

# Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan For Alaska FFY 2022-2024

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## 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. Respondents are asked to identify how match and maintenance-of-effort (MOE) funds are used. Lead Agencies explain their coordination with child care resource and referral (CCR&R) systems and describe their efforts on their disaster preparedness and response plans to support continuity of operations in response to emergencies.

### 1.1 CCDF Leadership

The Governor of a state or territory must designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency) or establish a joint interagency 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) and 98.16 (a)). 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) and 98.16(a)).

a) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Office Information:

Name of Lead Agency: State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Assistance, Child Care Program Office

Street Address: 3601 C Street, Suite 140

City: Anchorage

State: Alaska

ZIP Code: 99503

Web Address for Lead Agency: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>

b) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Official Contact Information:

Lead Agency Official First Name: Adam

Lead Agency Official Last Name: Crum

Title: Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner

Phone Number: (907) 269-7800

Email Address: [adam.crum@alaska.gov](mailto:adam.crum@alaska.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.

a) CCDF Administrator Contact Information:

CCDF Administrator First Name: Christina

CCDF Administrator Last Name: Hulquist

Title of the CCDF Administrator: Program Coordinator II

Phone Number: 907419-7565

Email Address: christina.hulquist@alaska.gov

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

CCDF Co-Administrator First Name: N/A

CCDF Co-Administrator Last Name: N/A

Title of the CCDF Co-Administrator: N/A

Description of the Role of the Co-Administrator: N/A

Phone Number: N/A

Email Address: N/A

## 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 the Lead Agency retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program (658D(b) and 98.16 (d)(1)). 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.**

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

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

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

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

C. Other.

Describe:

ii. Sliding-fee scale is set by the:

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

If checked, identify the entity and describe the sliding fee scale policies the local entity(ies) can set.

C. Other.

Describe:

iii. Payment rates and payment policies are set by the:

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

If checked, identify the entity and describe the payment rates and payment policies the local entity(ies) can set.

C. Other.

Describe:

iv. Licensing standards and processes are set by the:

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of licensing standards and processes the local entity(ies) can set.

C. Other.

Describe:

v. Standards and monitoring processes for license-exempt providers are set by the:

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

If checked, identify the entity and describe the type of standards and monitoring processes for license-exempt providers the local entity(ies) can set.

C. Other.

Describe:

vi. Quality improvement activities, including QRIS are set by the:

A. State or territory

Identify the entity:

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

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

C. Other.

Describe:

vii. Other. List and describe any other program rules and policies that are set at a level other than the state or territory level:

**1.2.2 The Lead Agency has broad authority to operate (i.e., implement activities) through other agencies, as long as it retains overall responsibility. Complete the table below to identify which entity(ies) implements or performs CCDF services.**

a. Check the box(es) to indicate which entity(ies) implement or perform CCDF services.

Who conducts eligibility determinations?

CCDF Lead Agency

TANF agency

Local government agencies

CCR&R

Community-based organizations

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

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Local government agencies
- CCR&R
- Community-based organizations

Who issues payments?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Local government agencies
- CCR&R
- Community-based organizations

Who monitors licensed providers?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Local government agencies
- CCR&R
- Community-based organizations

Who monitors license-exempt providers?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Local government agencies
- CCR&R
- Community-based organizations

Who operates the quality improvement activities?

- CCDF Lead Agency
- TANF agency
- Local government agencies
- CCR&R
- Community-based organizations

b. Other. List and describe any other state or territory agencies or partners that implement or perform CCDF services and identify their responsibilities.

**1.2.3 Describe the processes the Lead Agency uses to oversee and monitor CCDF administration and implementation responsibilities performed by other agencies as reported above in 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 (98.16(b)). In the description include:**

Written agreements. 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 the elements below (98.11(a)(3)).

--Tasks to be performed

--Schedule for completing tasks

--Budget which itemizes categorical expenditures in accordance with CCDF requirements

--Monitoring and auditing procedures

--Indicators or measures to assess performance of those agencies

Any other processes to oversee and monitor other agencies.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) monitors CCDF administrative and implementation responsibilities by other agencies through written agreements such as grant agreements and Reimbursable Service Agreements (RSA), and through monitoring and audit processes. CCPO has the following RSA's: University of Alaska- scholarship funds Early Childhood Education; Department IT Support- Integrated Child Care Information System interface and upgrades; University of Alaska- Child Care Market Rate Survey; Health Care Services- Child Care Background Checks; Legal- Child Care licensing and assistance.

The CCPO administers the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) through grants to community-based organizations and the child care resource and referral network, collectively referred to as CCAP grantees or designees. The CCPO monitors CCAP grantees for implementation of program policies and procedures through monthly file reviews, regular and ongoing meetings, quarterly reporting, and annual on-site evaluation. CCAP grantees are monitored for timeliness and accuracy using the following targets:



1. Family eligibility determinations are accurate.

Target: 95% or more of family eligibility determinations are accurate.

2. Level of care authorized is accurate.

Target: 95% or more of child care authorizations are accurate.

3. Family eligibility determinations and child care authorizations are timely.

Target: 95% or more of family eligibility determinations are processed and child care authorizations are issued timely.

4. Provider eligibility determinations are accurate.

Target: 95% or more of provider eligibility determinations are accurate.

5. Provider eligibility determinations are timely.

Target: 95% or more of provider eligibility determinations are timely.

6. Eligibility determinations are documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System and appropriate notices are issued accurately.

Target: 95% or more of cases have case notes entered following CCAP policy and appropriate notices issued accurately.

7. Provider payment request verifications are processed accurately.

Target: 95% or more of billing report forms are processed for payment accurately.

8. Provider payment request verifications are processed for payment timely.

Target: 95% or more of billing report forms are processed for payment timely.

The CCPO also administers the CCAP via a Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with another state agency (division within the CCPO). Monitoring includes review and approval of RSA billing submissions by the CCPO, data collection and reporting for submission of the federal ACF 801 report monthly, and annual review and approval between the CCPO and the other state agency of the RSA for the new fiscal year. Indicators or measures to assess performance are established and monitored by the other state agency. Efforts between the CCPO and other state agency are in progress to increase alignment and consistency of administration of the CCAP as well as to streamline data collection and reporting.

The CCPO, via a grant agreement, provides support to Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Network. The CCPO monitors the grantee for implementation of CCR&R activities, including the System for Early Education Development (SEED), Alaska's early childhood professional development system, and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS). Monitoring includes regular and

ongoing meetings, quarterly reporting, and annual evaluation in coordination with the Division of Public Assistance Contracted Services Quality Assurance Unit. The programs goals and performance measures for this grant are outlined below.

**Families: Goal 1:** Increased family knowledge of the characteristics of high-quality child care.

**Performance measure:** Family survey results indicate an increased knowledge of characteristics of high-quality child care.

**Target:** 1-2% increase each year until 65% or more of family survey respondents indicate increased knowledge of the characteristics of quality. After 65% reassess maximum threshold.

**Goal 2:** Market and provide child care referral services statewide.

**Performance measure:** As measured by the number of child care referrals.

**Target:** Provide a minimum of 10,000 referrals each year.

**Child Care Providers: Goal 1:** Advance the knowledge in early care and learning of staff working in licensed and regulated child care facilities.

**Performance measure:** Number and percent of early educators who reported an increase in their knowledge after receiving training.

**Target:** 1-2% increase each year until 75% of survey respondents indicated an increase in their knowledge. After 75% is achieved, reassess maximum threshold possible.

**Communities: Goal 1:** Engaging, educating, and advocating with entities and organizations about the importance of high-quality child care, its impact on the economy and how they can make a difference.

**Performance measure:** Measured by collaboration and outreach efforts.

**Target:** A minimum of 5 collaboration and outreach efforts per year.

**Early Care and Learning System: Goal 1:** Increase the quality of child care facilities in Alaska.

**Performance measure:** Number and percent of child care facilities advancing annually to the next level of Learn & Grow.

**Target:** 5% or more of child care facilities participating in Learn & Grow advance to the next level annually.

**Goal 2:** Advance the professional development of staff working in licensed and regulated child care facilities.

**Performance measure:** Number and percent of staff working in a licensed or regulated child care facility advance on the System for Early Education Development (SEED) Career Ladder.

**Target:** 10% or more of participants advance on the SEED Career Ladder annually.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), via a grant agreement with a local government agency, administers Child Care Licensing services in the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). Child Care Licensing services outside the MOA and for the remainder of the state are administered by the CCPO. The CCPO monitors the grantee for implementation of program policies and procedures through monthly file reviews, regular and ongoing meetings, quarterly reporting, and annual on-site evaluation. The program goals and indicators for this grant include alignment of the MOA code with CCPO regulations, implementation of the licensing regulations in the MOA, and development of licensing policies and procedures.

**1.2.4 Upon request, and to the extent practicable and appropriate, Lead Agencies must ensure 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 to other public agencies. This includes public agencies in other states, for their use in administering child care or related programs (98.15(a)(11)).**

**Assure by describing how the Lead Agency makes child care information systems systems (e.g., subsidy, registry, and QRIS systems) available to public agencies in other states.**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) uses the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) to administer benefits, issue payments, issue child care licenses, and as an ongoing tool for staff conducting family and provider eligibility determinations and monitoring compliance of child care facilities. The CCPO makes ICCIS available to entities implementing or performing CCDF services. To date, Alaska has not received a request from a public agency in another state for any code or software for ICCIS or information technology. In the event a request is received, the request will be evaluated by the CCPO and fulfilled to the extent practicable and appropriate. Thread, Alaska's Resource and Referral Agency, houses and manages the System for Early Education Development (SEED)

professional development registry, as well as Learn & Grow, Alaska's QRIS. Thread makes both information systems available to entities implementing or performing CCDF services. To date, Alaska has not received a request from a public agency in another state for any code or software for SEED or Learn & Grow, or information technology. In the event a request is received, the request will be evaluated by the CCPO and fulfilled to the extent practicable and appropriate.

**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)).**

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

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. Additionally, the CCPO complies with the Division of Public Assistance Administrative Procedures Manual which details out Confidentiality in 100-3 and can be located at: <http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/manuals/admin/apm.htm>

100-3 CONFIDENTIALITY All people served by the division are in particular need of the protection of privacy and confidentiality: Against the identification of the individual as belonging to a special group segregated on the basis of their need for public assistance; Against exploitation for commercial, personal, or political purposes; and Against making information available as a basis for prosecution and other proceedings except in connection with the enforcement of public assistance program laws. Refer to [Addendum 100-A](#) and [Addendum 100-B](#) in this manual for the Alaska statutes on confidentiality and misuse of public assistance records, and regulations on safeguarding and disclosure of client information.

100-3 A. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION It is against the law to use or disclose information obtained from households unless it is to: Persons authorized by a client-signed Release of Information form; Persons directly connected with the administration of the

programs; Persons directly connected with the enforcement of the provisions of the programs; or Persons directly connected with other federal or federally funded assistance programs such as Supplemental Security Income, Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, or the School Lunch Program. Staff normally does not release information or material from any case record to anyone or any agency without first obtaining a written consent from the client. This includes local and state police departments, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services. There are exceptions to releasing information without the client's consent. Refer to Administrative Procedures Manual Sections [100-3D](#), [100-3E](#), [100-3F](#), and [100-3G](#) for exceptions to releasing information without the client's consent. In addition, DPA staff may release information to the Department's Office of Children's Services and to Adult Protective Services if they report suspected abuse or neglect of a child or adult. See [section 100-9](#) in this manual.

Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4010-1 allows for a parent or provider to have access to information specific to their own case and to sign a release of information allowing the information to be released to a requestor. Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4010-4 requires information requested by an individual not associated with the case be submitted in writing and states no information may be released without the review of the request and approval from the Division of Public Assistance Director's Office and the Department of Law.

### [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](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 efforts in the development of the CCDF Plan. Note: Lead Agencies must describe in a - c. consultation efforts with required partners listed in Rule and Statute. ACF recognizes that there is great value in consulting with other entities and has provided element d. for Lead Agencies to identify consultation efforts with other agencies or organizations.**

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

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) consulted with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Child Care Licensing Program, grantee of the CCPO, regarding sections 2, and 5-7 of the plan, through regular and ongoing meetings with the grantee or via committee meetings. These meetings included but were not limited to: monthly meetings with the CCPO's Child Care Licensing Program Manager regarding grant expectations and compliance, development of licensing policies and procedures, and alignment of the MOA Code with CCPO regulations; discussions about on-line results of monitoring inspections; quarterly System for Early Education Development (SEED) meetings focused on professional development of the early care and learning workforce; and sub-committee meetings pertinent to the development and implementation of Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System. Representatives of general purpose local governments, including the MOA, also had the opportunity to provide input into the development of the CCDF Plan through more formal venues such as the public

comment process through the Alaska Online Public Notice System or by participating in the public hearing process.

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

The Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC) is responsible for coordination of state systems in order to provide efficient, effective, and accessible services for young children. AECCC includes representatives from both the public and private sectors and members generally meet quarterly. The CCDF State Child Care Administrator and Child Care Program Office (CCPO) staff are members of the council. Many of the recommendations of the AECCC align with and focus on topic areas of the CCDF Plan. AECCC members receive ongoing updates regarding the CCDF plan during quarterly meetings, with a presentation given specifically to the council at least once annually. For development of this CCDF plan, the CCPO developed a pre-meeting survey to identify what components of the CCDF plan council members wanted to dive deeper into during our feedback session. On March 25th, 2021 the CCPO led a feedback session with the council, sharing information and collecting input, including challenges, opportunities, and edits to the draft plan. Information gathered from these ongoing meetings and through discussion with AECCC members is taken into consideration by the State Administrator for purposes of program planning and development of/revisions to policies and procedures. Council members were notified during the March 25th, 2021 meeting the CCDF Plan would soon be posted for public comment and were encouraged to review the plan and provide input through electronic responses or participating in the public hearing process.

**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.**

Representatives from American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) CCDF Tribal Organizations were invited to provide input on this draft CCDF Plan through ongoing collaborative efforts and more formal venues of electronic responses. In February 2021 the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) surveyed the tribal contacts for preference of engagement and opportunity to participate in the development of the CCDF Plan. Tribes were contacted in May 2021 through an emailed broadcast with access to the draft CCDF Plan and invited

to participate in the public hearing process. The Child Care Program Office recognizes additional formal, structured consultation with Alaska AIAN CCDF Tribal Organizations is needed and plans are in progress to increase collaboration and coordination efforts through the 2022-2024 CCDF plan cycle.

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

For development of this CCDF plan, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) developed a pre-meeting survey administered to the Alaska Head Start Association to identify what components of the CCDF plan members wanted to dive deeper into during our feedback session. During the Head Start Association's March 2021 and April 2021, the CCPO led feedback sessions with the council, sharing information and collecting input, including challenges, opportunities, and edits to the draft plan.

**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:

a) Date of the public hearing. May 27, 2021 and July 26, 2021

Reminder: Must be no earlier than January 1, 2021, which is 9 months prior to the October 1, 2021, 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. May 17, 2021 and July 6, 2021.

*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.

The public was noticed through the Alaska Online Public Notice System at <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=190933>. Providers and other child care stakeholders were also noticed on, May 10, 2021, via a broadcast to the providers email address. A second public comment period was held in July, 2021.

The public was noticed through the Alaska Online Public Notice System at <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=190933>. Providers and other child care stakeholders were also noticed on, July 6, 2021, via a broadcast to the providers email address

d) Hearing site or method, including how geographic regions of the state or territory were addressed. The public hearing for plan cycle FFY2022-2024 was held virtually on May 27, 2021 and on July 26, 2021. Holding a virtual meeting allows for all stakeholders and geographic locations to participate equally.

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.)

The Plan was posted online through the Alaska Online Public Notice System, copies of the draft Plan were sent to all stakeholders via email broadcast, and the draft Plan was also available on the Child Care Program Office's website in a PDF document.

f) How was the information provided by the public taken into consideration regarding the provision of child care services under this Plan? Careful consideration was given to each comment or recommendation for possible inclusion into the plan. Those comments or recommendations requiring a change of regulation for either Child Care Licensing or the Child Care Assistance Program will again be evaluated for possible inclusion in a future regulation package.

**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>)**

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.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/regs.aspx>

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:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) worked with the Alaska System for Education Development (SEED) Steering Committee in February 2021 to inform the development of the CCDF Plan. During the months of January 2021-March 2021, The CCPO worked with the Executive Committee and stakeholders of Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System, on developing a new 5-year Strategic Plan as well as the quality sections of the CCDF Plan.

Working with child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office grants out to thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, and regularly works with the thread Network, including but not limited to: regular and consistent meetings with the CEO; serving on multiple committees together both internally and with stakeholders and partners; and partnership meetings between both organizations. In March 2021, the CCPO and thread leadership met specifically to collect input into the CCDF plan including challenges, opportunities, and edits. Additionally, SEED and Learn & Grow are both housed and managed by thread.

Providing translation in other languages.

Describe:

The CCDF Plan is located on the Child Care Program Office website that has a translation tab that allows you to read a document in the language you chose.

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

Describe:

Providing notification to stakeholders (e.g., parent and family groups, provider groups, advocacy groups). Describe:

Describe:

An email broadcast regarding the posting of the CCDF Plan on the Online Public Notice website and information about the Public Hearing and opportunity to comment was sent to stakeholders, including but not limited to: Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network; Municipality of Anchorage and Child Care Assistance grantees; AIAN CCDF Tribal Organizations; Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council; child care providers; families participating in the Child Care Assistance Program; and Office of Child Care, Region X staff. The finalized CCDF Plan and any Plan amendments will be made available on the Child Care Program Office's website. The public may access this website and the CCDF Plan and any amendments will be easily accessible from the homepage.

Working with statewide afterschool networks or similar coordinating entities for out-of-school time.

Other.

Describe:

For development of this CCDF plan, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) met with Alaska's Early Childhood Advocacy Group during their weekly meeting on April 19th 2021 and May 19th, 2021, sharing information and collecting input, including challenges, opportunities, and edits to the draft plan.

## 1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

### 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.

a. The Lead Agency is required to coordinate with the following agencies. Provide a description for how coordination occurred.

i. Appropriate representatives of the general purpose local government, which can include counties, municipalities, or townships/towns. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), grants child care licensing services to the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), and works directly with the MOA Child Care Licensing Office. The results of the coordination to ensures consistent licensing practices, enforcement, policies and procedures statewide. This work is accomplished through bi-monthly meetings, and annual grant quality assurance monitoring.

ii. [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, processes, and results:

The CCDF Lead Agency, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), participates on Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC). The AECCC's mission is promoting a unified, sustainable system of early care, health, education, and family support for young children (prenatal through age eight) and their families. In January 2019, the Child Care Program Office convened a statewide group called Alaska's Early Childhood Joint Task Force (JTF). JTF had an 8-member Leadership Team, which in turn engaged with and guided a full 40+ member JTF. The representation on the JTF included representation from public and private members in the field and cross-sector programs for children and families. The JTF formed to leverage leadership and resources and align work on two goals: A statewide Early Childhood Needs Assessment and a Strategic Plan. This effort was coordinated among three grants: the initial Preschool Development Grant received by the Department of Early Education and Development (DEED) and jointly managed by DEED and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS); an Impact Project grant from the State Capacity Building Center to align Early Care and Education (ECE) systems with programs and services, led by the DHSS Child Care Program Office; and an Indigenous Project LAUNCH grant to prepare Alaska Native children 0-8 with skills to succeed in school, led by Southcentral Foundation, a health and wellness organization serving the Alaska Native population in Southcentral Alaska. Both Alaska's Early Childhood Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan were completed in 2021, with an extensive stakeholder engagement process. Many members from AECCC were also JTF members, and the full AECCC were given updates and input into both documents throughout the process. The final strategic plan is titled Early Childhood Alaska: A Strategic Direction for 2020-2025, and has three goal areas, 12 strategies, and multiple actions under each strategy. Goal 1: Alaska children and families are healthy, safe, and stable. Goal 2: Alaska children have quality early learning experiences and are prepared for success in school. Goal 3: Alaska children and families are supported by a functional, comprehensive, mixed delivery, early childhood system. In March 2021, the AECCC adopted as an update to the council's priorities. The needs assessment and strategic plan can be found at [www.earlychildhoodalaska.com](http://www.earlychildhoodalaska.com)

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

iii. Indian tribe(s) and/or tribal organization(s), at the option of individual tribes. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results, including which tribe(s) was (were) consulted:

The CCDF Lead Agency, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with tribal organizations, as applicable, on/through: the benefits to becoming licensed; the licensing process; barriers/challenges to becoming licensed; Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) requirements (background checks, market price survey, health and safety training, policies and procedures, etc.); conducting on site health and safety inspections; health and safety training; quarterly "Partners Meetings", along with other early childhood care and education partners; presenting information at conferences such as the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) Tribal Child Care Conference, Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Child Care Conference, and Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Providers Conference; conducting outreach to provide Child Care Assistance Program information to the CCDF Tribal grantees within their service delivery areas; soliciting feedback into program changes for the Child Care Assistance Program during the review cycle, and data collection, for example for economic impact study updates in partnership with Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

Additional coordination:

Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), Child Care Program Manager, also known at the federal level as the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Administrator, serves as a member of the council. The council includes both public and private representation, including a representative from an Alaska Native Tribal Organization. The AECCC's mission is, "The AECCC shall promote a unified, sustainable system of early care, health, education, and family support for young children (prenatal through age eight) and their families."

System for Early Education Development

The Alaska System for Early Education Development, or "Alaska SEED" is Alaska's early childhood professional development system. Members of the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) management team serve on the Alaska SEED Steering Committee. The SEED Steering Committee is a diverse cross-sector of early childhood stakeholders who guide

the mission of SEED, including representation from Tribal Child Care. Alaska SEED's mission is, "To provide leadership and stewardship for a comprehensive, collaborative early childhood system of professional development that integrates, unites and advances the needs of a diverse workforce, including all sectors that serve children from prenatal through age 12 and their families."

#### Learn & Grow

Learn & Grow is Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS). A QRIS is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings. Learn & Grow's mission is, "to advance the quality of early care and learning to foster the success of young children.

Members of the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) management team serve on the Learn & Grow Executive Committee along with a representative from an Alaska Native Tribal Organization and other early childhood stakeholders.

#### Alaska Head Start Association (AHSA) Directors' Meeting

This group includes federal Head Start Region X and Region XI staff, federal Office of Child Care Region X staff, State of Alaska Departments of Education and Early Development and Health and Social Services staff, as well as Tribal and non-Tribal Head Start Directors'. CCPO managers participate monthly on telephonic calls and quarterly face-to-face meetings to share information about programs administered by the Child Care Program Office or in collaboration with our grantees to share information about: SEED; Learn and Grow; To discuss benefits to becoming licensed; Challenges and barriers to becoming licensed; Head Start Performance Standards and alignment with CCDBG and CCDF requirements; Background check processes; etc.; Opportunities for increased partnership

The goals of this coordination is to share knowledge, information, and resources; identify opportunities for further collaboration and coordination to strengthen and unify Alaska's early childhood care and education system; and better coordination of data to inform decision making to name a few. As a result, the CCPO- has established relationships and can better support children and families in Alaska through these partnerships.

[N/A-Check here if there are no Indian tribes and/or tribal organizations in the state.](#)

iv. 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 Part B, Section 619 for preschool).

Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), participates in the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education Early Intervention Committee monthly meetings. The goal of the committee is to improve communication and coordination of services and advise and assist the Lead Early Intervention Agency. The result of this coordination is that the work of this council is aligned with and supported by CCDF, and vice versa.

v. State/territory office/director for Head Start state collaboration. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) participates in monthly Alaska Head Start Association Director's meetings to stay abreast of Head Start program requirements and provide updates to state requirements. Staff of the Child Care Program Office meet as needed with the Head Start Collaboration Director to share child care updates, coordinate regarding licensure of Early Head Start/Head Start programs, early care and learning initiatives, Alaska's System for Early Education Development (SEED), and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System.

vi. State/territory agency responsible for public health, including the agency responsible for immunizations. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), Child Care Licensing staff coordinate closely with Public Health to ensure child immunization requirements are met. Child Care Licensing staff share information about a computer program created by Public Health called "Self-Image." Providers input child immunization information into Self-Image. The program then provides notices to the child care provider of upcoming immunizations, provides information about the appropriate timetables for obtaining immunizations, alerts providers as to whether or not the children in their care are current with their immunizations, etc.

