

Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization

Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization Highlights

The CCDBG is administered by Office of Child Care in the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of the Block Grant is to provide financial assistance to low-income families to access child care and to improve the quality, supply and availability of child care.

Reauthorization of the CCDBG was passed on November 19, 2014 and signed into law by President Obama. In general, the changes to federal law serve to improve health and safety of child care, improve the quality of child care, facilitate access to child care, and promote stable child care arrangements.

Minnesota already has in place a number of the new federal requirements, but there are several that are new for Minnesota. DHS is in the early stages of planning for the changes, and stakeholders will be an important part of planning for the changes.

Highlights of the new requirements of interest to counties and child care providers include:

Health and Safety Requirements for Child Care Providers

- Annual licensing inspections for child care centers and family child care. Currently inspections occur every two years.
- Annual inspection requirement for legally non-licensed providers. Currently no inspections are required.
- Expanded background study requirements, to include fingerprint based background studies. The current background study changes underway will cover a significant portion of the federal changes.
- Enhanced health and safety requirements, including prevention of infectious diseases; prevention of sudden unexpected infant death; medication administration; prevention and response to allergic reactions; building and physical premise safety; prevention of abusive head trauma; emergency preparedness and response planning; handling of hazardous materials and bio-contaminants; precautions in transporting children; first aid and CPR. Many of these are already addressed in current licensing requirements, and those that are not will need to be added.
- Orientation and ongoing training on the above health and safety requirements. Many of the training topics are already required, and those that are not will need to be added.
- Licensing monitoring and inspection reports, as well as the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated maltreatment, must be made available by electronic means, in a consumer-friendly and easily accessible format. Most of this information is already available on DHS Licensing Information Lookup for child care centers, but not for family child care.
- Requirement for a statewide child care disaster plan for coordination of activities and collaboration among state agencies and others to plan for an emergency or disaster. Licensed programs are required to address a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility) as part of their emergency preparedness and response planning.
- Qualification and training requirements for licensors in related health and safety requirements, and in all aspects of licensing requirements. These requirements are more specific than what Minnesota law currently requires for licensors.

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Family-Friendly Eligibility Policies – Child Care Assistance Program

- 12 month redetermination period. Currently 6 month redetermination period.
- 12 month eligibility period regardless of changes in income (as long as income does not exceed 85% of State Median Income) or temporary change in work, training or education activities. Currently eligibility ends following a 15 day notice if income exceeds 67% of State Median Income. Currently eligibility may end or the amount of assistance may be reduced depending on the type of change in work, training or education activity.
- Requires a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased at the time of redetermination, but remains below 85% of State Median Income. Currently eligibility ends following a 15 day notice if income exceeds 67% of State Median Income.
- When a parent's work, training or education activity ends during 12 month eligibility period, states have the option to continue assistance or to end assistance following a three month job-search period. Currently families are allowed up to 240 hours of job search per year (families with an approved Employment Plan are not subject to this limit), eligibility ends following a 15 day notice if parent is not participating in an allowed activity. If states do not choose this option, they must continue assistance until the end of the 12 month eligibility period.
- States are encouraged to minimize reporting requirements between redeterminations. Currently families are required to report many changes including changes in income, activity, and household composition.
- Requires states to establish payment policies that reflect generally accepted payment practices for child care providers. Currently payment is made for holidays and up to 25 absent days per year.
- Establishes an asset limit of \$1 million. Currently there is no asset limit.
- Requires expedited enrollment of homeless children prior to receiving required documentation. Currently there is no expedited enrollment process.
- Requires States to conduct a market rate survey or use alternative methodology, and describe how payment rates are established, taking into account the cost of providing higher quality services. Currently a market rate survey is conducted and payment rates are determined by Minnesota statute.