings.

- Disqualify the provider. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified.

Describe:

The Lead Agency CCDF Program Management would terminate the provider contract. The Lead Agency decision is final and is not appealable.

- Prosecute criminally.

Describe:

In egregious or incidents of suspected criminal activity or fraud, referrals to appropriate federal or state law enforcement agencies for prosecution may be warranted.

- Other.

Describe:

Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form

Lead Agencies may apply for a temporary waiver for certain background check requirements if milestone prerequisites have been fully implemented. These waivers will be considered "transitional and legislative waivers" to provide transitional relief from conflicting or duplicative requirements preventing implementation, or an extended period of time in order for the state/territory legislature to enact legislation to implement the provisions (98.19(b)(1)) These waivers are limited to a one-year period and may be extended for at most one additional year from the date of initial approval.

Approval of these waiver requests is subject to and contingent on OCC review and approval of responses in section 5 questions 5.4.1 -- 5.4.4 to confirm that the milestones are met. If milestone prerequisites are not met, the waiver request will not be approved. Approved waivers would begin October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. If approved, States and Territories

will have the option to renew these waivers for one additional year as long as progress is demonstrated during the initial waiver period. Separate guidance will be issued later on the timeline and criteria for requesting the waiver renewal.

Overview of Background Check Implementation deadlines

Original deadline for implementation (658H(j)(1) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2017

Initial one-year extension deadline (658H(j)(2) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2018

One-year waiver deadline (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(i)): September 30, 2019

Waiver deadline one-year renewal (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(ii)): September 30, 2020

Waiver approval for new (prospective) staff, existing staff or staff hired provisionally until background checks are completed, are subject to and contingent upon the OCC review and approval of responses to 5.4.9 that demonstrate that the state/territory requires: (1) the provider to submit the background check request before the staff person begins working; and (2) pending the results of the background check, the staff person must be supervised at all times by an individual who has completed the background check.

To submit a background check waiver request, complete the form below.

Check and describe each background check provision for which the Lead Agency is requesting a time-limited waiver extension.

Appendix A.7: Interstate criminal registry or repository check for new or prospective staff. (See related question at 5.4.6 (a))

Describe the provision from which the state/territory seeks relief.

The lead agency seeks relief from the requirement to complete the interstate criminal registry check for new or prospective staff. Currently, there is no standardized means of conducting these checks and the process varies greatly from state to state. In addition, the existing processes within states are constantly changing as states attempt to come into compliance with CCDBG requirements. This constant change in processes makes it very difficult to effectively set up procedures and system supports that match the ever-changing landscape. The lead agency remains in contact with our federal technical

assistance partners and other state partners as we determine the best course of actions for full compliance.

[Describe how a waiver of the provision will, by itself, improve the delivery of child care services for children](#)

A waiver of the provision will allow the lead agency needed time to develop effective procedures and system supports for conducting these checks without the need to invest an undue amount of time in manual processes that could take staff energy away from other necessary activities and increases the likelihood of user error.

[Certify and describe how the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.](#)

The health, safety and well-being of children served will not be compromised as a result of the waiver because the lead agency will continue to conduct a comprehensive background check that includes all the milestone elements, the NSOR, and the interstate child abuse and neglect registry. During the coming months, the lead agency will make attempts to check the inter-state criminal registry throughout the waiver period as it develops and refines the process procedures.

Appendix A.8: Interstate criminal registry or repository check for existing staff. (See related question at 5.4.6 (b))

[Describe the provision from which the state/territory seeks relief.](#)

The lead agency seeks relief from the requirement to complete the interstate criminal registry check for new or prospective staff. Currently, there is no standardized means of conducting these checks and the process varies greatly from state to state. In addition, the existing processes within states are constantly changing as states attempt to come into compliance with CCDBG requirements. This constant change in processes makes it very difficult to effectively set up procedures and system supports that match the ever-changing landscape.


[Describe how a waiver of the provision will, by itself, improve the delivery of child care services for children](#)

A waiver of the provision will allow the lead agency needed time to develop effective procedures and system supports for conducting these checks without the need to invest an undue amount of time in manual processes that could take staff energy away from

other necessary activities and increases the likelihood of user error.

[Certify and describe how the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.](#)

The health, safety and well-being of children served will not be compromised as a result of the waiver because the lead agency will continue to conduct a comprehensive background check that includes all the milestone elements, the NSOR, and the interstate child abuse and neglect registry. During the coming months, the lead agency will make attempts to check the inter-state criminal registry throughout the waiver period as it develops and refines the process procedures.

 **Appendix A.9: Interstate sex offender registry or repository check for new or prospective staff. (See related question at 5.4.7 (a))**

[Describe the provision from which the state/territory seeks relief.](#)


The lead agency seeks relief from the requirement to complete the interstate sex offender registry check for new or prospective staff. We are currently unaware of any automated method for checking this information. Therefore, a manual check of the state sex offender registry in each state is the only known option for completing these checks at this time.

[Describe how a waiver of the provision will, by itself, improve the delivery of child care services for children](#)

A waiver of the provision will allow the lead agency needed time to explore automated procedures and system supports for conducting these checks that minimize the impact on staff resources and reduces the probability of user error associated with a manual process.

[Certify and describe how the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.](#)

The health, safety and well-being of children served will not be compromised as a result of the waiver because the lead agency will continue to conduct a comprehensive background check that includes all the milestone elements, the NSOR, and the interstate child abuse and neglect registry. During the coming months, the lead agency will continue to make attempts to check the interstate sex offender registry manually throughout the waiver period as it develops and refines the process procedures.

 **Appendix A.10: Interstate sex offender registry or repository check for existing staff. (See related question at 5.4.7 (b))**

Describe the provision from which the state/territory seeks relief.

The lead agency seeks relief from the requirement to complete the interstate sex offender registry check for new or prospective staff. We are not aware of any automated method for checking this information. Therefore, a manual check of the state sex offender registry in each state is the only known option for completing these checks at this time.

Describe how a waiver of the provision will, by itself, improve the delivery of child care services for children

A waiver of the provision will allow the lead agency needed time to explore automated procedures and system supports for conducting these checks that minimize the impact on staff resources and reduces the probability of user error associated with a manual process.

Certify and describe how the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received through CCDF will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.

The health, safety and well-being of children served will not be compromised as a result of the waiver because the lead agency will continue to conduct a comprehensive background check that includes all the milestone elements, the NSOR, and the interstate child abuse and neglect registry. During the coming months, the lead agency will continue to make attempts to check the interstate sex offender registry manually throughout the waiver period as it develops and refines the process procedures.