Public Health staff audit the immunization records of select facilities each year. They forward their results to Child Care Licensing staff. If a facility receives 100% compliance on their audit, Child Care Licensing staff do not audit the records as well. State



Epidemiology contacts Child Care Licensing staff annually for a current list of licensed facilities to survey compliance with immunization requirements. If State Epidemiology does not receive a response from facilities, they notify Child Care Licensing staff and licensing follows up to ensure compliance. Licensing also coordinates with State Epidemiology to ensure immunizations, which are checked while on-site by Child Care Licensing staff, reflect current standards and best practice. Public Health staff periodically provides immunizations on-site at child care facilities, participates in health and safety training for child care providers, assists in responding to health related outbreaks in child care facilities, and provides on-site health consultation.

**vii. State/territory agency responsible for employment services/workforce development. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The CCDF Lead Agency, Division of Public Assistance (DPA), which includes the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), is also the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agency for the State of Alaska and works closely with Work Services Providers in developing job opportunities for all Alaskans, while focusing on families on TANF. As a result of this coordination, cChild cCare is acknowledged as a necessary support for families entering and remaining in the work force. Information about child care resources is available at DPA Field Services offices throughout the state. Work Services Providers receive child care information training for use as part of their resource portfolio to work with families. Work Services Providers request child care coverage for Parent's Achieving Self-Sufficiency (PASS) I families through Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees of the CCPO. Grantee staff issue authorizations (certificates) for families receiving PASS I child care assistance.

**viii. State/territory agency responsible for public education, including Prekindergarten (PreK). Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) through regular and ongoing meetings with the leadership. The goals around these meetings are to coordinate and align efforts to support the field and keep each other informed on federal and state requirements. Additionally, the CCPO and the leadership of DEED both participate in the states coordinating council as well as other early care and learning systems councils such as Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System, and the System for Early Education Development to ensure coordination and collaboration. Result of this

coordination ensures alignment with DEED on early care and learning goals, and increased opportunities for supporting children in all care settings.

**ix. State/territory agency responsible for child care licensing. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), is responsible for child care licensing. The Child Care Licensing Program coordinates with all appropriate entities depending on subject. Coordination with entities includes the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP); Child Care Grant Program; Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program (Alaska IN!); Child Care Resource & Referral; Child Care Assistance Program grantees; Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing Program grantee; Early Head Start and Head Start; AIAN CCDF Tribal Organizations; state departments; Alaska's professional development system, System for Early Education Development (SEED); Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS)- Learn & Grow; etc. The process of coordination includes but is not limited to: participation in regular and on-going meetings; participating in work groups and/or committees; participation in input and edits to policies; ad-hoc communication; and participating in Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

The goals of coordination as applicable include alignment and consistency of the administration of programs, regulations, policies and procedures, forms, notices, service delivery, and monitoring and oversight, and recruitment and retention efforts. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

**x. State/territory agency responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and other relevant nutrition programs. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with the lists information for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to encourage child care providers to participate. The CCPO lists CACFP information and provides a link on the website so child care providers may apply for services through the program. The CCPO provides CACFP brochures and/or referrals to licensed providers if requested. The result of this support is access to CACFP for child care providers.

xi. 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, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has conducted outreach to the McKinney-Vento state coordinator and local liaisons and provides Child Care Assistance and Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program information to the school coordinators statewide. Goals include increased awareness of programs administered by the CCPO and opportunity for increased collaboration and coordination with the McKinney-Vento state coordinator and local McKinney-Vento liaisons during the 2022-2024 CCDF plan cycle.

xii. State/territory agency responsible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), is housed within the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) where the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program is also administered. The CCDF State Administrator serves on the DPA Leadership Team and attends regular management meetings. Quality and accessible child care is an integral part of the Division's mission and child care continues its integration into the work of the Division. The co-location of child care programs and the TANF agency in the same division has allowed the Child Care Assistance Program for TANF families and the Child Care Assistance Program for non-TANF families to be better integrated and aligned. Three Public Assistance Analysts' within the CCPO work with Parents Achieving Self-Sufficiency (PASS) I, the child care assistance part of TANF by: providing training, technical assistance and policy clarification to any entity which administers PASS I, which may be located in the Division of Public Assistance or be a Work Services Provider or grantee; participating as needed on monitors for work services for the child care portion; attending regular partners meetings with Work Services Providers; and teleconferencing regularly with DPA staff. CCAP grantees assist the coordination of families transitioning to and from PASS I. Accounting staff within the CCPO and CCAP grantees work with PASS I by receiving billings and making payments to PASS I providers statewide. PASS I child care assistance has been integrated into the Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual. This coordination facilitates increased supply of full-day/ full-year services; aligned eligibility policies; blended funding; and access to more training and technical assistance resourced shared across agencies.

[xiii. Agency responsible for Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:](#)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), is housed within the Division of Public Assistance (DPA). DPA Field Services staff determine eligibility for Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program. The CCPO Program Manager/State Administrator is part of the DPA Leadership Team where opportunities to share information and to coordinate across the programs administered by the Division occur.

Goals of coordination include increased awareness of programs administered by the CCPO and connection to Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program and opportunity for collaboration and coordination during the 2022-2024 CCDF plan cycle. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

[xiv. State/territory agency responsible for mental health. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:](#)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with the agencies responsible for mental health areas concerning children. These are the Division of Behavioral Health, Operations Manager and Program Coordinator; the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Program Manager located in Women's Children's and Family Health; and a representative of the Mental Health Trust. Links to mental health programs for children are listed on the CCPO's website. The process of coordination includes but is not limited to: participation in regular and on-going meetings; participating in work groups and/or committees; participation in input and edits to policies; ad-hoc communication; and participating in Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council. The goals of this coordination to provide access to information and supports to child care providers and families. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

[xv. 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, processes, and results:](#)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, through regular and on-going meetings. The goal of this coordination is to support families, child care providers, and individuals in the field with

access to supports and resources and to ensure thread and CCPO are in alignment with goals and activities. Additionally, the CCPO and thread staff participate jointly on several early care and learning committees including but not limited to Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council; System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development Committee; and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) Stakeholder Committee; which ensures consistency and alignment to common goals. Result of this coordination with thread ensures delivery of services to families to include expanding accessibility and continuity of care and to assist families in receiving full- day services that meet the needs of working families. CCPO and thread also coordinate efforts in 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; and developing the supply of quality care for vulnerable populations (as defined by the CCPO) in child care and out-of-school time settings.

**xvi. Statewide afterschool network or other coordinating entity for out-of-school time care (if applicable). Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), coordinates with the Alaska Afterschool Network, for the goal of to supporting the school age population in access to quality care outside of school hours. This work includes aligning supports, resources, and systems for child care with the school age population. Additionally, both CCPO and Alaska's Afterschool Network director participate jointly on several early care and learning committees including but not limited to: System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development Committee; and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) Executive and Stakeholder Committees, which results in ensures consistency and alignment to common goals.

**xvii. Agency responsible for emergency management and response. Describe the coordination goals, processes, and results:**

The Division of Public Assistance (DPA), which includes the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has developed a disaster response plan, disaster response field guide, and Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The CCPO has worked in partnership with DPA leadership to include information applicable to child care in each of these documents. The DPA Disaster Response Plan and COOP were developed in collaboration with human services agencies, the state emergency management agency, state child care licensing agencies, and public health.

The CCPO has developed an addendum to the DPA Disaster Response Guide to ensure full compliance with CCDF requirements. Once the document is finalized, the disaster response plan, disaster response field guide, and COOP will be coordinated with staff, grantees, partner agencies, and Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC) via an opportunity to provide feedback and input into the current plans. Annually, the DPA documents are updated, which includes an opportunity for CCPO to review the current plans and provide updates and input into the next version.

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)).

b. The following are examples of optional partners a state might coordinate with to provide services. Check which optional partners the Lead Agency coordinates with and describe the coordination goals, processes and results.

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

Describe

The Child Care Program Office participates in monthly Alaska Head Start Association Director's meetings to include Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership grantees. The goal is, to stay abreast of Head Start program requirements and provide updates to state requirements. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

ii. State/territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges

Describe

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) coordinates and collaborates with the University of Alaska System on supporting the workforce in receiving higher education in Early Childhood Education. Through a Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with the University of Fairbanks Alaska, the CCPO provides scholarship funds for students that are established and working within the early childhood field in a licensed child care facility within the State of Alaska. The goal is to increase the knowledge and education level of individuals working in the field. As a result of this coordination,

CCPO and the University of Alaska support provide at least \$75,000 each year in scholarship funds to individuals.

- iii. Other federal, state, local, and/or private agencies providing early childhood and school-age/youth-serving developmental services.

Describe

- iv. State/territory agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Child Home Visitation programs grant.

Describe

The Child Care Program Office participates in the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education Early Intervention Committee monthly meetings, which includes representation from Women's, Children's, and Family Health to improve communication and coordination of services. The goal of this coordination is to be in alignment with CCDF and Maternal and Child Home Visiting programs supporting families. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

- v. Agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment.

Describe

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) participates in the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education Early Intervention Committee monthly meetings which includes Women's, Children's and Family Health who provide genetic and specialty clinics to improve access to care for children in need and universal newborn hearing screening. Additionally, the Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) also participates in these meetings. SDS houses the Alaska Infant Learning Program (ILP). The goal of this coordination is to ensure alignment and partnerships in supporting children and families between CCPO and early intervention. The CCPO has a memorandum of agreement with the ILP to provide free developmental screening and tools to families. The CCPO engages in quarterly meetings with the ILP for coordination and collaboration. The result of this coordination is building partnerships and ensuring alignment in working toward common goals.

vi. State/territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe

The Child Care Program Office coordinates with the Office of Children's Services for the administration of the Child Care Assistance Program for children in foster care and child protective services. This coordination includes regular on-going meetings between the Office of Children's Services (OCS) and the CCPO and collaboration on policies and procedures, forms, and notices. The goal is for all children receiving CCDF subsidy be determined eligible for a 12-month certification period, including vulnerable populations, as well as paying child care providers on behalf of families receiving subsidy, based on the State of Alaska Child Care Assistance Program Rate Schedule, or the provider's rate, whichever is lower. The result of this coordination provides continuity of care and increases stability to children in protective services and foster care.

vii. Provider groups or associations.

Describe

The Child Care Program Office participates in meetings to address potential child care needs, options and child care assistance options in Alaska as the opportunities arise. The goal is to remain involved in the child care needs and discussions. The result of this coordination is building relationships, common understanding of the landscape of child care in Alaska, and working together toward common goals.

viii. Parent groups or organizations.

Describe

ix. Other.

Describe

From Early Childhood Alaska: A Strategic Direction for 2020-2025, a specific strategy of Goal 3: "Alaska Children and Families are supported by a Functional, Comprehensive, Mixed-Delivery Early Childhood System" was to form a governance workgroup with the focus on creating an improved, sustainable, and accountable governance. In April 2020, Alaska's Early Childhood Governance Workgroup was formed. The workgroup meets monthly and is focused on developing a proposal for governance change for Alaska's Early Childhood System.



### 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](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))?**

No (If no, skip to question 1.5.2)

Yes. If yes, describe at a minimum:

a) How you define "combine"

The Child Care Program Office defines "combine" as bringing together of allowable and available resources.

b) Which funds you will combine

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), State of Alaska General Funds, and CCDF funds.

c. What is 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? Note: Responses should align with the goals, processes and results describe in 1.4.1.

The Child Care Program Office combines Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds with CCDF funds to maximize the number of children and families that can be served. Additionally, State General Funds assist with administrative costs associated with service delivery above the 5% allowed for CCDF and to meet Maintenance of Effort and Matching requirements.

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

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Direct Services and TANF Transfers to CCDF, as well as State General Funds will be combined at the State level to maximize service delivery of programs administered by the Child Care Program Office.

e) How are the funds tracked and method of oversight

Funds are tracked at the State level through the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICIS) and Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS). Reports pulled from these systems as well as monthly, quarterly, and annual audits and reporting facilitate oversight of expenditures.

**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:

Lead Agencies that use Prekindergarten funds to meet matching requirements must check Prekindergarten funds and public and/or private funds.

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)).

- a. N/A - The territory is not required to meet CCDF matching and MOE requirements
- b. 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.
  - i. If checked, identify the source of funds:  
State of Alaska General Funds
- c. 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)).
  - i. If checked, are those funds:

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

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

- d. 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 Prekindergarten expenditures (not to exceed 30 percent):

i. 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:

ii. Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that Prekindergarten programs meet the needs of working parents:

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

i. Assure by describing how the Lead Agency did not reduce its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services, pursuant to 98.55(h)(1) and 98.15(a)(6).

ii. Describe the Lead Agency efforts to ensure that Prekindergarten programs meet the needs of working parents:

iii. Estimated percentage of the MOE Fund requirement that will be met with Prekindergarten expenditures (not to exceed 20 percent):

iv. If the percentage is more than 10 percent of the MOE requirement, describe how the state will coordinate its Prekindergarten and child care services to expand the availability of child care:

- f. The same funds are used to meet at least some of the CCDF MOE and TANF MOE requirements.

i. If known, what percent of funds used to meet CCDF MOE also is used to meet TANF MOE requirements?

## 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 any public-private partnerships encouraged by the Lead Agency to leverage public and private resources to further the goals of the CCDBG Act. Include in the response any public-private partnerships that have emerged from the response to the COVID-19 pandemic (98.16(d)(2)) and if applicable, how those partnerships will be continued post-pandemic.**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), collaborates and coordinates public-private partnerships through participation in several early care and learning committees to increase supply and quality of child care services, including but not limited to: Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council; ; Best Beginnings; and Alaska's Early Childhood Governance Workgroup.

## 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 or network 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 Part B, 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, describe what services are provided and how it is structured. Use subsection 7.5 to address the services provided by the local or regional child care resource and referral agencies and 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?

- 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 organization(s) with all the responsibilities outlined above. If yes, describe the following:

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

The Child Care Program Office grants to Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, thread. Thread is a statewide network and has the following scope of work. 1. Provide families with information on a full range of child care options (including faith-based, community-based child care centers and family child care homes, nontraditional hours and emergency child care centers) in their local area or region.

thread provides families with information on a full range of child care options in their community through the "Find Early Care & Learning in Alaska" on-line tool from their website. This tool is an individualized search from thread's database and provides program information including:

- Type of care (including if a licensed or Head Start program);
- Distance (miles within the family's local community);
- Ages served;
- Days and hours of operation;
- Annual schedule;
- Environment (such as faith based, circle/story time, fenced yard, field trips, limited TV, planned activities, outdoor equipment, and pet free);
- Safety certifications/training;
- Transportation options;
- Meals, if provided; and
- Types of financial assistance, if accepted (such as military, TANF, Tribal, Office of Children's Services if a child is in child protective custody).

thread answers many important questions about the child care programs in their database such as vacancies, fees, policies, and caregiver experience. Early care and

education referrals are also made accessible through a toll free telephone number, or by emailing or faxing a referral form. thread also provides enhanced referrals to families with children who may have special needs.

2. To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive child care assistance to offer the families support and assistance in making an informed decision about child care options in an effort to ensure families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting to suit their needs and that is of high quality as determined by the State/Territory.

Every family is referred to thread during the child care assistance application process for child care search and referral services to assist families in enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting to suit their needs. thread works directly with families to provide an individualized list of early care and education programs based on their specific needs. thread offers information on:

- Selecting quality child care, preschool, or Head Start programs;
- Information on Quality Indicators including teacher/child ratio, staff qualifications and training, and family involvement;
- Understanding different types of care settings;
- Qualifications of early care and education providers;
- Current program vacancy information;
- Customized referrals for families who have children with special needs;
- Tips on working with your child's teacher; and
- Other community resources.

thread also offers guidance for parents on how to identify and choose quality care and education program through materials such as the "Quality Early Care & Education: A Guide for Alaska's Families". Other resources for parents include:

- Child development and parenting workshops;
- Networking opportunities with other families;
- Personalized support and information around parenting issues, child development, and community referrals through the "thread line service"

3. Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services provided through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for



children with disabilities.

thread collaborates with the CCPO to provide consultation, resources, and referrals for children with disabilities participating in the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program (Alaska IN!). thread's website contains links to Alaska IN!, administered by the CCPO to give extra support to families with children who have special needs in accessing inclusive care and offer supplemental funding to providers for training, needed accommodations, and support to help them meet the child's individual needs. The purpose of Alaska IN! is to enhance the skills of the child care provider, promote inclusive child care practices in child care settings, and ensure families participating in the Child Care Assistance Program, including children with special needs, have access to child care. This also helps ensure children with special needs have a stable and consistent child care provider who can meet their individual needs.

thread coordinates with the CCPO to provide the following for families applying for and participating in Alaska IN!:

- Providing outreach, education, and enhanced referral services to parents of children with special needs regarding child care options;
- Providing child care resource and referral resources to the provider and/or parent when additional needs are identified;
- Providing referrals for additional resources not offered by thread to the provider and/or parent when additional needs are identified;
- Conducting on-site observation of the identified child while in care with the child care provider;
- Consulting with the child care provider and parent in the development of the Child Care Provider Inclusion Plan to ensure the accommodations and/or training identified meet the child's specific needs;
- Increasing caregiver knowledge and expertise in the care of children with special needs;
- Providing technical assistance, training, and support to providers who care for children with special needs;
- Training child care providers to increase capacity to care for children with special needs;
- Maintaining a file for each child that contains the supporting documentation of the recommendations made for additional services needed for the Child Care Provider

Inclusion Plan;

- Assisting providers to implement child specific inclusionary practices; and
- Contacting the CCPO or Municipality of Anchorage child care licensing office, depending on the provider's location, when a concern is identified.

thread's website also contains links to the Child Care Assistance Program and the Alaska IN! brochure. Data regarding Alaska IN! is housed with the CCPO.

4. Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in local areas or regions of the State/Territory and submit such information to the State/Territory.

thread collects data on the supply and demand through its child care provider database. Providers offer their information voluntarily to this database, fulfilling on the available supply in communities. Through the "Find Early Care & Learning in Alaska" on-line tool, thread provides families with information on a full range of child care options in their community. This tool is an individualized search from thread's database and provides program information including:

- Type of care (including if a licensed or Head Start program);
- Distance (miles within the family's local community);
- Ages served;
- Days and hours of operation;
- Annual schedule;
- Environment (such as faith based, circle/story time, fenced yard, field trips, limited TV, planned activities, outdoor equipment, and pet free);
- Safety certifications/training;
- Transportation options;
- Meals, if provided; and
- Types of financial assistance, if accepted (such as military, TANF, Tribal, Office of Children's Services if a child is in child protective services).

thread also provides information in their database such as vacancies, fees, policies, and caregiver experience. Early care and education referrals are also made accessible through a toll free telephone number, or by emailing or faxing a referral form.

5. Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care centers and family child care homes

providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the State/Territory.

thread has established partnerships with public agencies and private entities such as the CCPO, Head Start and Early Head Start, Best Beginnings, Association for the Education of Young Children (AYEC), AIAN CCDF Tribal organizations, school districts, communities (including rural areas) and cities, social service agencies, and others to provide updated resource information for families and child care providers. Community events and conferences are listed on thread's website as well as made available through regular announcements to families, providers, and the public. These efforts work to increase supply and quality of child care services through consumer education and trainings.

Partnerships with early care and education programs promote recruitment and retention through technical assistance and consultation efforts. In addition, thread has worked to establish two community-based centers in Fairbanks Alaska: Thrivalaska Birth to 5 Head Start, and Thrivalaska School Age Program.

thread houses Alaska's early childhood professional development system, known as the System for Early Education Development (SEED). thread also provides professional development opportunities through support and funding to child care providers participating in SEED, including those in licensed Centers, Group Homes, Homes and license exempt providers receiving CCDF payments to increase quality of child care services.

6. As appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and/or local agencies that administer CCDF.

thread coordinates and collaborates with the CCPO regarding many activities and committees.

1. The System for Early Development Committee (SEED), which includes workgroups for:

- SEED Registry: thread manages the statewide early childhood professional registry tracking professional development achievements and advancements for over 2000 early educators and Infant Learning professionals. SEED is a member of the National Workforce Registry Alliance, which provides registries across the country with

resources on data related support on the workforce, standards of quality for workforce data systems, and a strong national voice driving policies and initiatives.

- SEED Career Ladder: thread manages the SEED Career Ladder. In partnership with the CCPO and other professional development entities including higher education, thread ensures the career ladder supports professional development advancement through multiple pathways. The Alaska SEED Career Ladder is a path articulating advancement in the early care and learning profession and is common to professionals in licensed child care centers, homes, or group homes, school district Pre-Elementary and Elementary schools, private Pre-Elementary and Elementary schools, military child care, tribal child care, Early Head Start/Head Start, and in-home visiting. The SEED Career Ladder is an active document that is reviewed and updated by the SEED Professional Development Committee every two years, and was most recently updated in 2015.

- Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies: thread and the CCPO have collaborated to implement Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies and ensure these align with the SEED Career Ladder.

- The SEED Professional Development Committee has a subcommittee of members specifically for looking at data, conducting research, and making recommendations for updates to the SEED Career Ladder, or aligning credentials and trainings of other programs. In 2019, the CCPO funded an Alaska Early Childhood and School-Age Wage Compensation study by completed by Johns Hopkins IDEALS Institute. The study included recommendations to Alaska for improvements to the early childhood system, which will inform planning and updates to the SEED strategic plan moving forward.

- SEED Training and Trainer Approval System: thread manages the SEED Training and Trainer Approval System currently in development to help strengthen the quality of training available and offered in Alaska. thread has collaborated with the CCPO to design and implement the Training Approval System in July 2016. The mission of the Training Approval System in Alaska is to increase compensation and benefits for the early care and learning workforce and to improve the quality and content of training and education for the early care and learning workforce. Building a comprehensive training approval system increases the consistency of training content and

qualifications across the state. The design process has also been inclusive of many training entities in Alaska including higher education, the Family Child Care Association, the early childhood conference organizers, the After School Network, and other school age stakeholders.

2. Professional Development Reimbursements and Travel Grants: thread manages funds to support financial reimbursements to early educators with qualifying professional development expenses. These funds are designed to support a continuum of accessing higher education and advanced professional development opportunities. Additionally, these resources reduce financial barriers for accessing professional development opportunities. SEED implemented a wage incentive program in the Fall of 2019, Alaska SEED Retaining Our Outstanding Teachers Award (ROOTS). ROOTS provides a funding award on a first come first serve basis to those in the SEED Registry. Since ROOTS was preparing to launch when the COVID-19 Pandemic hit, the first version of this program was called the COVID ROOTS award and had basic requirements of working in the field. As the program further develops beyond the pandemic crisis, SEED will develop ROOTS into a long term sustainable incentive program with the goal of retention and rewarding movement on the career ladder.

3. thread and the CCPO have collaborated in the design, development, and implementation of Learn and Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System. Learn & Grow launched in July of 2016 to help advance and support continuous quality improvement in licensed early care and learning programs. In 2021, all five levels were announced, with level 3 available now. The CCPO and thread plan on launching all 5 levels by 2025.

4. thread works to support Child Care Resource and Referral services for all early care and learning programs including tribal child care programs. thread has worked to develop outreach materials and build relationships with tribal child care programs and associated tribes with the goal to share and optimize resources and strengthen our early care and learning system. thread currently partners with Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Artic Slope Native Association, and Bristol Bay Native Association to coordinate professional development training for their early child professionals as well as through providing technical assistance to support their efforts in continuous quality

improvement.

5. thread partners with the CCPO to join Child Care Licensing Chats or collaborate on trainings when possible. Child Care Licensing and thread also have monthly meetings to collaborate and share information.

6. thread also coordinates with and informs the CCPO of events and outreach available in communities on a regular basis through meetings, announcements, newsletters, and on their website.

## 1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

In past disasters, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of emergency child care services and rebuilding and restoring of child care infrastructure has emerged as an essential service. 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. The effective date for the establishment of this Statewide Disaster Plan was October 1, 2018.

**1.8.1 Did you make any updates to the Statewide Disaster Plan since the FY 2019-2021 CCDF Plan was submitted? Please consider any updates that were made as a result of the Lead Agency's experiences in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. (Note: It is a Lead Agency decision on how often a plan should be updated and which entities, if any, should be collaborated with in the updating process.)**

No

Yes

If yes, describe the elements of the plan that were updated: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**1.8.2 To demonstrate continued compliance with the required elements in the Statewide Disaster Plan, certify by checking the required elements included in the current State Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan.**

- a. The plan was developed in collaboration with the following required entities:
  - i. State human services agency
  - ii. State emergency management agency
  - iii. State licensing agency
  - iv. State health department or public health department
  - v. Local and state child care resource and referral agencies
  - vi. State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care or similar coordinating body
- b. The plan includes guidelines for the continuation of child care subsidies.
- c. The plan includes guidelines for the continuation of child care services.
- d. The plan includes procedures for the coordination of post-disaster recovery of child care services.
- e. The plan contains requirements for all CCDF providers (both licensed and license-exempt) to have in place:
  - i. Procedures for evacuation
  - ii. Procedures for relocation
  - iii. Procedures for shelter-in-place
  - iv. Procedures for communication and reunification with families
  - v. Procedures for continuity of operations
  - vi. Procedures for accommodations of infants and toddlers
  - vii. Procedures for accommodations of children with disabilities
  - viii. Procedures for accommodations of children with chronic medical conditions
- f. The plan contains procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training.
- g. The plan contains procedures for staff and volunteer practice drills.

**1.8.3 If available, provide the direct URL/website link to the website where the statewide child care disaster plan is posted:**

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/regs.aspx>

## 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. OCC expects that Lead Agencies are using targeted strategies for each group to ensure tailored consumer education information. In this section, Lead Agencies will address how information is made available to families, the general public and child care providers 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.

This section also covers the parental complaint process and the consumer education website that has been developed by the Lead Agency. Finally, this section addresses the consumer statement that is provided to parents supported with CCDF funds.

Note: When asked for citations, responses can include state statute, regulations, administrative rules, policy manuals, or policy issuances. See the Introduction on page 4 for more detail.



## 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 child care providers with 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.**

- a. Application in other languages (application document, brochures, provider notices)
- b. Informational materials in non-English languages
- c. Website in non-English languages
- d. Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- e. Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- f. Bilingual outreach workers
- g. Partnerships with community-based organizations
- h. Collaboration with Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start
- i. Home visiting programs
- j. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has available for eligible families' interpretation services through the Telelanguage line. The Telelanguage line information is provided to all grantees and partners to utilize when an English Second Language (ESL) family is being provided services. The CCPO requires grantees and partners to utilize the Telelanguage line to minimize miscommunication. The State of

Alaska only publishes written material in English. If a family needs assistance whether it be requesting information, applying for benefits, or needing assistance the Telelanguage line is utilized to communicate with ESL families. Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, thread, provides some informational materials in Spanish for families and child care providers.

**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.**

- a. Applications and public informational materials available in Braille and other communication formats for access by individuals with disabilities
- b. Websites that are accessible (e.g. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act)
- c. Caseworkers with specialized training/experience in working with individuals with disabilities
- d. Ensuring accessibility of environments and activities for all children
- e. Partnerships with state and local programs and associations focused on disability-related topics and issues
- f. 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
- g. Partnerships with state and local IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C providers and agencies
- h. Availability and/or access to specialized services (e.g. mental health, behavioral specialists, therapists) to address the needs of all children
- i. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office provides program information and applications to grantees and partners for distribution during outreach activities such as at health and/or job fairs statewide.

## 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 (s); 98.32(d)).

### **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:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has made available the main office number (907-269-4500) and toll free number (1-888-268-4632) for filing child care complaints. In addition, the CCPO has posted on the main webpage an email link to file a complaint against a child care provider. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>

### **2.2.2 For complaints regarding all providers, including CCDF providers and non-CCDF providers, describe the Lead Agency's process and timeline for screening, substantiating, and responding to complaints. Describe whether the process includes monitoring, and highlight any differences in processes for CCDF and non-CCDF providers and licensed and license-exempt providers:**

The State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage child care licensing investigates all complaints received. Once a complaint is received the supervisor CCPO Complaint and Enforcement Review Committee (CERC) assigns the complaint a priority level (1-3) and licensing specialist to investigate. The timeline for completion of the investigation varies from 30-45-60 business days of the date the complaint was received depending on the priority level assigned. Investigations include unannounced onsite inspections; a health and safety walk through, parent interviews, staff interviews, and any follow up if needed with another

department or entity. For an allegation to be substantiated the licensing specialist must find a preponderance of evidence. If no evidence is found the allegation is not substantiated. If a facility has a non-compliance, resulting from an allegation, an enforcement action is imposed on the facility. Enforcement actions can include Plan of Correction, modification of license, fine, and up to and including suspension or revocation of their child care license. Once an investigation is complete, the provider receives a copy of the report of investigation which lists all of the allegations and whether or not they were findings based on the investigation. Child Care Licensing Policies and Procedures Manual 6090 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual 4310.

**2.2.3 Certify by describing how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints. Highlight any differences in processes for CCDF and non-CCDF providers and licensed and license-exempt providers:**

The State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage child care licensing maintains records of substantiated child care complaints by issuing the facility/provider a Report of Investigation (ROI). The ROI is then kept in the facility/provider binder until mandatory archiving. The licensing specialist also enters the investigation into the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICIS) Compliance screen. Child Care Licensing Policies and Procedures Manual 6090 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual 4310.

**2.2.4 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:**

The Child Care Program Office makes all substantiated findings from the Report of Inspection Notice of Violation, Report of Inspection, and Report of Investigation available online through the state of Alaska Find A Child Care Provider search.

<https://dpaworks.dhss.alaska.gov/FindProviderVS8/zSearch.aspx>

## **2.2.5 Provide the citation to the Lead Agency's policy and process related to parental complaints:**

6120-2 Licensing Investigation Files

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdfv>

## 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) and 98.33 (a)). The website must include information to assist families in understanding the Lead Agency's policies and procedures, including licensing child care providers. The website information must also include monitoring and inspection reports for each provider, and the quality of each provider (if such information is available for the provider) (658E(c)(2)(D); 98.33(a)). The website should also provide access to a yearly statewide report on the aggregate number of deaths, serious injuries, and the number of cases of substantiated child abuse that have occurred in child care settings. To help families access additional information on finding child care, the website must include contact information for local child care and resource referral organizations. It must also include information on how parents can contact the Lead Agency and other organizations to better understand 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 direct URL/website link to the consumer education website in 2.3.11.

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. (Note: While there is no Federal CCDF definition for easily accessible, Lead Agencies may consider easily accessible websites to be searchable, simple to navigate, written in plain language, and easy to understand.):**

The Child Care Program Office website is consumer-friendly and easily accessible. The website is displayed based upon six main category tabs, which when accessed provide additional in-depth information: Alaska: Find a Child Care Provider; Contact Information; Information for Child Care Providers; Information for Families; Resources and Reports; and Child Care Forms. In addition, the website is easily accessible to all individuals including individuals with disability. The American Disability Act (ADA) requires websites and the information provided to be accessible. All child care forms and child care resources and materials comply with ADA accessibility. The website is updated frequently.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>

**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)):**

The State of Alaska only publishes in English. The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website is therefore only provided in English. The CCPO can provide information for interpretation services to families and guests who need assistance accessing, navigating, or obtaining information from the CCPO website. The CCPO has added an icon to all CCPO webpages in a prominent location notifying users of the opportunity to request interpretation services.

Users may request interpretation services at any time, or staff can identify the need for users, or themselves if they are having trouble communicating with the user. The CCPO and grantees have marketing materials to help a user identify what languages the State of Alaska has interpretation services available.

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

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) ensures the website is accessible to persons with disabilities. The American Disability Act (ADA) requires all materials and resources published online are accessible to persons with a disability. All child care forms and child care resources and materials are accessible to persons with disability. These forms are created through PDF and are checked through running accessibility reports prior to making them available on our website. The CCPO works with the Statewide ADA Coordinator on making our website resources and materials accessible.

### **2.3.4 Provide the specific website links to the descriptions of the Lead Agency's 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.

- a. Provide the direct URL/website link to how the Lead Agency licenses child care providers, including the rationale for exempting certain providers from licensing requirements, as described in subsection 5.2

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdf>, sections 6010-6040.

- b. Provide the direct URL/website link to the processes for conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers, as described in subsection 5.4:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdf>, section 6080

c. Provide the direct URL/website link to the policies and procedures related to criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers, as described in 5.5.2.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdf>, section 6050.

d. Provide the direct URL/website link to the offenses that prevent individuals from being employed by a child care provider or receiving CCDF funds, as described in questions 5.5.4:

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp#7.10.905>

### 2.3.5 How does the Lead Agency post a localized list of providers searchable by zip code on its website?

The consumer education website must include a list of all licensed providers (98.33 (a)(2)). At the discretion of the Lead Agency, all providers eligible to deliver CCDF services, identified as either licensed or license-exempt, can be included. 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.

a. Provide the website link to the list of child care providers searchable by ZIP code:

<https://dpaworks.dhss.alaska.gov/FindProviderVS8/zSearch.aspx>

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):

- i. License-exempt center-based CCDF providers
- ii. License-exempt family child care (FCC) CCDF providers
- iii. License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- iv. Relative CCDF child care providers
- v. Other.

Describe

Approved In-Home providers.



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.

#### All Licensed Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment capacity
- Hours, days and months of operation
- Provider education and training
- Languages spoken by the caregiver
- Quality Information
- Monitoring reports
- Willingness to accept CCDF certificates
- Ages of children served

#### License-Exempt CCDF Center-based Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment capacity
- Hours, days and months of operation
- Provider education and training
- Languages spoken by the caregiver
- Quality Information
- Monitoring reports
- Willingness to accept CCDF certificates
- Ages of children served

#### License-Exempt CCDF Family Child Care Home Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment capacity
- Hours, days and months of operation
- Provider education and training
- Languages spoken by the caregiver
- Quality Information
- Monitoring reports

- Willingness to accept CCDF certificates
- Ages of children served

#### License-Exempt Non-CCDF Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment capacity
- Hours, days and months of operation
- Provider education and training
- Languages spoken by the caregiver
- Quality Information
- Monitoring reports
- Willingness to accept CCDF certificates
- Ages of children served

#### Relative CCDF Providers

- Contact Information
- Enrollment capacity
- Hours, days and months of operation
- Provider education and training
- Languages spoken by the caregiver
- Quality Information
- Monitoring reports
- Willingness to accept CCDF certificates
- Ages of children served

2.3.5 How does the Lead Agency post a localized list of providers searchable by zip code on its website?

The consumer education website must include a list of all licensed providers (98.33 (a)(2)). At the discretion of the Lead Agency, all providers eligible to deliver CCDF services, identified as either licensed or license-exempt, can be included. 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.

d. Other information included for:

- i. All Licensed providers.

Describe

Plain language summary that includes the facility's: compliance type; Inspection/Investigation Date; Findings; Violation Date; Compliance Date; Action Taken; Statute/Regulation; and Section.

- ii. License-exempt CCDF center-based providers.

Describe

- iii. License-exempt CCDF family child care providers.

Describe

Plain language summary that includes the facility's: compliance type; Inspection/Investigation Date; Findings; Violation Date; Compliance Date; Action Taken; Statute/Regulation; and Section.

- iv. License-exempt, non-CCDF providers.

Describe

- v. Relative CCDF providers.

Describe

Plain language summary that includes the facility's: compliance type; Inspection/Investigation Date; Findings; Violation Date; Compliance Date; Action Taken; Statute/Regulation; and Section.

**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.**

a. What information does the Lead Agency provide on the website to determine quality ratings or other quality information?

- i. Quality rating and improvement system
- ii. National accreditation
- iii. Enhanced licensing system
- iv. Meeting Head Start/Early Head Start Program Performance Standards
- v. Meeting Prekindergarten quality requirements
- vi. School-age standards, where applicable
- vii. Other.

Describe

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) currently defines quality as safe and healthy, which is measured by having a State of Alaska (SOA) or Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Child Care License.

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

- i. Licensed CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

License status.

- ii. Licensed non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

License status.

- iii. License-exempt center-based CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

- iv. License-exempt FCC CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

- v. License-exempt non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

- vi. Relative child care providers.

Describe the quality information:

- vii. Other.

Describe

**2.3.7 Lead Agencies must 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. These reports must include the 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. A full report covers everything in the monitoring visit, including areas of compliance and non-compliance. If the state does not produce any reports that include areas of compliance, the website must include information about all areas covered by a monitoring visit (e.g., by posting a blank checklist used by monitors).**

The reports must be in plain language or provide a plain language summary, as defined by the state or territory, 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.

Certify by responding to the questions below:

a. Does the Lead Agency post? (check one):

- i. Full monitoring reports that include areas of compliance and non-compliance.
- ii. Monitoring reports that include areas of non-compliance only, with information about all areas covered by a monitoring visit posted separately on the website (e.g., a blank checklist used by monitors). Note: This option is only allowable if the state/territory does not produce monitoring reports that include both areas of compliance and non-compliance.

If checked, provide a direct URL/website link to the website where a blank checklist is posted.

b. Check to certify that the monitoring and inspection reports and, if necessary, their plain language summaries include:

Date of inspection

Health and safety violations, including those violations that resulted in fatalities or serious injuries occurring at the provider.

Describe how these health and safety violations are prominently displayed:

If a facility has non-compliance(s), the information is provided in plain language by posting the Findings to the CCPO website, which includes the regulation and/or statute citation of violation and a plain language summary of the specifics of the violation.

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

Describe:

If a facility has non-compliance(s), discovered during the inspection the information is provided on the Find a Provider link on the CCPO Website. The violation(s) discovered during the inspection are listed and include the regulation and/or statute citation, title of the regulation, and a written summary of the violation details. The website link includes the date the violation occurred, any applicable enforcement actions taken by the state, and the date corrections were made by the facility for compliance.

A minimum of 3 years of results, where available.

c. How and where are reports posted in a timely manner? Specifically, provide the Lead Agency's definition of "timely" and describe how it ensures that reports and/or summaries are posted within its timeframe. Note: While Lead Agencies may 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.

i. Provide the direct URL/website link to where the reports are posted.

<https://dpaworks.dhss.alaska.gov/FindProviderVS8/zSearch.aspx>

ii. Describe how the Lead Agency defines timely posting of monitoring reports.

The Child Care Program Office and Municipality of Anchorage licensing will maintain all existing reports on the website for at least three years, and will make all reports

available on-line once the appeal timeframe has passed and the report is final.

d. Monitoring and inspection reports or the summaries must be in plain language to meet the CCDF regulatory requirements (98.33 (a)(4)).

i. Provide the Lead Agency's definition of plain language.

Plain language is defined as language that is clear and easy to understand without unnecessarily difficult words and free from jargon.

ii. Describe how the monitoring and inspection reports or the summaries are in plain language.

Plain language summary that includes the facility's: compliance type; Inspection/Investigation Date; Findings; Violation Date; Compliance Date; Action Taken; Statute/Regulation; and Section.

e. Describe the process for correcting inaccuracies in reports (98.33 (a)(4)).

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has procedures in place for correcting inaccuracies in reports. Once the facility has identified a mistake in the report, the facility is entitled to administrative remedies, which allows the facility to submit a written response to the Report of Inspection/Notice of Violation or Report of Investigation/Notice of Violation. The facility must submit within 15 business days of receipt a written response. The facility is required to have a violations conference with the Child Care Licensing Program Manager. If the facility does not agree with the violations conference, they may request an administrative hearing before an administrative law judge. In a violations conference the report is only corrected if the facility and CCPO are in agreement with the outcome of the violations conference. If the facility is not in agreement and requests an administrative hearing, the report is only corrected if a judge authorizes the correction.

f. Describe the process for providers to appeal the findings in reports. Description of the process should include the time requirements and timeframes for:

-- filing the appeal

-- conducting the investigation

-- removal of any violations from the website determined on appeal to be unfounded.

The State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage licensing has administrative remedies

in place for providers to appeal the findings in a Report of Inspection/Notice of Violation or Report of Investigation/Notice of Violation. The CCPO will issue a report within 10 days of the completion of an investigation or inspection. The provider must submit a written response within 15 business days of receipt of the report. A violations conference is held with the Child Care Licensing Program Manager and the provider. If the facility does not agree with the violations conference outcome, they may request an administrative hearing before an administrative law judge. Any discrepancies found during a violation conference or hearing will be immediately removed from the website.

g. Describe the process for maintaining monitoring and inspection 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)).

The Child Care Program Office and Municipality of Anchorage licensing will maintain all existing reports on the website for at least three years. The policy for removing reports can be found in Child Care Licensing Policy and Procedure Manual section 6170.

**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 by Lead Agencies on the consumer education website (98.33(a)(5)). The serious incident aggregate data should include information about any child in the care of a provider eligible to receive CCDF, not just children receiving subsidies.**

This aggregate information on serious injuries and deaths must be separated by category of care (e.g. centers, family child care homes, and in-home care) and licensing status (i.e. licensed or license-exempt) for all eligible CCDF providers in the state. The information on instances of substantiated child abuse does not have to be organized by category of care or licensing status. Information should also include the total number of children regulated to be cared for by provider type and licensing status (81 FR, p. 67477), so that families can view the serious injuries, deaths, and substantiated cases of abuse data in context. The aggregate report should not include individual provider-specific information or names.

a. Certify by providing:



i. 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) is the designated entity to which all State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage licensed, Approved Relative, and In-home child care providers must submit reports of any serious injury or death of a child occurring in a child care setting. The CCPO obtains the data/information about the injury or death by the facility submitting a Child Injury/Illness/Incident Report CC91 to their child care licensing specialist.

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

The Child Care Program Office defines substantiated child abuse and neglect as the act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of harm.

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

The Child Care Program Office defines "serious injury" as: injury requiring surgery; injury requiring admittance to hospital; choking/unexpected breathing problems; unconsciousness; concussion; poisoning; medication overdose; broken bone; severe head or neck injury; chemical contact in eyes, mouth, skin, or ingestion; severe burn; allergic reaction requiring administration of Epi-Pen; and seizures.

b. Certify by checking below that the required elements are included in the Aggregate Data Report on serious incident data that have occurred in child care settings each year.

- i. the total number of serious injuries of children in care by provider category/licensing status
- ii. the total number of deaths of children in care by provider category/licensing status
- iii. the total number of substantiated instances of child abuse in child care settings
- iv. the total number of children in care by provider category/licensing status

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

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Aggregate-Data-Injury-Report-FFY2018.pdf>

**2.3.9 The consumer education website must include contact information on referrals to local child care resource and referral organizations (98.33 (a)(6)). 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) provides consumer education on the website for the state's Child Care Resource and Referral, thread, on the Information for Parents tab.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/parents.aspx>

**2.3.10 The consumer education website must 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 (98.33 (a)(7)). Describe and include a website link to this information:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has a dedicated Contacts information page for consumer education on the website. The Contacts page provides the CCPO and Child Care Licensing contact information as well as the Child Care Assistance Offices for providers and families based on service delivery area. The CCPO website also notes in multiple locations throughout the website if any consumer has any questions to contact the main CCPO office.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/contacts.aspx>.

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

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>

## 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 Prekindergarten, 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) Child Care Assistance Program grantees, and the state's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, provide brochures regarding the Child Care Assistance Program and contact information for other DPA financial assistance programs. Information is discussed during the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) interview with the family or child care provider as applicable. Information regarding participating child care providers is available on the CCPO website and thread's website, on the Information for Families tab. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/families.aspx>

**2.4.2 How does the Lead Agency provide the required information about the following programs and benefits to the parents of eligible children, the general public, and where applicable, providers? Certify by describing for each program listed below, at a minimum, what information is provided, how the information is provided, and how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences. Include any partners who assist in providing this information.**

**a. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program:**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in TANF services, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**b. Head Start and Early Head Start programs:**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in Head Start and/or Early Head Start Programs, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**c. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in Heating Assistance Programs, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links. Heating

Assistance Programs include: the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Alaska Affordable Heating Program (AKAHP), and the Subsidized Rental Housing Utility Deposit (SRHUD).

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**d. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) Program:**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in SNAP, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**e. Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) program:**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC), front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website link.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**f. Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP):**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in CACFP, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

g. [Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\):](#)

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in Medicaid programs to include Denali KidCare, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

h. [Programs carried out under IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C:](#)

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. Also, if a parent indicates a specific need or interest in IDEA, front line staff will make a referral by providing contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**2.4.3 Describe how the Lead Agency makes information available to parents, providers and the general public on research and best practices concerning children's development, including physical health and development, particularly healthy eating and physical activity and information about successful parent and family engagement. The description should include:**

-- what information is provided

-- how the information is provided

-- how the information is tailored to a variety of audiences, including:

- parents

- providers

- the general public

-- any partners in providing this information

**Description:**

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. In addition, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, has robust resources on their website and categorized for a variety of audiences such as families, providers, and the community. These resources include information and access to developmental screenings; best practice activities for parents to do with their children; links to family supports and resources; and Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines. Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines provides milestones for children, including healthy eating and physical activity. The CCPO also partners with many agencies and organizations to help share these resources in a myriad of different ways, including but not limited to: Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education; Department of Education and Early Development; Infant Learning Program; Help Me Grow; and All Alaska Alliance for Healthy Kids. CCPO's website links: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Family-and-Provider-Resource-List.pdf>

**2.4.4 Describe how information on the Lead Agency's policies regarding the social-emotional and behavioral issues and 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.

## Description:

Information is available relevant to children birth through twelve years of age through a link on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website. This link is located in the Resources and Reports tab as Family and Provider Resource List. In addition, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, has extensive resources on their website and are categorized for a variety of audiences such as families, providers, and the community. Child Care Licensing regulations also include behavior guidance and related topics. Additionally, thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency has resources for families. Thread also provides training to child care providers that include guidance and best practice in general content such as trauma; behavior guidance; developmental touchpoints; and child maltreatment.

### **2.4.5 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.**

Training and consumer education is available to all child care providers on behavior guidance for children birth through twelve years of age through licensing chats and training through Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. Licensed child care providers must provide a parent with behavior guidance practices in compliance with 7 AAC 57.535 at or before admission into care. Approved Relative and In-home providers must ensure their practices meet compliance with behavior guidance practices in 7 AAC 41.213 and 7 AAC 41.370 respectively. All CCDF child care providers must develop a plan with the child's parent to address any behavior issues prior to suspension or expulsion of a child in care. The Child Care Program Office participates on Alaska's Reducing Early Childhood Exclusionary Practices (RECEP) committee. The purpose of RECEP is to create a comprehensive system of supports for the EC workforce in Alaska. EC educators need access to specialized consultation, on-going professional development, evidence-based tools and reflective supervision or coaching, in a supportive and sustainable work environment. Exclusionary practices disrupt access to high quality learning settings for children and families and to early childhood educators with whom children develop close relationships, putting children at increased risk of negative mental health and academic



impact. Success will look like a well-funded, aligned, and sustainable early childhood system, wherein

- EC educators are culturally competent, well versed in children’s social emotional development, feel supported and confident, and work in programs that actively promote teacher well-being
- programs and service provider agencies collaborate and coordinate with one another, and actively partner with families and caregivers
- there is shared state level early childhood exclusionary practices policy and regulation across agencies and programs; and
- private and government funding is invested upstream, resulting in increased child retention and fewer transitions, preservation of nurturing relationships, and better child outcomes.

Since 2018, Alaska’s RECEP team has worked to assess what parts of the early childhood system are in place to support the reduction of exclusionary practices and identify areas of improvement. Since 2018 the RECEP team has worked on: defining expulsion, suspension, and warm hand off, developing criteria for a data collection system, surveying the early childhood field to assess the rate of expulsion and suspension to establish a baseline from which to measure success of evidence informed interventions like Pyramid Model, trauma informed practices, and use of coaches and reflective supervision. identifying training needs of EC educator to increase quality, and gathering information on teacher stress, wellness, burn out and compassion fatigue to better inform allocation of resources to support EC educators.

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

Lead Agencies are required to provide information on developmental screenings to parents, the general public and, when applicable, child care providers. Information should include: Existing resources and services that the state can use in conducting developmental screenings and providing referrals to services for children who receive child care assistance. 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)). This information about the resources can include 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 are required to provide this information to eligible families during

CCDF intake and to child care providers through training and education (98.33(c)). Information on developmental screenings, as other consumer education information, should be accessible for individuals with limited English proficiency and individuals with disabilities.

### 2.5.1 Certify by describing:

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)).

Information is available through a link on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website. Information regarding how to access resources for developmental screenings is provided to Child Care Assistance applying families and providers during their interview. Child care providers and families are encouraged to access the Ages & Stages Questionnaires to assist them in identifying delays. There is additional resource information on thread's website, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency to connect to additional resources for developmental screening.

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.). Information on where to access the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program is provided during the family's interview to those families who indicate a child has a special need.

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.

During a family's interview for Child Care Assistance Program participation contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website links is provided by Child Care Assistance Program designees about how to access developmental screenings.

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.

During a family's interview for Child Care Assistance Program participation contact information and where to locate more information through the CCPO's website link is provided about how to access developmental screenings. The Child Care Program Office has a MOU with the Part C Agency, Alaska Infant Learning Program, to process and follow up on developmental screenings submitted to any local Infant Learning Program through a child care provider. For preschool and school aged children, the family is referred to the local school district or the child's primary health care provider for this information.

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

Training and consumer education is available to child care providers through licensing chats and training through Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. Any training related to child development would include information on developmental delays and access to developmental screenings.

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

CCAP Policies and Procedures section 4040-2 6

## 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 (98.33 d). Please note that if the consumer statement is provided electronically, Lead Agencies should consider ensuring the statement is accessible to parents, including parents with limited access to the internet, and that parents have a way to contact someone to address their questions.

### 2.6.1 Certify by describing:

a. How and when the Lead Agency provides parents receiving CCDF funds with a consumer statement identifying the requirements for providers and the health and safety record of the provider they have selected.

A consumer statement is available on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>. Additionally, a hard copy of the consumer statement is available in the lobby of all Child Care Assistance Program grantees, the Municipality of Anchorage Licensing office, and the regional offices of Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Families are provided a hard copy of the consumer statement at the time they apply for Child Care Assistance Program participation, when applying in-person, or at the time a determination is made regarding their application if the application was submitted via mail or fax. The consumer statement will be emailed or mailed to a family at any other time upon their request.

b. Certify by checking below the specific information provided to families either in hard copy or electronically. Note: The consumer statement must include the eight requirements listed in the table below.

- Health and safety requirements met by the provider
- Licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider
- Date the provider was last inspected
- Any history of violations of these requirements
- Any voluntary quality standards met by the provider
- How CCDF subsidies are designed to promote equal access
- How to submit a complaint through the hotline
- How to contact a local resource and referral agency or other community-based organization to receive assistance in finding and enrolling in quality child care

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

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Resources-Reports/Child-Care-Provider-Consumer>

### 3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

#### 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 period, 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 no fewer than 3 months if the Lead Agency exercises the option to discontinue assistance, and policies for the graduated phase-out of assistance. In addition, the Lead Agency is also required to describe procedures for the enrollment of children experiencing homelessness and, if applicable, children in foster care.

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 or, similarly, parents enrolled in school can have eligibility extended to allow parents to finish their school 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.

Note: When asked for citations, responses can include state statute, regulations, administrative rules, policy manuals or policy issuances. See the Introduction on page 4 for more detail.

### 3.1 Eligible Children and Families

#### 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)); 98.20(a).

#### **3.1.1 Eligibility criteria: Age of children served**

a) The CCDF program serves children

from 0

(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

(may not equal or exceed age 19).

If yes, Provide the Lead Agency definition of physical and/or mental incapacity:

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

(may not equal or exceed age 19)

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

i. "residing with":

The Child Care Program Office does not define 'residing with' at this time.

ii. "in loco parentis":

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.990(a)(36) and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3, "loco parentis" means a person acting in place of a parent, such as a relative or friend who assumes parental duties and responsibilities, but without the formalities of legal guardianship or adoption.

### 3.1.2 Eligibility criteria: Reason for care

a. How does the Lead Agency define the following terms for the purposes of determining CCDF eligibility?

i. Define what is accepted as "Working" (including activities and any hour requirements):

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.312 and revised Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section. 4070-3D the definition of "working" is an activity for which a wage or salary is paid at or above minimum wage established in Alaska Statute (AS) 23.10.065; or being engaged in a business with the intention of making a profit; for which a business license under AS 43.70 has been obtained; and that generates to the person engaged in that business net income that, when converted to an hourly rate, based on the number of hours worked or for

full-time work based on a 40-hour work week, is equal to or exceeds the minimum wage established in AS 23.10.065.

ii. Define what is accepted as "Job training" (including activities and any hour requirements):

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.313 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3D. the definition of a job training program is a structured learning environment for a participant to gain or enhance job skills that has specific learning objectives, identified skills to be mastered, a beginning date, and an ending date.

iii. Define what is accepted as "Education" (including activities and any hour requirements):

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.313 and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3D the definition of "education" is defined as "school" and means an educational or training program that includes classroom or online settings. An educational program is a structured learning environment in which an instructor or teacher leads students through a course of study that includes specific learning objectives, goals, and standards, and leads to a certificate of mastery or completion, a state license, a diploma, or a degree.

iv. Define what is accepted as "Attending" (a job training or educational program) (e.g. travel time, hours required for associated activities such as study groups, lab experiences, time for outside class study or completion of homework):

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3D, training includes opportunities provided by the individual's employer, potential employer, or an outside source and verification must include training registration or other documentation. Verification for educational activity must include a course registration and schedule verifying enrollment. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4100-1, travel time is allowed up to 1 hour from the child care provider to the activity and up to 1 hour from the activity to the child care provider except if the parent travels more than 30 miles to their activity or uses public transportation then up to 1 ½ hours before and 1 ½ hours after the activity are allowed.



### 3.1.2 Eligibility criteria: Reason for care

b. Does the Lead Agency allow parents to qualify for CCDF assistance on the basis of education and training without additional work requirements?

Yes

No,

If no, describe the additional work requirements.

### 3.1.2 Eligibility criteria: Reason for care

c. Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children who receive, or need to receive protective services?

No.

Yes. If yes:

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

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4030-1 A child in protective services or needing to receive protective services is a child who has been the subject of a report of harm and is considered to be in the State of Alaska's custody. A child in the State of Alaska's custody may be residing with their parent(s), a relative caregiver, or with a foster care parent. The purpose is to identify, treat and reduce child abuse and neglect, as well as to ensure that reasonable efforts are made to protect and maintain children in their own homes. A social worker may authorize child care for a child in protective services at risk of abuse or neglect and for whom child care during the day is part of a family treatment plan. The objective is to enable the child to remain with his or her own family or to return the child to the child's own family following out-of-home placement. When care is needed for only the child in protective services, the parent or foster parent must meet the eligibility requirements of the Office of Children's Services. Foster parents or relative caregivers who are seeking child care for their own children and for foster children in their household meet all financial and non-financial eligibility requirements.

*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 (98.20 (a)(3)(ii)(A))?

No

Yes

iv. Does the Lead Agency waive the eligible activity (e.g., work, job training, education, etc.) requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services on a case-by-case basis?

No

Yes

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

No

Yes

### 3.1.3 Eligibility criteria: Family Income Limits

Note: The questions in 3.1.3 relate to initial determination. Redetermination is addressed in 3.1.8 and 3.2.5.

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

Per 7 AAC 41.325 the Child Care Program Office defines "income" as the parents' total monthly earned and unearned income before taxes and mandatory deductions from all sources. The only deductions allowed are child support payments paid by the family and educational deductions.

b. Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below at the time of initial determination. Complete columns (i) and (ii) based on maximum eligibility at initial entry into CCDF. Complete columns (iii) and (iv) 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. If the income eligibility limits are not statewide, please complete the chart below using the most populous area of the state or territory (defined as the area serving highest number of CCDF children) and respond to c. below the table.

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
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 (iii) by (i), multiply by 100] Income Level if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI
1	5676	4825	N/A	N/A
2	7012	5960	N/A	N/A
3	7012	5960	N/A	N/A
4	8347	7095	N/A	N/A
5	9683	8230	N/A	N/A

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)).

Statewide.

d. **SMI source and year.** The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted. Current eligibility limits can be found at: LIHEAP FY2019,<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/state-median-income-estimates-for-optional-use-in-fy-2018-and-mandatory-use-in-fy-2019>

*Reminder:* 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-im-2020-02-state-median-income-estimates-for-optional-use-fy2020-and-mandatory-use-fy2021?utm\\_medium=rss](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im-2020-02-state-median-income-estimates-for-optional-use-fy2020-and-mandatory-use-fy2021?utm_medium=rss).

e. Identify the most populous area of the state (defined as the area serving the highest number of CCDF children) used to complete the chart in 3.1.3 b.

Anchorage, Alaska

f. What is the effective date for these eligibility limits reported in 3.1.3 b? 11/01/2019

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

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Files/CCAP-Family-Income-Contributions-Schedule-201908.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)).**

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

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(13) the Child Care Program Office ensures children receiving CCDF funds do not have assets that exceed \$1,000,000, by certifying their income/assets at application. The family self certifies by marking yes or no on the Child Care Assistance Program Application CC08 and signing the Statement of Truth, Rights and Responsibilities and Authorization for Release of Information page of the application. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4060-2, the eligibility worker discusses all information on the family's application during the required interview.

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 rules, which are applied by the Lead Agency (98.20(b)) during:**

**a. eligibility determination.**

Policies and Procedures section 4080, financial eligibility is based on the family's gross countable income, family size, and sliding fee scale.

**b. eligibility redetermination.**

Policies and Procedures section 4080, financial eligibility is based on the family's gross countable income, family size, and sliding fee scale.

**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)). Lead Agencies are reminded that authorized child care services are not required to be strictly based on the work, training, or education schedule of the parent (98.21 (g)). 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.**

- a. Coordinating with Head Start, Prekindergarten, other early learning programs, or school-age programs to create a package of arrangements that accommodates parents' work schedules
- b. Inquiring about whether the child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)
- c. Establishing minimum eligibility periods greater than 12 months
- d. Using cross-enrollment or referrals to other public benefits
- e. 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
- f. Working with entities that may provide other child support services.
- g. Providing more intensive case management for families with children with multiple risk factors;

h. 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

i. Other.

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(10) for a child attending an elementary school, pre-elementary school, Early Head Start or Head Start program the parent is to include the name of the school or program attended by each child in their child care assistance program application. Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4060-2 when conducting an interview with the family they are to be provided resources for accessing developmental screenings. Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.207(2)(c) a child care provider is to collaborate with the child's parent in developing and implementing a plan of care for the child at or before admission when a child is identified as having special needs, or when a special need is identified. Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4060-2 requires information to be provided during the interview with the provider applicant regarding how to access developmental screenings. Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.060, a child care provider caring for an eligible child with special needs may qualify for supplemental program rate. The family applies to the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program with information documentation of the child's special needs. Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program Policies and Procedures Manual sections 8060-4 A., B. and C. require the family's child care provider, in collaboration with the Alaska Resource and Referral Network and the child's family, to develop an inclusion plan for a child with special needs in the provider's care prior to be determined eligible for supplemental funding if there is also an additional cost associated with caring for the child who has special needs. To promote continuity of care for children, all families are authorized CCAP subsidy for a 12-month certification period, only required to report non-temporary changes, and benefits cannot be decreased or ended during the certification period, except for a few exceptions.

### 3.1.7 Fluctuation in earnings.

Check the processes that the Lead Agency uses to take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings.

- Average the family's earnings over a period of time (i.e. 12 months).
- Request earning statements that are most representative of the family's monthly income.
- Deduct temporary or irregular increases in wages from the family's standard income level.
- Other.

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120-1 and 7 AAC 41.335, families are not required to report income changes within their 12-month certification period, unless the income change is an increase causing the monthly gross income to exceed 85% of the state median income. This is because benefits cannot be decreased within the current certification period. Families can report decreases in earnings or increases in the level of care need. These would be increases in benefits and can be made effective within the current certification period.

**3.1.8 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)). Lead Agencies should note that there are no federal requirements for specific documentation or verification procedures. Check the information that the Lead Agency documents and verifies at initial determination and redetermination and describe, at a minimum, what information is required and how often. Check all that apply.**

- Applicant identity.
- Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(3) and (d), at the time of initial eligibility determination and redetermination the applicant's identity name (First, Last and Middle) as listed on the application is verified by a current government issued photo identification. Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual 4070-3 A. if the applicant's name changes during their certification period a government issued photo identification supporting the name change is required in order to change the parent's name in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS). At the time of renewing participation an unexpired government issued photo identification is required if the document on file expired during the family's certification period. This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) and maintained in the family's case file. All foster parents caring for children in protective services must submit a driver's license or government identification. Foster parents are fingerprinted every 5 years as part of the background check requirement and their identity is re-verified at that time.

Applicant's relationship to the child.

Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(2), at the time of application the applicant's relationship to each individual in the family must be provided. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3 defines a parent as biological, adoptive, or step-parent, legal guardian and caretaker who are acting "in loco parentis or as a foster parent. This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) and maintained in the family's case file. The Office of Children's Services accepts verbal verification for children in protective services.

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

Required at Initial Determination



## Required at Redetermination

### Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(8), at the time of initial eligibility determination or when adding a child to the family, verification is required for each child of the family for which child care assistance is requested, supporting the child's proof of age and citizenship or alien status. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual sections 4070-2 A. acceptable verification of a child's age can be: birth certificate; adoption record; passport; government issued photo identification; Denali KidCare card; Supplemental Security (SSI) records; certificate of Indian blood; Immigration or naturalization records; school record; hospital, midwife or physician's records or court records.

Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-2 B. requires verification of a child's US citizenship, US National, and Naturalization to be: Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) entry indicating another Division of Public Assistance program verified US citizenship through receipt of hard copy verification; birth certificate; certificate of citizenship or naturalization provided by the USCIS; US passport or other official identification verifying citizenship or immigration status. Verification for determining a child's qualified alien status includes:

- Lawful Permanent Resident: Form I-551, or for recent arrivals, a temporary I-551 stamp in a foreign passport or on a Form I-94.
- Refugees: Form I-94 endorsed to show entry as a refugee under section 207 of the INA and date of entry to the U.S.; or Form I-668B or I-766 annotated "274a.12(a)(3)" or Form I-571.
- Asylees: Form I-94 annotated with a stamp showing grant of asylum under section 208 of the INA; a grant letter from the Asylum Office of the USCIS; Form I-668B or I-766 annotated "274a.12(a)(5)"; or an order of an Immigration Judge granting asylum.
- Alien who has had deportation withheld under Sections 241(b)(3) or 243(h) of the INA: Order of an Immigration Judge showing deportation withheld under Section 241(b)(3) or 243(h) and date of grant; or Form I-668B or I-766 annotated "274a.12(A)(10)."
- Battered spouse or child of a U.S. citizen or permanent legal resident: (1) an approved or pending petition showing a prima facie case that he or she is protected under the Violence Against Women Act; and (2) verification that the individual

responsible for the battery or cruelty is no longer living in the household of the victim.

- Victim of Trafficking: letter of certification from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). The validity of this letter must be verified and ORR notified of benefits the individual has applied for by calling the toll-free trafficking verification line at 1-866-401-5510. Form I-797 indicating a Class T-3(child) Visa.

When verification provided for the child's proof of age and citizenship or alien status does not contain an expiration date, new verification is not required at the time of redetermination.

At the time of initial eligibility determination or when adding a child to the family, if the child is not a U.S. citizen and child care assistance is requested, verification of their alien status is required.

This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCS), and maintained in the family's case file.

The child's birth certificate is required at the time the child is taken into custody for all children in protective services. Citizenship or immigration status is verified at the time a child is taken into state custody,

[Work.](#)

[Required at Initial Determination](#)

[Required at Redetermination](#)

[Describe:](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(4), at eligibility determination and redetermination the family must provide for each working parent in the family receiving wages or a salary, the name and address of the parent's employer, start date of the parent's employment, the parent's work schedule, the parent's hourly wage or hourly wage equivalent, the parent's frequency of pay, and verification of the parent's gross earnings. Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(5), if a working parent is engaged in a self-employment business the parent must provide a copy of each current business license and verification of the parent's profits and net income from the business. Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4080-2 B. acceptable verification

includes: a statement signed and dated by the employer, employer's wage record, all pay stubs from employment for the full two (2) most current months. This may be the month the application is received and the month prior or the two (2) months prior to the month the application was received depending on the parent's employment and/or pay frequency and when the application was submitted; family's last year's tax filing for Seasonal Income; Military Leave and Earnings statements or by collateral contact with the employer or other person authorized by the employer to verify payroll information. Acceptable verification for self-employed parents include the prior year's tax return to include the applicable schedule, income and expense records or a Self-Employment Income. An Employment Statement CC36 form can be used for wage verification at initial application or if there is a reported job change. During subsequent evaluations of eligibility, the family must provide pay stubs from their employer to verify their actual earnings. The information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCSIS), and maintained in the family's case file. The Office of Children's Services accepts self-certification from the foster parent for children in protective services.

[Job training or educational program.](#)

[Required at Initial Determination](#)

[Required at Redetermination](#)

[Describe:](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(6), at eligibility determination and redetermination, participation in a job training or educational program is verified. A parent in the family attending school (includes a training program per 7 AAC 41.313) must provide for each parent in the family attending school, the name of the program in which the parent is enrolled, the parent's date of enrollment in the program, the date on which the parent anticipates completing the program, verification of the parent's enrollment in the program, and verification of the amounts and terms of financial aid, if any, that the parent has received or anticipates receiving to participate in the program. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070 3-D Academic pursuits are considered an eligible activity when the intended outcome of the educational program or the course of study includes specific goals, objectives, and standards leading to a certificate of mastery, or completion, state license, diploma, or degree. Pursuit of a high school diploma; General Educational Development (GED) diploma; post-secondary; on-line

educational and job training programs; and courses in English as a Second Language meet this requirement. Parent(s) must provide the class or course registration and schedule verifying enrollment with a start date and end or proposed end date to be considered an eligible activity. Information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCSIS) and maintained in the family's case file. The Office of Children's Services accepts self-certification from the foster parent for children in protective services.

Family income.

Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.325, at eligibility determination and redetermination, family income is verified. Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(4)A family receiving wages or a salary must provide the name and address of the parent's employer, start date of the parent's employment, the parent's work schedule, the parent's hourly wage or hourly wage equivalent, the parent's frequency of pay, and verification of the parent's gross earnings. Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4080-2 acceptable verification is defined for earned and unearned income. This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCSIS) and maintained in the family's case file. Foster parents disclose income at the time they become licensed foster parents caring for children in protective services, however their income is not verified.

Household composition.

Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315 (c)(2) the family's application for program participation must include the following information for each individual in the child care assistance family: name, date of birth, and relationship of the individual to the parent of the family. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-4-A., "Families" consist of parent(s) and all

minor children residing in the home. Parents and all their minor children of the family residing in the home at the time of the PASS II application are included in the family size. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, or other adults who reside with the family are not considered in the family size. These adults should not be listed on the family's application unless they are acting in loco parentis. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4060-2 at eligibility determination and redetermination, family composition listed on the family's application is confirmed with the parent. Individuals listed on the family's application are discussed during the family's interview to determine if they are included in the family for child care assistance purposes or if there are other individuals in the home who should be included in the child care assistance family. Verification is the family's application and reported changes. This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) and maintained in the family's case file. Foster parents self-certify their household composition at the time they are licensed as foster parents to care for children in protective services, however, this eligibility requirement does not apply.

Applicant residence.

Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(c)(1), at eligibility determination and redetermination the applicant must provide their mailing address. Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.300(a)(4) the family's children must be physically present and living in the state. The Child Care Assistance Program Application CC08 includes asking the applicant for their physical address and if the addresses provided are for contact information only and the family considers themselves homeless. Verification is the family's application, interview, and reported changes. This information is documented in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS) and maintained in the family's case file. The Office of Children's Services verifies this eligibility requirement for children in protective services at the time they become licensed as foster parents.

Other.

Required at Initial Determination

Required at Redetermination

Describe:

Children in child protective services through the Office of Children's Services (OCS) are considered categorically eligible. Income verification is not required, only a self-certification the foster parent is working and additional verification is not required.

**3.1.9 Which strategies, if any, will the Lead Agency use to ensure the timeliness of eligibility determinations upon receipt of applications? Check all that apply.**

Time limit for making eligibility determinations

Describe length of time:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual 4050-5, an eligibility determination will be made within 15 days of a complete application being received and an interview completed.

Track and monitor the eligibility determination process

Other.

Describe:

None

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

3.1.10 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: Alaska/ Department of Health and Social Services/ Division of Public Assistance

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

i. "Appropriate child care":

Per Alaska Temporary Assistance Regulation 7 AAC 45.258(b)(3) A family applying for or receiving ATAP benefits is eligible to receive child care assistance under this chapter if the child care is provided by an eligible provider under 7 AAC 41 (Child Care Assistance Program Regulations). Per Alaska Temporary Assistance Manual section 730-2: "Appropriate child care" is when a child care provider is willing to take care of the participant's children, appears to have the ability to care for children of the same age and development level as the participant's children, and is or is willing to become an approved or licensed child care provider.

ii. "Reasonable distance":

Per Alaska Temporary Assistance Manual 730-2: "Reasonable distance" is when the provider's location is within 30 minutes travel time by public or private transportation from the participant's home or activity site.

iii. "Unsuitability of informal child care":

This term is not defined - Alaska Temporary Assistance Manual section 730-2 defines "suitable" so adjusted for this definition, unsuitability of informal child care is when child care is not appropriate or within a reasonable distance

iv. "Affordable child care arrangements":

Per Alaska Temporary Assistance Manual section 730-2, "affordable child care arrangement" is when the family has PASS I assistance to pay the expense.

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

i. In writing

ii. Verbally

iii. Other.

Describe:

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

a. Alaska Temporary Assistance Manual section 705-3 and 791-1; Work Services Procedure Manual section 1007, Alaska Administrative Procedures Manual sections 102 and 104.

## 3.2 Family Contribution to Payments

### 3.2 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. Questions 3.2.1 through 3.2.4 address co-payments during the initial/entry-eligibility period.

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. Question 3.2.5 addresses co-payments during the graduated phase-out period.



**3.2.1 Provide the CCDF co-payments in the chart below according to family size for one child in care.**

a. Complete the chart based on the most populous area of the state or territory (defined as the area serving the highest number of CCDF children, aligned to the response provided in 3.1.3 e).

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Family Size	Lowest initial or First Tier Income Level where family is first charged co-pay (greater than \$0)	What is the monthly co-payment for a family of this size based on the income level in (a)?	What percentage of income is this co-payment in (b)?	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)?	What percentage of income is this co-payment in (d)?
1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	57	1	1	4825	434	9
3	70	1	1	5960	536	9
4	83	1	1	7095	639	9
5	97	1	1	8230	741	9

b. If the sliding-fee scale is not statewide (i.e., county-administered states):

i. N/A. Sliding fee scale is statewide

ii. Identify the most populous area of the state (defined as the area serving the highest number of CCDF children) used to complete the chart above.

Anchorage, Alaska

iii. Describe how many jurisdictions set their own sliding-fee scale (98.16(i)(3)).

Statewide

c. What is the effective date of the sliding-fee scale(s)? November 1, 2019. The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As

of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted.

d. Provide the link(s) to the sliding-fee scale:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Files/CCAP-Family-Income-Contributions-Schedule-201908.pdf>

### 3.2.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated, and to whom will it be applied?

Check all that apply under a. or b.

- a. The fee is a dollar amount and (check all that apply):
  - i. The fee is per child, with the same fee for each child.
  - ii. The fee is per child and is discounted for two or more children.
  - iii. The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
  - iv. No additional fee is charged after certain number of children.
  - v. The fee is per family.
  - vi. The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).  
Describe:
  - vii. Other.  
Describe:
- b. The fee is a percent of income and (check all that apply):
  - i. The fee is per child, with the same percentage applied for each child.
  - ii. The fee is per child, and a discounted percentage is applied for two or more children.
  - iii. The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
  - iv. No additional percentage is charged after certain number of children.
  - v. The fee is per family.

- vi. The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

Describe:

- vii. Other.

Describe:

**3.2.3 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)).**

- No.

- Yes, check and describe those additional factors below.

- a. Number of hours the child is in care.

Describe:

- b. Lower co-payments for a higher quality of care, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

- c. Other.

Describe:

**3.2.4 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, on a case-by-case basis, 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.**

- No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments.
- Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments. If yes, identify and describe which families have their family contributions/co-payments waived.
  - a. Families with an income at or below the Federal poverty level for families of the same size.

Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

Per Alaska Temporary Assistance Regulations 7 AAC 45.258 and Child Care Assistance Program Manual sections 4040-2, and 4040-3 E. Families applying for, or receiving Alaska Temporary Assistance are non-income eligible for PASS I Child Care Assistance, thus have a \$0 co-pay. Funding for PASS I recipients comes from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Families are determined income eligible by the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) Field Services staff. Financial eligibility is based on the family's application to receive Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (TA) benefits.

- b. Families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services on a case-by-case basis, as determined by the Lead Agency for purposes of CCDF eligibility.

Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

Per Alaska Office of Children's Services Policies and Procedures section 6.2.2.4 B describes the eligibility for child care residing in out-of-home care which does not include a financial eligibility.

- c. Families meeting other criteria established by the Lead Agency. Describe the policy.

### **3.2.5 Policies and processes for graduated phase-out of assistance at redetermination.**

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

Lead Agencies that establish initial family income eligibility below 85 percent of state median income (SMI) are required to provide 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 (98.21 (b)(1)). 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.

Lead Agencies that provide a graduated phase-out must implement a two-tiered eligibility threshold, with the second tier of eligibility (used at the time of eligibility redetermination) to be set at:

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 co-payment 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.

**Lead Agencies that establish initial family income eligibility below 85 percent of state median income (SMI) are required to provide 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 (98.21 (b)(1)). 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.**

- 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. (If checked, skip to subsection 3.3)

The Lead Agency sets the second tier of eligibility at 85 percent of SMI.

A. Describe the policies and procedures.

B. 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.

A. Provide the income level for the second tier of eligibility for a family of three:

B. Describe how the second eligibility threshold:

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

2. 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:

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

4. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure related to the second eligibility threshold:

3.2.5 b. To help families transition from assistance, does the Lead Agency gradually adjust co-payments for families eligible under the graduated phase-out period?

No

Yes

i. If yes, describe how the Lead Agency gradually adjusts copayments 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 3.4.3 of the plan.)*

No.

Yes.

Describe:

### 3.3 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

#### 3.3 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).

#### **3.3.1 Describe how the Lead Agency defines:**

a) "Children with special needs":

Per Child Care Assistance regulation 7 AAC 41.990(a)(56), "special needs," with respect to a child, means a child (A) within the meaning of "child with a disability" under 20 U.S.C. 1401 (sec. 602, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); (B) who is eligible for early intervention services under 20 U.S.C. 1431 -1444 (part C, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); or (C) who is younger than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973); Should the need exist to implement a wait list, per Child Care Assistance regulation 7 AAC 41.050(g)(2) and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual

section 4030-1 A., an eligible child with special needs will be prioritized as wait list exempt, and will not be placed on a wait list.

**b) "Families with very low incomes":**

To qualify for the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program a family must be determined to be financially needy. Per 7 AAC 45.275 financial need exists for the caretaker relative and dependent child if the total amount of the resources available to meet the needs of the assistance unit do not exceed the resource limit; the total monthly income available to meet the needs of the assistance unit, after certain amounts are disregarded or deducted, does not exceed the 185% eligibility standard and the caretaker relative and dependent child are not members of the service population eligible for TANF assistance under a federally-approved tribal family assistance program. Alaska considers those families whose income is equal to or less than 60% of Alaska's State Median Income (SMI) to be very low income. Currently Alaska does not have a waitlist. Per 7 AAC 41.050, should the Child Care Program Office need to implement a wait list, the highest priority for retention in the child care assistance program will be given to a participating family lowest on the department's Family Income and Contribution Schedule, adopted by reference in 7 AAC 41.335. The highest priority is given to participating or applying families in which a single parent is, or both parents are working, or attending school, if the department has paid child care assistance for full-time student status for less than five years. The next priority is given to families in which a parent is searching for work and is in a participating family, or attending school, if the department has paid child care assistance for full-time student status for five years or more, and the parent is in a participating or applying family.

**3.3.2 Identify how the Lead Agency will prioritize or target child care services for the following children and families:**

Note: If waiving co-payments is checked, Lead Agencies will need to provide further information in question 3.2.4. Paying higher rates for accessing higher quality care is addressed in 4.3.3 and using grants or contracts to reserve spots is addressed in 4.1.6.



a) Indicate how the identified populations are prioritized or targeted.

i. Indicate how services are prioritized for children with special needs. Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment in child care services
- Serve without placing on waiting list
- Waive co-payments (on a case-by-case basis). As described in 3.2.4
- Pay higher rate for access to higher quality care
- Using grants or contracts to reserve spots

ii. Indicate how services are prioritized for families with very low incomes. Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment in child care services
- Serve without placing on waiting list
- Waive co-payments (on a case-by-case basis). As described in 3.2.4
- Pay higher rate for access to higher quality care
- Using grants or contracts to reserve spots

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

- Prioritize for enrollment in child care services
- Serve without placing on waiting list
- Waive co-payments (on a case-by-case basis). As described in 3.2.4
- Pay higher rate for access to higher quality care
- Using grants or contracts to reserve spots

iv. Indicate how services are prioritized, for families receiving TANF, those attempting to transition off TANF, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF (98.16(i)(4)).

Check all that apply:

- Prioritize for enrollment in child care services
- Serve without placing on waiting list
- Waive co-payments (on a case-by-case basis). As described in 3.2.4
- Pay higher rate for access to higher quality care
- Using grants or contracts to reserve spots

b. If applicable, identify and describe any other ways the identified populations in the table above are prioritized or targeted.

Child care providers caring for children participating in the State of Alaska Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) may be eligible for additional funds through the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program (Alaska IN!). Additional funds are based on the actual cost to the child care provider to provide the additional services specific to the child's diagnosed special needs and reimbursable up to the dollar amount of the cost of care authorized through the CCAP.

### **3.3.3 List and define any other priority groups established by the Lead Agency.**

The lead agency does not define any other priority groups.

### **3.3.4 Describe how the Lead Agency prioritizes services for the additional priority groups identified in 3.2.3.**

The lead agency does not define any other priority groups.

### **3.3.5 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 technical assistance 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).**

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

Per Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.315(e) and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4050-4., when a family

identifies they are homeless on their application or during their interview and they meet all other factors of eligibility, they will be approved for program participation for the month of application and an additional 30 days (one month) following the month of application, prior to submitting required verification of: government issued photo identification for the parents of the family; proof of the child's age and citizenship or alien status; and proof of child custody. Families experiencing homelessness are given up to an additional 30 days to provide verification.

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

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

Outreach is conducted to homeless families by distributing information and brochures to homeless shelters; collaborating with the McKinney-Vento statewide coordinator; and providing a resource list on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website.

*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)).

**3.3.6 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)).

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:

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

Children experiencing homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a) (98-2) may be enrolled for not more than 30 days if the child's immunization records are not immediately available. The Child Care Program Office established this grace period in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Epidemiology.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp#7.57>

ii. Children who are in foster care.

Children who are in foster care may be enrolled for not more than 30 days if the child's immunization records are not immediately available.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

7 AAC 41.215(c)(3) and 7 AAC 57.550(c)(3).7

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)).

Children experiencing homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a) (98-2) may be enrolled for not more than 30 days if the child's immunization records are not immediately available. Child care providers will receive guidance and clarification as needed from their licensing specialist regarding enrolling a child of a family experiencing homelessness. Families may be referred to local public health facilities for assistance in obtaining necessary immunizations or at the parent's request, assistance will be provided in obtaining records from the Division of Public Health, Epidemiology.

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

No.

Yes.

Describe:

## 3.4 Continuity for Working Families

### **3.4.1 Minimum 12-month eligibility.**

#### 3.4.1 Minimum 12-month eligibility.

The Lead Agency is required to establish a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination period:

regardless of changes in income. Lead Agencies may not terminate CCDF assistance during the minimum 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 state median income (SMI), regardless of temporary changes in participation in work, training, or educational activities (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) and (ii)). The Lead Agency may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the minimum 12-month period if a family experiences a temporary job loss or a temporary change in participation in a training or educational activity. Any temporary change cannot have a time limit (e.g. 60 days, 90 days, etc.). 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 minimum 12-month eligibility period (except as described in 3.1.1); any changes in residency within the state, territory, or tribal service area

a. Describe the Lead Agency's policies and procedures related to providing a minimum 12-month eligibility period at initial eligibility determination and redetermination and

[provide a citation for these policies or procedures.](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.305 The department will or a designee shall determine family eligibility to participate in the child care assistance program. After a determination of eligibility for a 12-month period, the department will not and a designee may not re-determine family eligibility for that 12-month period, if the family's average monthly income does not exceed 85 percent of the state median income for a family of the same size. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual Section 4040-2 B. PASS I CCA family's certification period is set by the TA eligibility worker. A redetermination of the family's TA eligibility must be completed at least once a year although the stability of the family's situation and history of providing complete and timely reports of changes determine the review period. The PASS I certification period in ICCIS will reflect twelve (12) months; 4090-1 The Parents Achieving Self-Sufficiency (PASS) II and PASS III eligible family's certification period is twelve (12) months. Within that twelve (12) month certification period there may be a combination of months of PASS II and months of PASS III, PASS II only or PASS III only; and 4090-1 B. An applying and renewing PASS III family's certification period for the CCAP is twelve (12) months. When a family transitions from PASS II to PASS III a new twelve (12) month certification period for PASS III is not established.

[The Lead Agency is required to establish a minimum 12-month eligibility and redetermination period](#)

[b. Describe and provide the citation for each of the minimum required elements listed below that are included in the Lead Agency's definition of "temporary change".](#)

- [i. 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.](#)

[Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:](#)

Once a determination of approval is made, if the family reports a temporary change of eligible activity, no changes will be made to reduce the level of care authorized.

A change to add additional care or to authorize care for a month not previously authorized will be made. Temporary changes are not required to be reported. A temporary decrease to a family's income will not result in changes to the family's budget and co-pay. A temporary decrease in the family's income will result in a change to the unit of care authorized, only if an increase in care is needed.

Definition of a temporary change of eligible activity: Any cessation of work or

attendance at a job training or educational program that does not exceed three (3) months. This includes when employment ends with an employer and the family intends or is attempting to find new employment. The three months starts the first of the month following when the change occurs. For the purposes of changes in a family's circumstance for CCAP participation, a change which is considered temporary is not required to be reported. Temporary changes include: a. Any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent, for periods of family leave (including parental leave) or sick leave.

**Citation:**

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120.

- ii. Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working.

**Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:**

For the purposes of changes in a family's circumstance for CCAP participation, a change which is considered temporary is not required to be reported. Temporary changes include any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons.

**Citation:**

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120.

- iii. Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in a training or educational program.

**Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:**

For the purposes of changes in a family's circumstance for CCAP participation, a change which is considered temporary is not required to be reported. Temporary changes include any student holiday or break for a parent participating in job training or an educational program.

**Citation:**

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120

- iv. Any reduction in work, training, or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending a training or educational program.

Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:

For the purposes of changes in a family's circumstance for CCAP participation, a change which is considered temporary is not required to be reported. Temporary changes include any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending job training or an educational program.

Citation:

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120

- v. 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.

Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:

For the purposes of changes in a family's circumstance for CCAP participation, a change which is considered temporary is not required to be reported. Temporary changes include any other cessation of work or attendance at a job training or educational program that does not exceed three (3) months. This includes when employment ends with an employer and the family intends or is attempting to find new employment.

Citation:

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120.

- vi. A child turning 13 years old during the minimum 12-month eligibility period (except as described in 3.1.1).

Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:

To be considered eligible for CCAP benefits, an eligible child means an individual who is younger than thirteen (13) years of age, or a child who turns thirteen (13) years of age during the family's certification period is eligible to continue through the last day of the family's certification period.

Citation:

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-2.



- vii. Any changes in residency within the state, territory, or tribal service area.

Describe or define your Lead Agency's policy:

When a participating family reports they are physically moving or have moved from one CCAP service delivery area to another, they will remain eligible for the remainder of their current certification period if they continue to need child care in the new service delivery area.

Citation:

Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120-1 H.

c. Provide any other elements included in the state's definition of "temporary change", including those implemented during the pandemic, and provide the citation.

A family is not required to report temporary changes, but if reported and the change increases the family benefit, the change is to be made.

### **3.4.2 Continuing assistance for "job search" and a Lead Agency's option to discontinue assistance during the minimum 12-month eligibility period.**

a. Does the Lead Agency consider seeking employment (engaging in a job search) an eligible activity at initial eligibility determination (at application) and at the minimum 12-month eligibility redetermination? (Note: If yes, Lead Agencies must provide a minimum of three months of job search.)

### **3.4.2 Continuing assistance for "job search" and a Lead Agency's option to discontinue assistance during the minimum 12-month eligibility period.**

Lead Agencies have the option, but are not required, to discontinue assistance during the minimum 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.

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. This time period allows 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 state median income (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.

No.

Yes.

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

b. Does the Lead Agency discontinue assistance during the minimum 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 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:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.310(c) During the family's eligibility period, if a parent experiences a non-temporary job loss or ends participation in a job training or educational program, the family will continue to receive program benefits at the same level for a period of three months for the parent to engage in job search activities. The family's program benefits will end after the three-month period of job search activities, unless the parent has resumed work or is attending a job training or educational program. Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3 D. Job search time of up to three (3) full months is available to a parent who experiences a non-

temporary job loss or ends participation in a job training or educational program.

ii. Describe what specific actions/changes trigger the job-search period after each such loss or cessation:

Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4070-3 D.

When the parent in a one (1) parent family, or one (1) or both parents in a two (2) parent family, request child care coverage for job search activities.

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

The time frame will begin the first (1st) of the following month for a period of three (3) full months.

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

4070-3 D

c. The Lead Agency may discontinue assistance prior to the next minimum 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 minimum 12-month redetermination. Check all that apply.

i. Not applicable.

ii. 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.

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

B. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

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

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120-1 A family is required to report within ten (10) business days after a change of the family's physical or mailing address and 4120-1 J. The Designee will close a family's participation at the end of the current month and send the Child Care Assistance Closure notice in the following circumstances, see section 4170-2 Notice of Action for

Family The family's whereabouts are unknown and mail correctly addressed with their last known address was returned by the post office with no forwarding address, and the Designee is unable to contact the family by telephone for a new address. See section 4000-6 Returned Mail Processing.

[iv. 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.](#)

Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.425(a)(4) for the third child care assistance intentional program violation regardless of dollar loss, the department will impose an obligation to repay the child care assistance program loss attributable to the intentional program violation and permanently terminate a family from the program, including terminating authorizations. Per 7 AAC 41.450(a) the department will debar from program participation a family found to be ineligible under this chapter because of (1) a penalty described in [7 AAC 41.425\(c\)](#) for an intentional program violation; (2) failing to comply with a repayment plan developed under [7 AAC 41.420](#); or (3) failing to cooperate with the development of a repayment plan. (b) A family including a debarred individual may not participate in the child care assistance program. Per Child Care Assistance Program Manual section 4410-5 When a family or provider does not develop or comply with a repayment plan as required to repay a Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) overpayment, the family or provider will be debarred from program participation until satisfactory compliance is achieved. When a family owes their provider either their monthly contribution (co-pay) and/or the difference in the provider's charges and what the CCAP has paid on the family's behalf, and the family has not entered into a payment plan with their provider, the family will be debarred from program participation. Per Child Care Assistance Program Manual section 4420-2 C. When an IPV determination is received for a family with an open PASS I case, the CCPO Eligibility and Benefits Staff will cancel any existing authorizations for the timeframe of the penalty and reissue the authorization to include the benefit reduction. When an IPV determination is received for a family with an open PASS II or PASS III case, the Eligibility and Benefits Staff will coordinate with the Designee for the Designee to send the family Child Care Assistance - Notice of Change identifying how the penalty will reduce their benefits. The Designee will cancel existing authorizations for the timeframe of the penalty and reissue the authorization to

include the benefit reduction. A copy of the reissued authorization is sent to the family with the Child Care Assistance - Notice of Change. A copy of the canceled and reissued authorization is also sent the family's child care provider.

### **3.4.3 Change reporting during the minimum 12-month eligibility period.**

#### 3.4.3 Change reporting during the minimum 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 (98.21 (e)).

Note: Responses should exclude reporting requirements for a graduated phase-out, which were described in question 3.2.5 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 3.4.2 of the Plan, they may require families to report a non-temporary change in work, training or educational activities (otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity).

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 state median income (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.

- i. Additional changes that may impact a family's eligibility during the 12-month period.

Describe:

- ii. Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family.

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.320 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120-1 families are required to report changes in their mailing and physical addresses within 10 business days.

- iii. Changes that impact the Lead Agency's ability to pay child care providers.

Describe:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41.320 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4120-1 families are required to report changes to child care providers within 10 business days.

c. Any additional reporting requirements that the Lead Agency chooses to require from parents during the minimum 12-month eligibility period, shall not require an additional office visit. In addition, the Lead Agency must offer a range of notification options to accommodate families. How does the Lead Agency allow 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.

- i. Phone  
 ii. Email  
 iii. Online forms  
 iv. Extended submission hours  
 v. Postal Mail  
 vi. FAX  
 vii. In-person submission  
 viii. Other.

Describe:

Drop-Box

d) Families must have the option to voluntarily report changes on an ongoing basis during the minimum 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.

Increases in eligible activity hours and increases in care hours needed that result in an increase in benefits (level of care); Decrease in earnings that results in a decrease of co-pay and increase in benefit; Increase in household size resulting in a decrease of co-pay and increase in benefits as well as benefits added for any new children needing child care.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

Child Care Assistance Program Manual section 4120-1.

### **3.4.4 Prevent the disruption of employment, education, or job training activities**

3.4.4 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).

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. Check all that apply.

- i. Advance notice to parents of pending redetermination
- ii. Advance notice to providers of pending redetermination
- iii. Pre-populated subsidy renewal form
- iv. Online documentation submission
- v. Cross-program redeterminations
- vi. Extended office hours (evenings and/or weekends)
- vii. Consultation available via phone
- viii. Other.

Describe:

Several options for submitting applications and documents including mail, fax, email, and in person/drop box.

## 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. In addition to generally building the supply of child care for all families, this effort also supports equal access for CCDF eligible children to the priced child care market.



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.

Note: When asked for citations, responses can include state statute, regulations, administrative rules, policy manuals or policy issuances. See the Introduction on page 4 for more detail.

## 4.1 Maximize Parental Choice and Implement Supply Building Mechanisms

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 their 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 their 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)).**

Alaska provides benefits through a child care certificate (Child Care Assistance Authorization document). A parent(s) may choose from a variety of providers, including licensed centers, group homes and homes as well as legally exempt regulated child care providers participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) including Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care Providers, and Accredited and Certified/Approved participating providers whose standards meet or exceed the State's Regulations and Requirements. Care is authorized at the time the family is determined eligible for CCAP and identifies the period of

time within the family's certification period for which care is authorized; the Designee agency and the agency's contact information; the worker who created the authorization document for PASS II and III, the PASS I case manager's name and phone number as applicable; family name and mailing address, provider name and mailing address; the children for whom child care is authorized including age category, and units of care; the anticipated eligible cost of care, including the family contribution amount and anticipated benefit amount to be paid for PASS II and III families; Maximum amount payable by the state of Alaska CCAP; and variable language providing specific additional information pertaining to the unit of care authorized. The authorization document also informs families of their responsibility to pay their child care provider their monthly co-pay and all other provider charges not covered by the Child Care Assistance Program; that the state payment to the provider will be up to the state maximum listed, based on the child's attendance, including when a full month level of care is authorized, but will be paid at a part month rate should the child attend care fewer than 6 days in the month; parents and providers who decide to end child care services, must give the other party at least 10 business days written notice prior to ending child care services unless both parties agree in writing to waive the 10 day notice timeframe requirement; an annual registration fee will be paid to licensed providers up to a maximum of \$50 per provider, per child if the provider charges for a registration fee and has reported this as part of their rates to the Child Care Assistance Program; and funding is through the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Assistance.

**4.1.2 Identify how the parent is informed that the child care 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.**

- a. Certificate provides information about the choice of providers
- b. Certificate provides information about the quality of providers
- c. Certificate is not linked to a specific provider, so parents can choose any provider
- d. Consumer education materials on choosing child care

- e. Referrals provided to child care resource and referral agencies
- f. Co-located resource and referral staff in eligibility offices
- g. Verbal communication at the time of the application
- h. Community outreach, workshops, or other in-person activities
- i. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office website and forms, brochures, and the family interview provide additional information and clarification on provider options.

#### **4.1.3 A core principle of CCDF is that families receiving CCDF-funded child care should have equal access to child care that is comparable to that of non-CCDF families (658E(c)(4)(A) and 98.45(a)).**

a. Describe how parents have access to the full range of providers eligible to receive CCDF:

Information for licensed and legally exempt providers is made available through the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website as well as through the Child Care Resource and Referral Network referral system. Per the Child Care Services Monthly Report (March 2021), 86% of licensed child care providers and 15% regulated license exempt approved, certified, or accredited, specifically participating include Approved Relative, Approved In-Home, and Military Certified) are participating in the Child Care Assistance Program.

b. Describe state data on the extent to which eligible child care providers participate in the CCDF system:

The Child Care Program receives monthly reports from the State's Research and Analysis Unit which includes data on all participating provider types. All licensed and approved providers meet CCDF requirements. As of September 2021, Alaska has 516 eligible providers. Due to a system outage in September 2021, we are unable to provider the number of providers participating in our subsidy program.

c. Identify any barriers to provider participation, including barriers related to payment rates and practices - including for family child care and in-home providers - based on provider feedback and reports to the Lead Agency:

Rural and remote areas throughout Alaska do not have state trooper stations, which conduct fingerprints for the Alaska Background Check Program. In order to participate in the CCAP providers and their caregivers are required to have background checks. If a rural and remote area in Alaska lacks internet, they are unable to obtain the required health and safety trainings via online classes. This means the provider would need to either obtain internet access or travel to a location with internet and/or approved in person health and safety trainings. Additional barriers include the application process, regulatory requirements, and monitoring by state government, and now a lack of need for child care because many families are continuing to work from home, or a fear of placing children in care due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some providers prefer to only care for children of private pay families because there is less paperwork and lower risk. Many providers do not agree with the Child Care Assistance Program reimbursement rates and strongly advocate for increases to the rates. Providers have also advocated for advance payment for service as opposed to reimbursement after care has been provided.

**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)).**

Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.210(10) and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4230-4 B. states that a parent of a child in care is allowed unlimited access to the child and all areas of the child care premises. This requirement is monitored by Child Care Licensing staff while on site for inspections.

**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?**

No.

Yes. If checked, what limits will the Lead Agency set on the use of in-home care? Check all that apply.

- a. Restricted based on the minimum number of children in the care of the provider to meet the Fair Labor Standards Act (minimum wage) requirements.

Describe:

The family must have at least four children who are not in school at any time during the day, are otherwise eligible, and are not the children of the In-home caregiver.

- b. Restricted based on the provider meeting a minimum age requirement.

Describe:

A caregiver hired by the family to provide in-home child care services must be at least 18 years of age.

- c. Restricted based on the hours of care (i.e., certain number of hours, non-traditional work hours).

Describe:

A family may be eligible to use in-home care if they have at least one child, if all parents in the family are working a night shift. Night shift is defined as employment requiring a minimum of six (6) work and travel hours between the time of 8:00 pm and 6:00 am. If this is the only qualifying criteria, eligibility to use In-home care ends the month following a parent no longer working a night shift.

- d. Restricted to care by relatives. (A relative provider must be at least 18 years of age based on the definition of eligible child care provider (98.2)).

Describe:

- e. Restricted to care for children with special needs or a medical condition.

Describe:

A family may be eligible if they have at least one child with special needs verified by a health care or mental health care professional.

- f. Restricted to in-home providers that meet additional health and safety requirements beyond those required by CCDF.

Describe:

g. Other.

Describe:

A family may be eligible to use in-home care if they have at least one child who is younger than twelve (12) months of age. If this is the only qualifying criteria, eligibility to use In-home care ends the month following the child turning twelve (12) months of age. The In-home caregiver may bring their own child(ren) to the family's home if there will be no more than a total of five (5) children (family and caregiver's children combined) younger than thirteen (13) years of age and with the written permission of the family. All children of the family and the caregiver are counted even if not all the children are present at the same time.

#### 4.1.6 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

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 4.1.7.

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 entities that receive contracts (e.g., shared services alliances, CCR&R agencies, FCC networks, community-based agencies, child care providers) and how grants or contracts are promoted by the Lead Agency:

iii. How rates for contracted slots are set through grants and contracts and if they are viewed by providers as a vehicle for stabilizing payments.

#### 4.1.6 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?

No

Yes. If yes, does the Lead Agency use grants or contracts to increase the supply and/or quality of child care programs serving the populations below? Check all that apply.

i. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children with disabilities:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

ii. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Infants and toddlers:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

iii. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve School-age children:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

iv. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children needing non-traditional hour care:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

v. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children experiencing homelessness:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

vi. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

vii. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children in underserved areas:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

viii. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children in urban areas:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

ix. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Children in rural areas:

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

x. Grants or Contracts are used in Child Care Programs that serve Other populations, please specify :

To increase the supply of care

To increase the quality of care

Describe

Not applicable. Skip to 4.1.7.

**4.1.7 Lead Agencies must identify shortages in the supply of high-quality child care providers that meet parents' needs and preferences. List the data sources used to identify any shortages and declines in the supply of care types that meet parents' needs. Also describe the method of tracking progress to support equal access and parental choice (98.16(x)).**



**a. In child care centers.**

The CCPO receives monthly reports from the state's research and analysis unit, which provides data on licensed child care centers. The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) has made 2017 Alaska Child Care Market Price Survey Report available on the CCPO website at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>. The CCPO, in partnership with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) has completed two Market Rate Surveys, one in November 2020 and one in March 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and proposed revised Child Care Assistance Program Rate Schedule draft is being finalized and will be made available to the public in September 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and rate schedule will be posted to DPA's temporary website, thread CCR&R's website, and the CCPO's website when it becomes available. The CCPO and UAA ISER is scheduled to hold public information meetings in September 2021 to share information with providers, families, partners, and stakeholders.

**b. In child care homes.**

The CCPO receives monthly reports from the state's research and analysis unit, which provides data for licensed child care homes and licensed exempt, regulated Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care. The CCPO, in partnership with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) has completed two Market Rate Surveys, one in November 2020 and one in March 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and proposed revised Child Care Assistance Program Rate Schedule draft is being finalized and will be made available to the public in September 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and rate schedule will be posted to DPA's temporary website, thread CCR&R's website, and the CCPO's website when it becomes available. The CCPO and UAA ISER is scheduled to hold public information meetings in September 2021 to share information with providers, families, partners, and stakeholders.

**c. Other.**

McDowell Group created a data dashboard describing the unmet need for children younger than 6 years old, broken out by borough. This dashboard presents the estimated number of children that are in care more generally, not just in licensed care. When considering unmet need, the number of children that are not in need of care, the number of children that are in licensed care, the number of children that are in

regulated approved care (unlicensed), and the number of children that are in other forms of informal care are all subtracted from the total number of children in the region. This method provides an estimate of how many slots for any type of care are needed. Child Care Aware of America has created a desert map for infants and toddlers. One assumption of this map is that all infants and toddlers in an area require licensed care: <http://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/research/mappingthegap/alaska-mapping-the-gap/>

In addition to this desert map, as part of the 2017 Market Rate Survey, CCPO analyzed waitlists for infants and toddlers to get an estimate of how many children are interested in, but not yet receiving, licensed care. The CCPO, in partnership with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) has completed two Market Rate Surveys, one in November 2020 and one in March 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and proposed revised Child Care Assistance Program Rate Schedule draft is being finalized and will be made available to the public in September 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and rate schedule will be posted to DPA's temporary website, thread CCR&R's website, and the CCPO's website when it becomes available. The CCPO and UAA ISER is scheduled to hold public information meetings in September 2021 to share information with providers, families, partners, and stakeholders.

**4.1.8 Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (x)). These strategies should address 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. Identify what method(s) is (are) used to increase supply and/or to improve quality for the following populations and indicate in the description if a strategy is focused more on building supply or on improving quality.**

a) Children in underserved areas. Check and describe all that apply.

i. Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.6).

Describe:

- ii. Targeted Family Child Care Support such as Family Child Care Networks.

Describe:

- iii. Start-up funding.

Describe:

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread has a quality initiative which includes start up funding for new providers.

- iv. Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread offer technical assistance to anyone interested in becoming a licensed child care provider.

- v. Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread coordinate to offer introduction to licensing information and other services to recruit new child care providers in underserved areas.

- vi. Tiered payment rates (as in 4.3.3).

Describe:

- vii. Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

- viii. Accreditation supports.

Describe:

- ix. Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

x. Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

xi. Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program grantees are required to provide outreach to include helping eligible families in Alaska access affordable quality child care and supporting child care providers in administering quality child care programs statewide. The CCPO developed program forms and brochures to be used for this purpose. Designees are responsible for Ensuring information and forms about the programs administered by the CCPO are readily available to potentially eligible families and child care providers throughout their service delivery area; recognizing the diversity of the population and the need for innovative distance delivery options; assisting interested individuals with the appropriate forms and guidelines; and coordinating with the Alaska statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R).

4.1.8 Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (x)). These strategies should address 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. Identify what method(s) is (are) used to increase supply and/or to improve quality for the following populations and indicate in the description if a strategy is focused more on building supply or on improving quality.

b. Infants and toddlers. Check and describe all that apply.

i. Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.6).

Describe:

ii. Family Child Care Networks.

Describe:

iii. Start-up funding.

Describe:

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread has a quality initiative

which includes startup funding for new providers to increase supply.

iv. Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread offer technical assistance to anyone interested in becoming a licensed child care provider to increase supply.

v. Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread coordinate to offer introduction to licensing information and other services to recruit new child care providers for infants and toddler care to increase supply.

vi. Tiered payment rates (as in 4.3.3).

Describe:

vii. Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

viii. Accreditation supports.

Describe:

ix. Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

x. Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

xi. Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program grantees are required to provide outreach to include helping eligible families in Alaska access affordable quality child care and

supporting child care providers in administering quality child care programs statewide. The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) developed program forms and brochures to be used for this purpose. To help increase supply, designees are responsible for ensuring information and forms about the programs administered by the CCPO are readily available to potentially eligible families and child care providers throughout their service delivery area; recognizing the diversity of the population and the need for innovative distance delivery options; assisting interested individuals with the appropriate forms and guidelines; and coordinating with the Alaska statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R).

4.1.8 Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (x)). These strategies should address 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. Identify what method(s) is (are) used to increase supply and/or to improve quality for the following populations and indicate in the description if a strategy is focused more on building supply or on improving quality.

c. Children with disabilities. Check and describe all that apply.

i. Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.6).

Describe:

ii. Family Child Care Networks.

Describe:

iii. Start-up funding.

Describe:

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread has a quality initiative which includes startup funding for new providers. This funding is to help increase supply.

iv. Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread offer technical assistance to anyone interested in becoming a licensed child

care provider as well as the application process and forms for application to the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program through the determination of approval or denial. This will help increase supply.

v. Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread coordinate to offer introduction to licensing information and other services to recruit new child care providers for children with disabilities, to help increase supply.

vi. Tiered payment rates (as in 4.3.3).

Describe:

vii. Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

viii. Accreditation supports.

Describe:

ix. Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

x. Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

xi. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office offers the Alaska IN Program to offer supplemental financial support to licensed child care providers to meet the needs of children with disabilities while in care. Child Care Assistance Program grantees are required to provide outreach to include helping eligible families in Alaska access affordable quality child care and supporting child care providers in administering quality child

care programs statewide. The CCPO developed program forms and brochures to be used for this purpose. To help increase supply, designees are responsible for ensuring information and forms about the programs administered by the CCPO are readily available to potentially eligible families and child care providers throughout their service delivery area; recognizing the diversity of the population and the need for innovative distance delivery options; assisting interested individuals with the appropriate forms and guidelines; and coordinating with the Alaska statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R).

4.1.8 Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (x)). These strategies should address 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. Identify what method(s) is (are) used to increase supply and/or to improve quality for the following populations and indicate in the description if a strategy is focused more on building supply or on improving quality.

d. Children who receive care during non-traditional hours. Check and describe all that apply.

i. Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.6).

Describe:

ii. Family Child Care Networks.

Describe:

iii. Start-up funding.

Describe:

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread has a quality initiative which includes startup funding for new providers, to help increase supply.

iv. Technical assistance support.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread offer technical assistance to anyone interested in becoming a licensed child care provider, to help increase supply.



v. Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread coordinate to offer introduction to licensing information and other services to recruit new child care providers with nontraditional hours, to help increase supply.

vi. Tiered payment rates (as in 4.3.3).

Describe:

vii. Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

viii. Accreditation supports.

Describe:

ix. Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

x. Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

xi. Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program grantees are required to provide outreach to include helping eligible families in Alaska access affordable quality child care and supporting child care providers in administering quality child care programs statewide. The CCPO developed program forms and brochures to be used for this purpose. To help increase supply, designees are responsible for ensuring information and forms about the programs administered by the CCPO are readily available to potentially eligible families and child care providers throughout their service delivery area; recognizing the diversity of the population and the need for innovative distance delivery options; assisting interested individuals with the

appropriate forms and guidelines; and coordinating with the Alaska statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R).

4.1.8 Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (x)). These strategies should address 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. Identify what method(s) is (are) used to increase supply and/or to improve quality for the following populations and indicate in the description if a strategy is focused more on building supply or on improving quality.

e. Other. Check and describe all that apply.

i. Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.6).

Describe:

ii. Family Child Care Networks.

Describe:

iii. Start-up funding.

Describe:

iv. Technical assistance support.

Describe:

v. Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

vi. Tiered payment rates (as in 4.3.3).

Describe:

vii. Support for improving business practices, such as management training, paid sick leave, and shared services.

Describe:

viii. Accreditation supports.

Describe:

ix. Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

x. Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

xi. Other.

Describe:

On September 1, 2021 The Child Care Program Office used thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency as an intermediary to provide applications for a stabilization grant. Phase one stabilization grants provide funding to licensed and approved child care providers. At this time 330 application have been received, and thread is processing applications, no payments have been made.

**4.1.9 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 (658 E(c)(2)(M); 98.16 (x);98.46(b)).**

a) How does the Lead Agency define areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment?

The Child Care Program Office uses borough estimates of unemployment data from Alaska's Department of Labor and Workforce Development and borough estimates of poverty status data from the American Community Survey (Table S1701 - 2012-2016 5-Year Estimates) to define areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment. Alaska has 29 boroughs/census areas of which 21 have been identified to have significant concentrations of poverty and/or unemployment.

The following boroughs/census areas have been identified to have significant

concentration of poverty and/or unemployment: Aleutians East Borough; Bethel Census Area; Denali Borough; Dillingham Census Area; Haines Borough; Hoonah-Angoon Census Area; Kenai Peninsula Borough; Ketchikan Gateway Borough; Kusilvak Census Area; Lake and Peninsula Borough; Matanuska-Susitna Borough; Nome Census Area; North Slope Borough; Northwest Arctic Borough; Petersburg Borough; Prince of Wales-Hyder Census; Southeast Fairbanks Census Area; Valdez-Cordova Census Area; City and Borough of Wrangell; City and Borough of Yakutat; and Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area.

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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) identified strategies for targeted outreach and partnership opportunities to prioritize efforts to increase access for families to high-quality child care and development in the identified areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment.

The CCPO prioritizes efforts through conducting in-person and virtual licensing chats, connecting with CCDF Tribal Administrators to provide technical assistance on licensing options and the benefits of becoming licensed, and assisting individuals applying to become licensed through the process.

The CCPO provides funding to Alaska's Resource and Referral Agency, thread for resources; referrals; SEED, Alaska's System for Early Education Development, and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System. CCPO partners with thread to develop targeted out-reach for participation and supports to provide high quality care for families, and to provide access to professional development support such as training, technical assistance, financial professional development reimbursements, and quality initiatives. Beginning in 2021, all five levels of Learn & Grow are available. The Learn & Grow system will allow increased access to high quality child care.

## 4.2 Assess Market Rates and Analyze the Cost of Child Care

### 4.2 Assess Market Rates and Analyze the Cost of Child Care

Key principles of the CCDF are to: (1) provide equal access to childcare for children receiving childcare assistance; and (2) ensure parental choice by offering a full range of childcare services. Payment rates that are too low to support equal access undermine these principles. To establish subsidy payment rates that ensure equal access, Lead Agencies collect and analyze data through a number of tools. 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 childcare services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child or (2) an ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model (CEM) (658E(c)(4)(B)). A cost estimation model estimates the cost of care by incorporating both data and assumptions to judge what expected costs would be incurred by childcare providers and parents under different 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 childcare services (CCDF-ACF-PI-2018-01).

Regardless of whether Lead Agencies conduct a MRS or an alternative methodology, they are required to analyze the cost of providing child services, known as the narrow cost analysis, that meet basic health/safety/quality and staffing requirements (base level care) (98.45(b)(3), (f)(1)(ii)(A), and (f)(2)(ii)), and higher-quality care at each level of quality, as defined by the Lead Agency (98.45(b)(4), (f)(1)(ii)(B), and (f)(2)(iii)). The analysis must identify the gaps between the cost of care and subsidy levels adopted by the state and then be considered as part of the rate setting process.

Note: Any Lead Agency considering using an alternative methodology, instead of a MRS 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 MRS and an alternative methodology.

A MRS or an ACF pre-approved alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than 2 years before the date of submission of the Plan (658E(c)(4)(B)(i) (98.45 (c)). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Lead Agencies may request a waiver for up to one additional year (until July 1, 2022) to complete the required MRS or an ACF pre-approved alternative

methodology. Lead Agencies may also request the required Narrow Cost Analysis be waived for one year (until July 1, 2022). These waiver requests must include a justification linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 4.2.1 Completion of the MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology.

Did the state/territory conduct a statistically valid and reliable MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology?

Yes. If yes, please identify the methodology(ies) used below to assess child care prices and/or costs.

a. MRS.

When was your data gathered (provide a date range, for instance, September - December, 2019)?

The Child Care Program Office conducted two surveys, one in November 2020 and one in March 2021. The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) completed a Narrow Cost Analysis and the Market Rate Survey report. The data from both surveys were combined into one MRS report.

b. ACF pre-approved alternative methodology.

Identify the date of the ACF approval and describe the methodology:

No, a waiver is being requested in Appendix A.

a. Please identify the Lead Agency's planned methodology(ies) to assess child care prices and/or costs.

i. MRS.

If checked, describe the status of the Lead Agency's implementation of the MRS.

ii. ACF pre-approved alternative methodology.

If checked, describe the status of the Lead Agency's implementation of the ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, including if applicable, the date of the ACF approval and a description of the methodology:

b. If a waiver is requested, Lead Agencies will need to respond to questions 4.2.2- 4.5.2 based on data collected for the FY 2019-2021 CCDF Plan or any data collected since then. Identify the date of the Lead Agencies' most recent and complete Market Rate Survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology that will provide data to inform responses to questions 4.2.2 - 4.5.2. 09/10/2021

**4.2.2 Prior to developing and conducting the MRS, or conducting the ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, the Lead Agency is required to consult with (1) the 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)). Local child care program administrators may also be good informants to Lead Agencies on narrow cost analyses.**

Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the:

a) State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body:

The Child Care Program Office provided Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC) opportunities to attend Market Rate Survey Informational Meetings. During the September 16th AECCC meeting, the lead administrator led discussion regarding CCDF updates, including the MRS. The Child Care Program Office consulted with the Chair of the Governance Committee at Best Beginnings, who is also the former director of Child Development and Technical Assistance at Rural Cap. The Chair was also included in the pre-test of the market rate surveys and was requested to and provided input into the surveys. UAA ISER had additional conversations with the Chair regarding the surveys and the child care system.

b) Local child care program administrators:

Child Care Assistance Program Local Administrators were included in the pre-test of the market rate surveys and were requested to and provided input into the surveys. Those include Alaska Family Services Anchorage, Alaska Family Services Central, thread, and the LeeShore Center.

c) Local child care resource and referral agencies:

The child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency, thread, was included in the pre-test of the market rate surveys and were requested to and provided input into the surveys. UAA ISER also had additional conversations with thread regarding previous surveys conducted by thread in order to decrease duplicate Covid-19 related questions.

d) Organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors:

The Child Care Program Office consulted with the Chair of the Governance Committee of Best Beginnings Alaska's Early Childhood Investment, who is also the former director of Child Development and Technical Assistance at Rural Cap. The Chair was also included in the pre-test of the market rate surveys and was requested to and provided input into the surveys. UAA ISER had additional conversations with the Chair regarding the surveys and the child care system. The CCPO has also had additional conversations with child care providers since the 2017 Market Rate Survey and considered input and recommendations provided between 2017 and 2021.

e) Other. Describe:

Correspondence was sent to Alaska tribal partners to inquire about their interest in collaborating in the review and development of the questionnaire to be used surveys. The Market Rate survey questions were sent to the tribal partners for review and input . Additional MPS pre-testers included OCS, the CCPO's eligibility and Benefits Team, and additional DPA staff . UAA ISER and the Child Care Program Office met with the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care and National Center on Subsidy and Innovation and Accountability for technical assistance and guidance, reviewed questionnaires used by other states, used comments provided from the pre-test conducted prior to beginning the market rate surveys, and reviewed of the 2022-2024 CCDF Preprint for first comment period.

**4.2.3 ACF has established a set of benchmarks, largely based on research, to identify the components of a valid and reliable market rate survey (81 FR, p. 67509). To be considered valid and reliable a Market Rate Survey or preapproved alternative methodology meets the following:**



- represents the child care market
- provides complete and current data
- uses rigorous data collection procedures
- reflects geographic variations
- analyzes data in a manner that captures other relevant differences

An MRS can use administrative data, such as child care resource and referral data, if it is representative of the market.

a. Describe how each of the benchmarks are met in either the MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology.

i. Represent the child care market: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Alaska conducted two Market Rate Studies to see how the COVID-19 pandemic was affected child care in Alaska. In November 2020, there were a total of 437 licensed child care providers in the state of Alaska, while in March 2021 that total increased to 488 providers. The total number of unique child care providers responding to both the November 2020 and March 2021 surveys is 343 child care providers. That is 69.8% (343/488) of child care providers statewide.

ii. Provide complete and current data:

In November 2020, information for this licensed child care provider market price report was gathered through a survey sent to licensed child care providers from November 9 to December 7, 2020. In March 2021 Survey, an online child care provider survey was administered March 17 to April 29, 2021 to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child care providers in Alaska. One week prior to the start date, a notification email was sent. The invitation letter sent the first day of the survey included the link to the survey. Reminders were sent weekly to non-respondents. Telephone follow-up of non-respondents was added to increase the response rate.

In November 2020 of 437 licensed child care providers, 244 or 56% completed the survey. This rate is higher than the 42% of the 2017 Market Price Survey.

In March 2021, of 488 licensed child care providers, 286 or 58.6% completed the survey.

In addition to the analysis of the March 2021 survey respondents (n = 286), we

compare findings to those of child care providers who responded to the November 2020 survey (n = 244). Depending on the research question, our analysis includes providers who responded to:

- Both the November 2020 and the March 2021 surveys (n = 187);
- November 2020 survey only (n = 57); and
- March 2021 survey only (n = 99).

### iii. Use rigorous data collection procedures:

The Market Rate Survey was built and administered using web-based Qualtrics, however, providers could request to submit responses over the phone or using a paper survey. The survey was tested internally prior to distributing to child care providers. One week prior to the start date, a notification email was sent. The invitation letter sent the first day of the survey included the link to the survey. Reminders were sent weekly to non-respondents. Telephone follow-up of non-respondents was added to increase the response rates in un-represented geographic area/facility type combinations. The data were cleaned, standardizing rate units to a common basis and identifying data entry errors.

### iv. Reflect geographic variations:

Child Care Assistance rates are determined for each of Alaska's 29 Census Areas and Boroughs. The 2020/2021 Market Rate Surveys targeted follow up effort to areas which had low response rates. For areas with no providers or low response rates, neighboring Census Areas and Boroughs are grouped together into their associated Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Economic Regions to ensure results are based on a sufficient number of responding providers.

### v. Analyze data in a manner that captures other relevant differences:

The Market Rate Survey's design and estimated assistance rates explicated differentiated between different facility types (licensed centers, licensed group homes, and licensed homes), age groups (infants, toddlers, pre-school, school age), full versus part time care, and daily versus monthly care. MRS surveys targeted follow up effort to facility types which had low response rates. Rates are separately estimated for each of the noted groups and geographic areas.

b. Given the impact of COVID-19 on the child care market, do you think that the data you gathered (as indicated in 4.2.1) on the prices or costs of child care adequately reflect the child care market as you submit this plan?

No

Yes.

If yes, why do you think the data represents the child care market?

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) in partnership with UAA ISER, conducted two Market Rate Surveys during state fiscal year 2021. The first survey was conducted November 9, 2020 through December 7, 2020 with a look back at October 2020 data. The Second survey was conducted March 17, 2021 through April 19, 2021 with a look back at February data. The reason for the two surveys was to gather information on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on child care providers over time. The Market Rate Survey used questions from the 2017 Market Rate Survey and new questions were added to include child care costs, operational costs associated with providing child care, school age children, additional fees for providing child care, and the impact of the of the Covid-19 pandemic on child care providers. The CCPO is requesting a waiver for the MRS and Narrow Cost Analysis as additional time for completion is needed. Additional data will be added to the CCDF plan as an amendment. Intensive follow-up promoted an overall response rate of 69.8% (343/488). Survey data were validated against administrative data on provider rates.

#### **4.2.4 Describe how the market rate survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology reflects variations in the price or cost of child care services by:**

a) Geographic area (e.g., statewide or local markets). Describe:

The CCPO, in partnership with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) has completed two Market Rate Surveys, one in November 2020 and one in March 2021 . The Market Rate Survey Report and proposed revised proposed Child Care Assistance Rate Schedule draft is being finalized and will be made available to the public in September 2021. The Market Rate Survey Report and ratel schedule will be posted to DPA's temporary website, thread CCR&R's website, and

the CCPO's website when it becomes available. The CCPO and UAA ISER held public information meetings in September 2021 to share information with providers, families, partners, and stakeholders.

**b) Type of provider. Describe:**

Child Care Provider rate categories include 1. Licensed and Military Child Care Centers; 2. Licensed Group Homes; 3. Licensed and Military Home; and 4. Licensed Exempt Approved Relative and In-Home providers. Licensed providers are paid at a higher rate than licensed exempt providers. If there are variations in this information, it will be included as an amendment to the CCDF Plan.

**c) Age of child. Describe:**

Age Group categories include Infant (Birth through 12 months), Toddler (13 months through 35 months), Pre-school (36 months through 59 months), and School age (5 years through 13 years). If there are variations in this information, it will be included as an amendment to the CCDF Plan.

**d. Describe any other key variations examined by the market rate survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, such as quality level.**

Not applicable.

**4.2.5 Has the Narrow Cost Analysis been completed for the FY 2022 - 2024 CCDF Plan?**

No, a waiver is being requested in Appendix A. If no, describe the status of the Lead Agency's upcoming narrow cost analysis.

Yes, the narrow cost analysis information is included in the report as described in 4.2.6. If yes, describe how the State/Territory analyzed the cost of child care through a narrow cost analysis for the FY 2022 - 2024 CCDF Plan, including:

a. The methodology the Lead Agency used to conduct, obtain, and analyze data on the estimated cost of care (narrow cost analysis), including any relevant variation by geographic location, category of provider, or age of child (98.45 (f)(ii)).

Two methodologies were utilized. The first used the same approach as the 2017 Alaska Child Care Market Price Survey Report conducted by the Child Care Program Office to provide consistent estimates of cost over time. The second was an original methodology developed for this study and using information about

provider costs solicited in the November 2020 Market Price Survey. The second method used cost of a full-time equivalent (FTE) month of child care was also estimated by utilizing information solicited as part of the Market Price Survey. Providers were asked about their staffing, employee wages and benefits, and about their key operational expenses including food, supplies, rent, and utilities. These costs were then aggregated and normalized based on other operational data providers supplied as well as some assumptions. These costs are reported by facility type and geographic region.

[b. How the methodology addresses the cost of child care providers' implementation of health, safety, quality and staffing requirements \(i.e. applicable licensing and regulatory requirements, health and safety standards, training and professional development standards, and appropriate child to staff ratio, groups size limits, and caregiver qualification requirements \(98.45 \(f\)\(ii\)\(A\)\).](#)

The cost analysis solicited information on staff training, medical leave, and other fringe benefits. Student teacher ratios reported by providers were evaluated against statutory requirements for maximum group size. Providers were also asked about their rent, utility, food, and supply cost. These costs were converted to costs per full time equivalent student, and estimated for each geographic area and facility type.

[c. How the methodology addresses the cost of 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 \(98.45 \(f\)\(ii\)\(B\)\).](#)

Three key inputs are used to estimate the cost of child care: child-to-caregiver and maximum group size ratios established in licensing regulations, regional wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and a set of assumptions taken from the "Guidance on Estimating and Reporting the Costs of Child Care" developed by the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance and National Center on Subsidy Innovation and Accountability. More specifically, the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) used the assumption that personnel costs tend to range between 70% and 80% of total costs for centers.

[d. The gap between costs incurred by child care providers and the Lead Agency's payment rates based on findings from the narrow cost analysis.](#)

Costs of care vary substantially between urban areas and between urban and rural

areas in the State. Response rates for cost questions were lower than response rates for other questions in the Market Rate Survey, making valid statistical inference for some rural areas in the state challenging. While it is believed the narrow cost analysis can provide some context for the cost of care in some parts of the state, caution is warranted before any direct comparisons to assistance rates are made. The Child Care Program Office understands that the current rate structure does not meet the reported cost of care as stated in the 2021 Market Rate Survey. A change in rates will need to go through a regulation change, of which the Child Care Program Office is currently conducting.

**4.2.6 After conducting the market rate survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, the Lead Agency must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology. The detailed report must also include the Narrow Cost Analysis, as described in 4.2.5, which estimates the 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 or for a state with a QRIS system that is currently limited to only certain providers, those states may use other quality indicators (e.g. provider status related to accreditation, PreK standards, Head Start performance standards, school-age quality standards, or state defined quality measures.)**

The Lead Agency must make the report with these results widely available no later than 30 days after completion of the report, including posting the results on the Lead Agency website. The Lead Agency must describe in the detailed report how the Lead Agency took into consideration the views and comments of the public or stakeholders.

Describe how the Lead Agency made the results of the market rate survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology report widely available to the public (98.45(f)(1)) by responding to the questions below.

a. Date the report containing results was made widely available - no later than 30 days after the completion of the report. 09/14/2021

b. Describe how the Lead Agency made the detailed report containing results widely available and provide the link where the report is posted.

The report is available on thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency's website and linked from the State's temporary website until the CCPO's website is available. The link to the report is [https://www.threadalaska.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Alaska-Child-Care-Market-Price-Survey-Report-2020-and-2021\\_9.10.2021.pdf](https://www.threadalaska.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Alaska-Child-Care-Market-Price-Survey-Report-2020-and-2021_9.10.2021.pdf)

c. Describe how the Lead Agency considered stakeholder views and comments in the detailed report.

The Child Care Program Office hosted two informational meetings the week of September 13th 2021. The CCPO and ICER presented the data and provided opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and provide comments. Those questions and comments were collected and will be used in future decision making and regulatory changes.

### 4.3 Establish Adequate Payment Rates

The Lead Agency must set CCDF subsidy payment rates, in accordance with the results of the current MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, as identified in 4.2.1, 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 assistance. Lead Agencies must also consider the costs of base and higher quality care at each level as part of its rate setting. 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 as identified in 4.2.1) for the following categories below.**

4.3.1 Provide the base payment rates and percentiles (based on the most recent MRS as identified in 4.2.1) for the following categories below.

Lead Agencies are required to provide a summary of data and facts in their Plan to demonstrate how its payment rates ensure equal access. The preamble to the final rule (81 FR, p. 67512), indicates that a benchmark for adequate payment rates is the 75th percentile of the most recent MRS. The 75th percentile is the number separating the lowest 75 percent of rates from the highest 25 percent. Setting rates at the 75th percentile, while not a requirement, would ensure that eligible children have access to three out of four child care slots.

The 75th percentile benchmark applies to the base rates. Base rates are the lowest, foundational rates before any differentials are added (e.g., for higher quality or other purposes). Further, base rates must be sufficient to ensure that minimum health and safety and staffing requirements are covered.

Percentiles are not required if the Lead Agency conducted an ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, but must be reported if the Lead Agency conducted a MRS. For states that conduct an ACF pre-approved alternative methodology, report the base payment rates based on a full-time weekly rate.

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. If rates are not statewide, please use the most populous geographic region (defined as the area serving highest number of CCDF children) to report base payment rates below.

a. Provide the base payment rates and percentiles based on either the statewide rates or the most populous area of the state (area serving highest number of children accessing CCDF). To facilitate compiling state by state payment rates, provide the full-time weekly base payment rates in the table below. If weekly payment rates are not published, then the Lead Agency will need to calculate its equivalent.

i. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Infant (6 months) Center care:

Base payment rate: 900

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 209.30

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th



If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

ii. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Toddler (18 months) Center care:

Base payment rate:800

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 186.05

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

iii. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Preschooler (4 years) Center care:

Base payment rate:700

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 162.79

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

iv. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - School-age child (6 years) Center care (Based on full-day, full-year rates that would be paid during the summer):

Base payment rate:745

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 173.26

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

v. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Infant (6 months) Family Child Care:

Base payment rate:900

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 209.30

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

vi. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Toddler (18 months) Family Child Care:

Base payment rate:800

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 186.05

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

vii. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - Preschooler (4 years) Family Child Care:

Base payment rate:700

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 162.79

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

viii. Age of child in what type of licensed child care setting (All rates are full-time) - School-age child (6 years) Family Child Care (Based on full-day, full-year rates that would be paid during the summer):

Base payment rate:745

Full-time weekly base payment rate: 173.26

If the Lead Agency conducted an MRS, what is the percentile of the base payment rate? 25th

If the Lead Agency used an alternative methodology what percent of the estimated cost of care is the base rate? N/A

b. If the Lead Agency does not publish weekly rates then how were these rates calculated (e.g., were daily rates multiplied by 5 or monthly rates divided by 4.3)?

Monthly rates divided by 4.3.

c. Describe how the Lead Agency defines and calculates part-time and full-time care.

Full month care is defined as enrollment of 17 through 23 full day units of care in a month. That is 17 through 23 full days or 17 through 23 units in combination of full and part day units with at least one full day of care in the month. Part month care is defined as enrollment that is fewer than 17 days of care in any combination of part or full day units or between 17 through 23 part day units of care in a month.

d. Provide the date these current payment rates became effective (i.e., date of last update based on most recent MRS as reported in 4.2.1). November 1, 2019

e. If applicable, identify the most populous area of the state (area serving highest number of children accessing CCDF) used to complete the responses above.

Anchorage, Alaska

f. Provide the citation, or link, if available, to the payment rates

[dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/regs.aspx](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/regs.aspx)

g. 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)).

Not applicable. Payment rates are set by the Child Care Program Office for the entire state.

#### 4.3.2 Describe how and on what factors the Lead Agency differentiates payment rates.

Check all that apply.

a. Geographic area.

Describe:

Rate regions are based on the 29 boroughs within the state of Alaska as defined by the State of Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

b. Type of provider.

Describe:

Licensed or Military Center, Licensed Group Home, Licensed or Military Home, and Approved Relative or In-Home Care.

c. Age of child.

Describe:

Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and School Age.

d. Quality level.

Describe:

e. Other.

Describe:

Units of care - full month or part month, full days or part days.

**4.3.3 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). Lead Agencies may pay providers more than their private pay rates as an incentive or to cover costs for higher quality care (81 FR, p. 67514).**

Has the Lead Agency chosen to implement tiered reimbursement or differential rates?

No.

Yes. If yes, identify below any tiered or differential rates, and at a minimum, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates, including if the rates were based on the MRS or an ACF pre-approved alternative methodology. Check and describe all that apply.

a. This option should not be selected if the answer above is "Yes" -- Tiered or differential rates are not implemented.

Describe:

b. Differential rate for non-traditional hours.

Describe:

c. Differential rate for children with special needs, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

Child care providers providing care to a child with a diagnosed special need may receive supplemental payments (add-ons) through the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program (Alaska IN!). Alaska IN! is applicable to all provider types participating in the Child Care Assistance Program. The supplemental payment is the child care provider's actual cost associated with providing the additional services specific to the child's special need. The cost is reimbursed based on percentage increments of the cost of care authorized for the child not to exceed 100% of the cost of care authorized.

d. 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:

e. 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:

f. Differential rate for higher quality, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

g. Other differential rates or tiered rates.

Describe:

#### 4.3.4 Establishment of adequate payment rates.

a. Describe how base payment rates are adequate and enable providers to meet health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements under CCDF, and how they were established based on the most recent MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology and the Narrow Cost Analysis, as reported in 4.2.1 and 4.2.5.. In determining compliance with the Act for the equal access provisions in the FY2019-2021 CCDF Plan, the OCC reviewed all the states with payment rates below the 75th percentile benchmark. Of those states, the half with the lowest payment rates were considered non-compliant and placed on a corrective action plan (CAP). These states all had rates below the 25th percentile for either some or all categories of care. The 25th percentile is not to be viewed as a benchmark or a long-term solution to gauge equal access. It is also not to be viewed as sufficient for compliance in future plan cycles. OCC expects to continue to take action against states with the lowest rates in future plan cycles in an effort to keep payment rates moving upward toward ensuring equal access. Note: Per the preamble (81 FR p. 67512), in instances where an MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology indicates that prices or costs have increased, Lead Agencies must raise their rates as a result.

The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted. Additional data will be added to the CCDF plan as an amendment.

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.

The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted. Additional data will be added to the CCDF plan as an amendment.

**4.3.5 Describe how the Lead Agency took the cost of higher quality, as determined in 4.2.5, 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, PreK standards, Head Start performance standards, or state-defined quality measures).**

The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted. Additional data will be added to the CCDF plan as an amendment.

**4.3.6 Identify and describe any additional facts that the Lead Agency considered in determining its payment rates ensure equal access. If applicable, provide a description of how any additional health and safety costs, because of the COVID-19 pandemic are included in rate setting.**

The Child Care Program Office conducted a Market Rate Survey in 2021. However any update to rates and income eligibility limits must go through a regulatory process to be updated. As of September 2021, the CCPO is using LIHEAP data from 2019, as that is what is currently in regulation. The CCPO is in the process of making this regulatory change and

will update the rates and income eligibility limits as they are adopted. Additional data will be added to the CCDF plan as an amendment.

## 4.4 Implement Generally Accepted Payment Practices and Ensure Timeliness of Payments

### 4.4 Implement Generally Accepted Payment Practices and Ensure 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)). Responses may also identify any additional health and safety fees providers are charging as a result of COVID-19.

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)).

**4.4.1 Certify by identifying and describing the payment practices below that the Lead Agency has implemented for all CCDF child care providers.**

a. Ensure the timeliness of payments by either (Lead Agency to implement at least one of the following):

i. Paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

ii. Paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) processes payment to providers once a complete Request for Payment CC78 form has been received, the family has a Child Care Assistance authorization document for the month of service for the child care provider who has submitted the request, and the month of service has passed. Child Care Assistance Request for Payment CC78 forms can be submitted to the CCPO no sooner than the first day of the month following the month in which child care services were provided. The deadline to submit is on or before the last day of the month immediately following the month in which child care services were provided. Within 21 calendar days of receiving a complete and acceptable Request for Payment CC78 form, the CCPO will process the Request for Payment and verify payment to the provider

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):

i. Paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance.

Describe the policy or procedure.

ii. Providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time.

Describe the policy or procedure.

- iii. Providing full payment if a child is absent for five or fewer days in a month.

Describe the policy or procedure.

- iv. 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.

Care is authorized as a full or part month. If a child is authorized for a full month for care and only attends between 1 and 5 days, payment is calculated at the part month rate. When a child is authorized for a full month and in care at least 6 days, payment is calculated at the full month rate. This practice is stronger than paying just on attendance, as a child who is authorized at a full month rate will still be paid for a full month even if they only attend a minimum of 6 days.

Additionally, when a family needs full or part days of care beyond a full month, full or part day units can be authorized in addition to the full or part month that the child was originally authorized.

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).

Units of care are authorized as enrollment on a full month or part month basis when 17 through 23 full and/or part days of care are needed in the month. When a family needs full or part days of care, in addition to an enrollment authorization, the full or part day units are authorized in addition to the full or part month. When care is

authorized as a full or part month and the child only attends between 1 and 5 days, payment is calculated at the part month rate. When care is authorized as a full month and the child is in care at least 6 days payment is calculated at the full month rate. Units of care are: Part day - up to and including 5 hours of care in a day; Full day - 5 hours and 1 minute up to and including 10 hours of care in a day; Part month - fewer than 17 days of care in any combination of part or full day units, or between 17 through 23 part day units of care in a month; Full month - between 17 through 23 full day units of care in a month; or between 17 through 23 day units in combination of full days and part days with at least one full day units in a month.

ii. [Paying for reasonable mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents.](#)

[Describe the policy or procedure.](#)

The Child Care Assistance Program will pay a maximum registration fee payment of \$50 per child per licensed provider, per calendar year, if the provider requests a registration fee on their Request for Payment CC78 form.

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, including fees related to COVID 19, and the dispute-resolution process. Describe:](#)

Each child care provider applying for participation in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) completes a Child Care Provider Rates and Responsibilities CC12 form which includes acknowledgement by the provider they will follow the requirements of CCAP regulations 7 AAC 41, to include the family being issued a Child Care Assistance Authorization document prior to the provider requesting payment for services. Also included on the CC12 is the provider's rates and hours of operation. In accordance with CCAP regulations 7 AAC 41.025, 7 AAC 41.035, 7 AAC 41.040, 7 AAC 41.245, 7 AAC 41.250, payment will be made to providers as long as a Child Care Assistance Authorization document has been issued to the family and the provider and the child attends at least one day in the service month, except that a provider will be paid for the required 10-day notice timeframe if the child did not attend, or attended only part of the 10 day notice timeframe during the month due to ending services with that provider. If an

adjustment or non-payment determination is made, written notice is sent to the provider describing the reason and their right to appeal the determination through the hearing process. The Child Care Assistance Authorization document includes information regarding an annual registration fee of up to \$50 to be paid to licensed providers in addition to up to the maximum payment authorized; the parent is responsible for any costs a provider charges over the authorized rates in addition to the family's co-pay. Child Care Providers are also required to complete a provider interview, an online provider orientation, and a provider billing training as part of their Child Care Assistance Program application for participation. The interview and the online trainings reiterate regulations, policies and procedures, provider responsibilities, and rights.

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:

The same or following day if the mail has already gone out for the day, the family is determined eligible and care is authorized, or during the family's eligibility period if care is changed/increased, the family ends services with the provider, or benefits are ended prior to the 12-month certification period, the family's identified child care provider is sent a copy of the family's new Child Care Assistance Authorization document which includes the timeframe and level of care authorized. A family's authorized care can only be reduced with timely adverse action at which time both the provider and family receive a copy of the new Child Care Assistance Authorization document.

f. The Lead Agency has a timely appeal and resolution process for payment inaccuracies and disputes. Describe:

If a provider discovers an error they are to contact the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) to report the under or over payment. The incorrect payment process is followed to clearly document the reason for additional payment to be made to the provider due to an underpayment or for recoupment of an over payment. If the error resulted in an overpayment of \$99 or less no recoupment action is taken. If an underpayment is determined for any amount, the error is to be corrected and the provider paid. If a provider disagrees with a decision made by the CCPO or Child Care Assistance Office they may request a hearing within 30 days of the date of the decision. The Alaska Department of Administration, Office of Administrative Hearings conducts the hearings

for the division and issues a final agency action. If a provider is not satisfied with the decision of the hearing authority they may seek judicial review of the final decision.

g. Other. Describe:

Not applicable.

#### 4.4.2 Do payment practices vary across regions, counties, and/or geographic areas?

No, the practices do not vary across areas.

Yes, the practices vary across areas.

Describe:

#### 4.4.3 Describe how Lead Agencies' payment practices described in subsection 4.4 support equal access to a full range of providers.

In Alaska 99% of children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program were in licensed care and 81% of licensed providers are participating in the Child Care Assistance Program, thereby demonstrating participating families have equal access to a range of providers. Request for payment practices are fair for all provider types and include payment of registration fees to allow greater access to more providers. In addition, child care providers receive payment within 21 days based on unit of care authorized and actual attendance, and authorizing care on a full-month/part-month provides stability for providers. The CCPO issues payment for sick days as well as notice days.

In the January 2021 Child Care Services Monthly Report, Table 5: Number of children with an authorization by provider type and CCAP rate region shows of the children authorized care, (71%) children were in Licensed Center care; (10%) children were in Licensed Group Home care; (10%) children were in Licensed Home care; (1%) children were in Approved Relative care; and 8 (less than 1%) children were in In-home care.

## 4.5 Establish Affordable Co-Payments

Family co-payments are addressed in Section 3 related to minimum 12-month eligibility and the graduated phase-out provision and also in this subsection, because they are an important element for determining equal access. If a Lead Agency allows providers to charge amounts more than the required family co-payments, the Lead Agency must provide a rationale for this practice, including how charging such additional amounts will not negatively impact a family's ability to receive care they might otherwise receive, taking into consideration a family's co-payment and the provider's payment rate.

4.5.1 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 services (98.16 (k))? Check all that apply

- a. Limit the maximum co-payment per family.

Describe: .

Family co-payments are based on the family's monthly gross countable income and family size. The Family Income and Contribution Schedule is based on Alaska's State Median Income with a minimum co-pay amount of \$1 (exception families receiving TANF and children in child protective services through the Office of Children's Services) and a maximum of no more than 9% of the family's monthly countable income.

- b. 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

- c. 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 3.2.5.

- d. Other.

Describe:

**4.5.2. 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.

The Child Care Program Office requires child care assistance program participating providers to have established rates for their services. Each provider sets their own rates based on their business need. The CCPO certifies 99% of all children participating in the CCAP are in licensed child care thereby ensuring equal access to quality care and affordability.

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.

A majority of providers charge families additional amounts above the state rate. As of May 2021, the Integrated Child Care Information System is down due to a cyber attack. The Child Care Program Office will collect more data to support why we allow providers to continue this practice in preparation for the next plan cycle.

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.

The family's co-payment is not connected to the provider's charges. Alaska updated the *Family Income and Contribution Schedule* and the *Child Care Assistance Program Rate Schedule* effective October 31, 2019 which resulted in many families experiencing a decrease in their co-payment amount.

## 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 all child care providers in a state or territory and then moves to focus specifically on CCDF providers who may be licensed, or those exempt from licensing. The next section addresses child-staff ratios, group size limits, and required qualifications for caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.16(m)) serving CCDF children. The section then covers the health and safety requirements; standards, training, and monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that CCDF child care providers comply with licensing and health and safety requirements (98.16(n)). Finally, Lead Agencies are asked to describe any exemptions for relative providers (98.16(l)). In some cases, CCDF health and safety requirements may be integrated within the licensing system for licensed providers and may be separate for CCDF providers who are license-exempt. In either case, Lead Agencies are expected to identify and describe health and safety requirements for all providers receiving CCDF.

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 apply to all child care staff members who are licensed, regulated, or registered under state/territory law and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services.

Note: When asked for citations, responses can include state statute, regulations, administrative rules, policy manuals or policy issuances. See the Introduction on page 4 for more detail.

## 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, identify, and describe all that apply, and provide a citation to the licensing rule.**

a. Center-based child care.

i. Identify the providers subject to licensing:

A facility regularly providing child care for five or more children who are not relatives of the caregiver may not operate as a child care facility unless the facility has a current license issued by the department or is exempt under [7 AAC 57.015](#).

ii. Describe the licensing requirements:

A center must be in compliance with all of 7 AAC 57 Child Care Facilities Licensing and 7 AAC 10 Licensing, Certification, and Approvals, as applicable. To be a State of Alaska licensed child care center, a facility must have a capacity of 13 or more

children, and to be a Municipality of Anchorage licensed child care center a facility must have a capacity of 9 or more children. A licensed child care center must meet child-to-caregiver ratios, have an Administrator that meets the age and education and training requirements, and have a Child Care Associate for every 30 children.

iii. Provide the citation:

7 AAC 57.010; 7 AAC 57.300; 7 AAC 57.320; 7 AAC 57.350; 7 AAC 57.505; and AMC 16.55.030

b. Family child care. Describe and provide the citation:

i. Identify the providers subject to licensing:

A facility regularly providing child care for five or more children who are not relatives of the caregiver may not operate as a child care facility unless the facility has a current license issued by the department or is exempt under [7 AAC 57.015](#).

ii. Describe the licensing requirements:

A licensed family child care must be in compliance with all of 7 AAC 57 Child Care Facilities Licensing and 7 AAC 10 Licensing, Certification, and Approvals, as applicable. There are two types of licensed family child care for the State of Alaska child care licensing: to be a licensed child care home the facility can be licensed for a capacity not to exceed 8 children, and to be a licensed child care group home the facility capacity must be 9 to 12 children, and have two caregivers. There is one type of licensed family child care for the Municipality of Anchorage: to be a licensed child care home the facility can be licensed for a capacity not to exceed 6 children for the first 12 months and not to exceed 8 children thereafter.

iii. Provide the citation:

7 AAC 57.010; 7 AAC 57.300; 7 AAC 57.320; 7 AAC 57.350; 7 AAC 57.505; AMC 16.55.170

c. In-home care (care in the child's own) (if applicable):

i. Identify the providers subject to licensing:

Exempt from Licensing

ii. Describe the licensing requirements:

Exempt from Licensing requirements.

iii. Provide the citation:

7 AAC 57.015(9)

**5.1.2 Identify the CCDF-eligible providers who are exempt from licensing requirements. 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. Describe how such exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children (658E (c)(2)(F); 98.40(a)(2)). Do not include exempt relative care providers, this information will be collected in Section 5.6.**

a. License-exempt center-based child care. Describe and provide the citation by answering the questions below.

i. Identify the CCDF-eligible center-based child care providers who are exempt from licensing requirements. Describe the 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:

US Department of Defense or US Coast Guard Certified hold a current certificate or other approval granted by the US Department of Defense or US Coast Guard and Department of Defense Instruction Number 6060.02 effective August 5, 2014 are the standards used in certifying these providers, regardless of the military branch, and meet the requirements of 7 AAC 41 (2) Tribally Approved or Tribally Certified hold a current certificate or other approval granted by a tribal entity. The standards used for tribal certification must be evaluated by the CCPO to determine if they meet or exceed the requirements of 7 AAC 41 in order to be eligible for CCAP participation; (3) Nationally Accredited or Nationally Certified Day Camp or Similar Facility or Program hold a current accreditation or certification from the American Camping Association or another national accreditation group. The accreditation standards must be evaluated by the CCPO to determine if they meet or exceed the requirements of 7 AAC 41 to be eligible for CCAP participation.

ii. [Provide the citation to this policy:](#)

Child Care Assistance Program Regulations section 7 AAC 41.200(a)(2)(3)(4), Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual section 4190-1.

iii. [Describe how the exemptions for these CCDF-eligible providers do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children.](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program Regulations section 7 AAC 41.210(2), child care providers shall remain in compliance with the applicable requirements of this chapter and shall remain in compliance with the applicable requirements of the accrediting, certifying, or approving agency; (6) shall immediately notify the department or designee regarding any circumstance that involves abuse, harm, or serious risk of harm to children in care; (7) shall give written notice to a participating family at least 10 business days before child care services are discontinued, specifying the last date care is to be provided; (8) shall cooperate with the department by allowing announced or unannounced access by the department to all areas of the child care premises, records, and children in care for purposes of health and safety inspections, investigations, or other program compliance reviews; (9) shall contact the child's parent in case of illness or injury; (10) shall allow a parent of a child in care unlimited access to the parent's child and all areas of the child care premises; (11) shall maintain daily attendance records reflecting dates and time children are in care; (12) shall, before program participation or within the first three months after receiving approval for program participation, obtain training on health and safety topics consisting of (A) the prevention and control of infectious diseases; training under this subparagraph must include training on immunizations; (B) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices; (C) the administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent; (D) the prevention of and response to emergencies because of food and allergic reactions; (E) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic; (F) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment; (G) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a hazard or natural disaster within the meaning of those terms under 42 U.S.C. 5195a(a) (sec. 602(a), Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act); (H) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants; (I) appropriate

precautions in transporting children; (J) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and (K) minimum health and safety training. Per 7 AAC 41.211 Ratios and Program Requirements; 7 AAC 41.213 Behavior Guidance, 7 AAC 41.215 General Health, Safety, Medication, and Nutrition Requirements; 7 AAC 41.220 Environmental Health and Safety Requirements; 7 AAC 41.222 Life and Fire Safety; 7 AAC 41.225 Diapering; 7 AAC 41.230 First Aid Kit and Procedures; 7 AAC 41.235 Certification for First Aid and CPR; and 7 AAC 41.240 Animals, Toxic Substances, and Poisonous Plants: A provider described in [7 AAC 41.200](#)(a)(2),(3), or (4) shall meet the applicable requirements of the accrediting, certifying, or approving agency. The standards and requirements of the accrediting, certifying, or approving agency must be evaluated by the CCPO to determine if they meet or exceed the requirements of 7 AAC 41 in order to be eligible for CCAP participation. US Department of Defense or US Coast Guard Certified hold a current certificate or other approval granted by the US Department of Defense or US Coast Guard and Department of Defense Instruction Number 6060.02 effective August 5, 2014 are the standards used in certifying these providers, regardless of the military branch, and meet the requirements of 7 AAC 41.

b. License-exempt family child care. Describe and provide the citation by answering the questions below.

i. Identify the CCDF-eligible family child care providers who are exempt from licensing requirements. Describe the 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:

The department will or a designee shall authorize a provider to participate in the child care assistance program under this chapter as an Approved Relative Child Care Provider, if the provider meets the applicable requirements and has approval of the department or a designee under [7 AAC 41.201](#)(d). A provider under [7 AAC 41.200](#) (a)(5), who is exempt from licensure under [7 AAC 57.015](#)(8), may apply for approval to participate in the child care assistance program if the provider will regularly provide care for children, each of whom is a qualifying relative of the provider. A child in the provider's care must be the grandchild, great grandchild, niece, nephew, or sibling of the provider. Care may only be provided to a maximum of five children who are listed on the application. The five-children maximum includes all children younger than 13 years of age residing in the provider's household. Child care services must be

provided by the provider as the sole caregiver, in the provider's private residence that is outside of the child's own home, including providers who are siblings, and for less than 24 hours per day. A provider described in this subsection will be approved for participation in the program biennially. A parent will not be approved for participation in the program if that parent is providing care only for that parent's own children.

ii. Provide the citation to this policy:

7 AAC 41.200 Provider Eligibility and Qualifications; 7 AAC 41.201(d); and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual Section 4190.

iii. Describe how the exemptions for these CCDF-eligible providers do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children.

In order to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program, a provider must meet and maintain all applicable requirements as described in Child Care Assistance Regulations 7 AAC 41, all health and safety requirements as described in 7 AAC 57, and all background check requirements under 7 AAC 10.900 - 7 AAC 10.990 for the provider and all individuals 16 years of age and older living in the location where child care services are provided. Approved Relative Child Care Providers are monitored by Child Care Assistance Program Designees with on-site assistance from the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) or Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Licensing Staff, per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures section 4230-3.

c. In-home care (care in the child's own home by a non-relative): Describe and provide the citation by answering the questions below.

i. Identify the CCDF-eligible in-home child care (care in the child's own home by a non-relative) providers who are exempt from licensing requirements. Describe the 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.

The department will or a designee shall authorize a provider to participate in the child care assistance program under this chapter as an In-Home Child Care Provider, if the provider meets the applicable requirements and has approval of the department or a designee. A parent will not be approved for participation in the program as an in-home caregiver for the care of the parent's own children. A family eligible to hire an in-home caregiver for the children of the family residing in the family's home must be

participating in an eligible activity outside the family's home, except as described in [7 AAC 41.310\(b\)\(4\)](#), and require care for (1) at least four children who (A) are not in school at any time during the day; (B) require care; (C) are otherwise eligible as specified in [7 AAC 41.350](#); and (D) are not the children of the in-home child care caregiver; (2) at least one child with special needs; (3) at least one child who is younger than 12 months of age; or (4) at least one child of a family in which all parents are working a night shift. The In-home caregiver may bring their own child(ren) to the family's home if there will be no more than a total of five (5) children (family and caregiver's children combined) younger than thirteen (13) years of age and with the written permission of the family. All children of the family and the caregiver are counted even if not all the children are present at the same time.

[ii. Provide the citation to this policy:](#)

7 AAC 41.200 Provider Eligibility and Qualifications; 7 AAC 41.370; and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual Section 4190.

[iii. Describe how the exemptions for these CCDF-eligible providers do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children.](#)

In order to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program a provider a CCAP eligible family may hire an in-home caregiver to care for the family's children in the family's home if the family and caregiver meet and maintain all requirements, which include health and safety requirements as described in Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41, 7 AAC 41.370, Child Care Licensing Regulations 7 AAC 57 and the background check requirements of 7 AAC 10.900 - 7 AAC 10.990. The caregiver cannot reside in the family home and the parent(s) using an In-home caregiver is considered the provider and is responsible for establishing expectations for their caregiver that meet the requirements as listed above along with CCAP policies and procedures section 4230-4 . The CCAP Designee monitors In-home providers with on-site assistance from the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) or Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Licensing Staff, per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures section 4230-3.

## 5.2 Standards for Ratios, Group Size and Qualifications for CCDF Providers

Lead Agencies are required to have 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. Exemptions for relative providers will be addressed in subsection 5.6.

### **5.2.1 Describe how the state/territory defines the following age classifications. For instance, Infant: 0-18 months.**

#### **a. Infant. Describe:**

For the State of Alaska, child care licensing, an infant means a child from birth through 18 months of age. For Municipality of Anchorage child care licensing there are two categories: a young infant means a child from 6 weeks through 11 months or older if not walking independently, an older infant means a child from 12 through 18 months old.

#### **b. Toddler. Describe:**

A toddler means a child age 19 to 36 months.

#### **c. Preschool. Describe:**

A preschooler means 3 and 4 years of age.

#### **d. School-Age. Describe:**

For the State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage, child care licensing school-age is broken up into two age categories: Kindergarten means children 5 and 6 years of age and school-age means 7 through 12 years of age



**5.2.2 To demonstrate continued compliance, provide the ratio and group size for settings and age groups below.**

a) Licensed CCDF center-based care

i. Infant

A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 3 children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of five children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

B. Group size:

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home caring only for infants is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 infants if not more than two of the infants are non-ambulatory. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 2 caregivers with a maximum group size of 5 infants if not more than four infants are non-ambulatory . For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 infants if not more than two of the infants are non-ambulatory.

ii. Toddler

A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 3 children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have

at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of five children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

**B. Group size:**

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home caring only for toddler is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 toddler if not more than two of the toddler are non-ambulatory. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 2 caregivers with a maximum group size of 5 toddlers if not more than four toddlers are non-ambulatory . For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 toddlers if not more than two of the toddlers are non-ambulatory.

**iii. Preschool**

**A. Ratio:**

10:1

**B. Group size:**

20:2

**iv. School-age**

**A. Ratio:**

State of Alaska child care licensing Kindergarten (5-6 years old) 14:1; and School-age (7-12) 18:1. Municipality of Anchorage care licensing Kindergarten (5-6 years old) 10:1; and School-age (7-12) 10:1

**B. Group size:**

State of Alaska child care licensing, kindergarten (5-6 years old) 28:2 and school-age (7-12) 36:2. Municipality of Anchorage child care licensing - Kindergarten (5-6 years old) 20:2, and School-age (7-12) 20:2.

**v. Mixed-Age Groups (if applicable)**

**A. Ratio:**

Exempt from Licensing.

**B. Group size:**

Exempt from Licensing.

vi. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe the ratio and group size requirements for license-exempt providers.

Exempt from Licensing.

**5.2.2 To demonstrate continued compliance, provide the ratio and group size for settings and age groups below.**

**b. Licensed CCDF family child care home providers:**

**i. Mixed Groups**

**A. Ratio:**

Home: Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 8 children under age 13 years. Of the total children in care, no more than 3 may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory.

Group Home: Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of 12 children under age 13 years. Of the total children in care, no more than five may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory. There is one type of licensed family child care for the Municipality of Anchorage: to be a licensed child care home the facility can be licensed for a capacity not to exceed 6 children for the first 12 months and not to exceed 8 children thereafter. Of the total children in care, no more than 3 may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory.

**B. Group size:**

State of Alaska child care licensing maximum group size for a child care home is 8

children to 1 caregiver. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 12 children to 2 caregivers. For Municipality of Anchorage child care homes, maximum group size for the first 12 months is 6 children to 1 caregiver, and thereafter is 8 children to 1 caregiver.

## ii. Infant

### A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 3 children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of five children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

### B. Group size:

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home caring only for infants is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 infants if not more than two of the infants are non-ambulatory. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 2 caregivers with a maximum group size of 5 infants if not more than four infants are non-ambulatory . For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 infants if not more than two of the infants are non-ambulatory.

## iii. Toddler

### A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 3 children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of five

children may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

#### B. Group size:

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home caring only for toddler is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 toddler if not more than two of the toddler are non-ambulatory. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 2 caregivers with a maximum group size of 5 toddlers if not more than four toddlers are non-ambulatory . For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is 1 caregiver with a maximum group size of 3 toddlers if not more than two of the toddlers are non-ambulatory.

#### iv. Preschool

##### A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 8 children under age 13 years. Municipality of Anchorage Municipal Code AMC 16.55.170 child care homes must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 6 children for the first 12 months, and no more than a total of 8 children thereafter. Of the total children in care, no more than 3 may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of 12 children under age 13 years. Of the total children in care, no more than five may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

##### B. Group size:

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home is 8 children to 1 caregiver. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 12 children to 2 caregivers. For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is no more than 6 children to 1 caregiver, and for subsequent years no more than 8 children to 1 caregiver.

v. School-age

A. Ratio:

The State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (a) requires: a child care home must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 8 children under age 13 years. Municipality of Anchorage Municipal Code AMC 16.55.170 child care homes must have at least one caregiver and may provide care for no more than a total of 6 children for the first 12 months, and no more than a total of 8 children thereafter. Of the total children in care, no more than 3 may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than 2 may be non-ambulatory. For the State of Alaska Child Care Facilities Licensing regulation 7 AAC 57.505 (b) requires: a child care group home must have at least two caregivers and may provide care for no more than a total of 12 children under age 13 years. Of the total children in care, no more than five may be under the age of 30 months, and no more than four may be non-ambulatory.

B. Group size:

The State of Alaska maximum group size for a child care home is 8 children to 1 caregiver. Maximum group size for a child care group home is 12 children to 2 caregivers. For the Municipality of Anchorage child care homes maximum group size for the first year is no more than 6 children to 1 caregiver, and for subsequent years no more than 8 children to 1 caregiver.

vi. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care homes, describe the ratio and group size requirements for license-exempt family child care home providers.

To be exempt from Licensing requirements, a child care home must care for no more than 4 unrelated children.

**5.2.2 To demonstrate continued compliance, provide the ratio and group size for settings and age groups below.**

c. Licensed in-home care (care in the child's own home):

i. Mixed Groups (if applicable)

A. Ratio:

Exempt from Licensing.

B. Group size:

Exempt from Licensing.

ii. Infant (if applicable)

A. Ratio:

Exempt from Licensing.

B. Group size:

Exempt from Licensing.

iii. Toddler (if applicable)

A. Ratio:

Exempt from Licensing.

B. Group size:

Exempt from Licensing.

iv. Preschool (if applicable)

A. Ratio:

Exempt from Licensing.

B. Group size:

Exempt from Licensing.

v. School-age (if applicable)

**A. Ratio:**

Exempt from Licensing.

**B. Group size:**

Exempt from Licensing.

**vi. Describe the ratio and group size requirements for license-exempt in-home care.**

[7 AAC 41.211. Ratios and program requirements](#) (b) A provider described in [7 AAC 41.200\(a\)\(5\)](#) shall ensure that the number of children does not exceed the maximum of five children, younger than 13 years of age, and that no more than two children are younger than 30 months of age. Group size: Each child younger than 13 years of age receiving care, regardless of the hours in care, must be counted in the maximum number of children allowed, including the provider's own children or other children residing in the provider's home. A child who reaches 13 years of age while receiving authorized care, must be counted in determining the maximum number of five children receiving care.

**5.2.3 Provide the teacher/caregiver qualifications for each category of care.**

**a. Licensed Center-Based Care**

**i. Describe the teacher qualifications for licensed CCDF center-based care, including any variations based on the ages of children in care:**

[7 AAC 57.300. Qualifications of an administrator](#) and [7 AAC 57.310. Qualifications and responsibilities of employees and other individuals in a child care facility](#).

Teacher/caregiver qualifications include being at least 18 years of age to count in the child-to-caregiver ratios, except in a child care center a caregiver who is at least 16 years old may be counted if they have completed a child care training course or have demonstrated competency in child care to the administrator's satisfaction, works under the supervision of an adult caregiver, works within sight and sound of an adult caregiver, and makes up no more than one-fourth of the total caregivers on duty.

Teacher/caregiver qualifications also include an orientation of the facility's policies and procedures; where appropriate, satisfying the individual needs of children; emergency



procedures and health and safety measures; the following approved health and safety training, appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served, which consists of:

- (A) prevention and control of infectious diseases, including immunizations;
- (B) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;
- (C) administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;
- (D) prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions;
- (E) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- (F) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment;
- (G) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-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) that shall include procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place and lock down, staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions);
- (H) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants;
- (I) appropriate precautions in transporting children, if applicable;
- (J) valid current pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and
- (K) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, as required by section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i); trained in compliance with Alaska's child abuse reporting laws under AS 47.17, or other child abuse reporting procedures and laws in the service area; and the applicable requirements of 7 AAC 10.1000-7 AAC 10.1095 and 7 AAC 57.005- 7 AAC 57.810.

ii. Describe the director qualification for licensed CCDF center-based care, including any variations based on the ages of children in care or the number of staff employed: [7 AAC 57.300. Qualifications of an administrator](#) and [7 AAC 57.310. Qualifications and responsibilities of employees and other individuals in a child care facility](#). The director (administrator) of a child care center must be at least 21 years of age, and

must: have an understanding of the development of children; have the ability to care for children; have the skills to work with children, family members, department staff, community agencies; and, if applicable, staff of the child care facility; and have management and supervisory skills necessary to handle finances, plan and evaluate programs, and select and supervise personnel, including delegation of responsibility and motivation of staff. The administrator of a child care facility must have at least 12 semester hours of college credits in early childhood development, child development, child psychology, or the equivalent, or must hold either a current child development associate (CDA) credential from the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition or a Montessori certificate issued by a program accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Commission for Teacher Education. College credits in management may substitute for three of the 12 required credits. The administrator of a child care center for school age children may substitute relevant college courses, except that at least three semester hours of college credits in child development are required.

Additionally, the director (Administrator) of a licensed CCDF child care center, must complete the following approved health and safety training, appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served:

- (A) prevention and control of infectious diseases, including immunizations;
- (B) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;
- (C) administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;
- (D) prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions;
- (E) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- (F) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment;
- (G) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-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) that shall include procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place and lock down, staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions);
- (H) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio

contaminants;

(I) appropriate precautions in transporting children, if applicable;

(J) valid current pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and

(K) Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, as required by section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C.

5106a(b)(2)(B)(i); trained in compliance with Alaska's child abuse reporting laws under AS 47.17, or other child abuse reporting procedures and laws in the service area.

iii. If any of the responses above are different for license-exempt child care centers, describe which requirements apply to exempt centers:

Exempt child care centers must meet or exceed Child Care Assistance Program Regulations 7 AAC 41, Child Care Licensing Regulations 7 AAC 57, to be eligible to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iv. If applicable, provide the website link detailing the center-based teacher and director qualifications.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx>;

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp#7.57.300>

## b. Licensed Family Child Care

i. Describe the provider qualifications for licensed family child care homes, including any variations based on the ages of children in care:

[7 AAC 57.300. Qualifications of an administrator](#) and [7 AAC 57.310. Qualifications and responsibilities of employees and other individuals in a child care facility](#).

Administrator qualifications include being at least 21 years of age; teacher/caregiver qualifications include being at least 18 years of age; and an orientation of the facility's policies and procedures; where appropriate, satisfying the individual needs of children; emergency procedures and health and safety measures; the following approved health and safety training, appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served, which consists of: (A) prevention and control of infectious diseases, including immunizations;

(B) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;

(C) administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;

(D) prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions;

- (E) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;
- (F) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment;
- (G) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-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) that shall include procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place and lock down, staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions);
- (H) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants;
- (I) appropriate precautions in transporting children, if applicable;
- (J) valid current pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and
- (K) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, as required by section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i); trained in compliance with Alaska's child abuse reporting laws under AS 47.17, or other child abuse reporting procedures and laws in the service area; and the applicable requirements of 7 AAC 10.1000-7 AAC 10.1095 and 7 AAC 57.005- 7 AAC 57.810.

ii. If any of the responses above are different for license-exempt family child care homes, describe which requirements apply to exempt homes:

i. A provider described in [7 AAC 41.200\(a\)\(5\)](#) must:

- (1) be at least 18 years of age;
- (2) have at least a high school diploma, general educational development (GED) diploma, or the equivalent;
- (3) have an understanding of the development of children;
- (4) have the ability to care for children;
- (5) have the skills to work with children, family members, department staff, and community agencies;
- (6) have the skills necessary to handle finances and plan and evaluate programs; and
- (7) be able to prevent exposure of children to high-risk situations, including exposure

to physical hazards and encounters with individuals or animals posing a possible danger.

7 AAC 41.201(d) A provider under [7 AAC 41.200\(a\)\(5\)](#), who is exempt from licensure under [7 AAC 57.015\(8\)](#), may apply for approval to participate in the child care assistance program under this chapter if the provider will regularly provide care for children, each of whom is a qualifying relative of the provider. A child in the provider's care must be the grandchild, great grandchild, niece, nephew, or sibling of the provider. Care may only be provided to a maximum of five children who are listed on the application. The five-children maximum includes all children younger than 13 years of age residing in the provider's household. Child care services must be provided by the provider as the sole caregiver, in the provider's private residence that is outside of the child's own home, including providers who are siblings, and for less than 24 hours per day. A provider described in this subsection will be approved for participation in the program biennially. A parent will not be approved for participation in the program if that parent is providing care only for that parent's own children.

To participate in the Child Care Assistance Program a provider must meet and maintain all applicable requirements as described in Child Care Assistance Regulations 7 AAC 41, all health and safety requirements as described in 7 AAC 57, and all background check requirements under 7 AAC 10.900 - 7 AAC 10.990 for the provider and all individuals 16 years of age and older living in the location where child care services are provided.

iii. [If applicable, provide the website link detailing the family child care home provider qualifications:](#)

<http://www.akleg.gov/basis/aac.asp#7.41.200>

c. [Regulated or registered In-home Care \(care in the child's own home by a non-relative\)](#)

i. [Describe the qualifications for licensed in-home child care providers \(care in the child's own home\) including any variations based on the ages of children in care:](#)

A license exempt In-home child care provider described in [7 AAC 41.200\(a\)\(6\)](#) must meet the applicable qualifications of [7 AAC 41.370](#). [7 AAC 41.370. Child care in the child's own home](#) (a) To participate in the child care assistance program under this

chapter, an eligible family may hire an in-home child care caregiver to care for the family's children in the family's home only if the caregiver does not reside in the family

home, has a valid background check under [AS 47.05.300](#) - 47.05.390 and [7 AAC 10.900](#) - [7 AAC 10.990](#), and is approved under (j) of this section. A parent will not be approved for participation in the program as an in-home caregiver for the care of the parent's own children. A family eligible to hire an in-home caregiver for the children of the family residing in the family's home must be participating in an eligible activity outside the family's home, except as described in [7 AAC 41.310\(b\)\(4\)](#), and require care for (1) at least four children who

(A) are not in school at any time during the day;

(B) require care;

(C) are otherwise eligible as specified in [7 AAC 41.350](#); and (D) are not the children of the in-home child care caregiver; (2) at least one child with special needs; (3) at least one child who is younger than 12 months of age; or (4) at least one child of a family in which all parents are working a night shift. The In-home caregiver is considered an employee of the family and: (1) Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age; (2) Have at least a high school diploma, GED, or the equivalent; (3) Cannot be a member of the family's Temporary Assistance (TA) unit; (4) May be related or unrelated to the children receiving care; (5) May not reside in the same home as the children of the family they are caring for; (6) Will not be established with the CCAP as a different child care provider type at the same time they are providing in-home child care; (7) May bring their own child(ren) into the family's home while providing child care services only with written approval from the family and only if by doing so the total number of children in care combined does not exceed five (5); and (8) Will only be approved to provide in-home childcare services for one family at a time.

A family with four (4) children may qualify to use in-home child care during the summer months when no children of the family are in school; however, would need to use a different provider type if they do not meet the qualifications once school starts. To participate in the Child Care Assistance Program a provider must meet and maintain all applicable requirements as described in Child Care Assistance Regulations 7 AAC 41, all health and safety requirements as described in 7 AAC 57, and all background check requirements under 7 AAC 10.900 - 7 AAC 10.990 for the provider and all individuals 16 years of age and older living in the location where child care services are provided.

[ii. If any of the responses above are different for license-exempt in-home care providers, describe which requirements apply to exempt in-home care providers:](#)

There are no variations from section i.

## 5.3 Health and Safety Standards and Training for CCDF Providers

### 5.3 Health and Safety Standards and Training for CCDF Providers

The state/territory must describe its requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing training. 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. This training must address the required health and safety topics (658E(c)(2)(l)(i)) and the content area of child development. Lead Agencies have flexibility in determining the number of training hours to require, and they may consult with Caring for our Children Basics for best practices and the recommended time needed to address these training requirements.

Lead Agencies must also have ongoing training requirements for caregivers, teachers, and directors who are caring for children receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(l)(i); 98.44(b)(1)(iii)). Lead Agencies are to report the total number of ongoing training hours that are required each year, but they do not have to report these hours out by topic (658E(c)(2)(G)(iii)). Ongoing training requirements will be addressed in 5.3.13.

Both preservice/orientation and ongoing trainings should be a part of a broader systematic approach and progression of professional development (as described in section 6) within a state/territory.

States and territories must have health and safety standards

for programs (e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, etc.) serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to the required health and safety topics as appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served (98.41(a)). This requirement is applicable to all child care programs receiving CCDF funds regardless of licensing status (i.e., licensed or license-exempt). The only exception to this requirement is for relative providers, as defined in 98.2. Lead Agencies have the option of exempting relatives from some or all CCDF health and safety requirements (98.42(c)). Exemptions for relative providers' standards and training requirements will be addressed in question 5.6.3.

To certify, describe the following health and safety requirements for programs serving children receiving CCDF assistance on the following topics (98.16(l)) identified in questions 5.3.1 - 5.3.12. Note: Monitoring and enforcement will be addressed in subsection 5.4.

### **5.3.1 Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations) health and safety standards and training requirements.**

#### **a. Standard(s)**

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

. A licensed child care facility and license-exempt provider must take precautions to reduce risk against the spread of a communicable, contagious, or infectious disease that could pose a significant threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children in care, including seeking and complying with current medical and sanitation advice on communicable, contagious, or infectious diseases; adopting universal precautions, including the use of gloves, to handle potential exposure to blood, blood-contaminating body fluids, and injury discharges; training staff in universal precautions and in the prevention of communicable, contagious, and infectious diseases; encouraging children to wash their hands: before food handling, preparation, serving, or table setting, before eating, after toileting, after handling pets or other animals; and when hands are contaminated with a body fluid, including after nose wiping; and before and after participation in moist play, including molding clay or painting; and ensuring caregiver hygiene requirements are met including not allowing a caregiver with a communicable disease, rash, or infection, or an acute respiratory infection to work in any capacity in which the caregiver likely could transmit that disease, rash, infection, or respiratory infection to child in care. Caregivers shall conform to good hygienic practices, including following universal precautions and thoroughly washing their hands with soap and warm running water and rinse with water before food handling, food preparation, food serving, eating, or setting a table, after toileting, diapering, or assisting with toileting or diapering before and after assisting with toothbrushing, after handling animals, animal waste, or animal cages, before and after giving medication, before and after participation in moist play including molding clay, painting, and cooking, and whenever hands are contaminated with a body fluid,



including after nose wiping. If a caregiver uses gloves, the caregiver shall wash the caregiver's hands immediately after the gloves are removed even if the hands are not visibly contaminated. The use of gloves does not preclude or substitute for handwashing. Immunization records are required at or before admission of a child, a child care facility shall obtain from the child's parent a valid immunization certificate or evidence the child is exempt from immunizations. A valid immunization record includes the child's original immunization record showing that, in a manner consistent with the timetable prescribed by the department's childhood immunization schedule, the child has received, or has begun and is continuing to receive, immunizations; or an immunization record that includes a statement or record by a physician, clinic, or health center indicating the date each required immunization was given. Evidence that the child is exempt from immunization includes a form prescribed by the department and signed by a medical doctor (M.D.), doctor of osteopathy (D.O.), advanced nurse practitioner (ANP), or physician assistant (PA) licensed in this state, stating that in the individual's professional opinion, immunizations would be injurious to the health of the child or members of the child's family or household; or a form prescribed by the department and signed by the child's parent or guardian, affirming that immunization conflicts with the tenets and practices of the church or religious denomination of which the parent or guardian is a member; or a form prescribed by the department and signed by the child's parent or legal guardian, stating the child is homeless within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2) (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) and does not have a record of the required immunizations; or a form prescribed by the department and signed by the child placement agency or worker, foster parent, or child's guardian, stating that the child is in foster care and does not have a record of the required immunizations.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers health and safety standards including: :

Immunization [7 AAC 57.550](#) (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(k); Hand Hygiene 7 AAC 57.545 (incorporating [7 AAC 10.1045](#) Universal Precautions and [7 AAC 10.1050](#) Caregiver Hygiene); Cleaning, Sanitizing & Disinfecting [7 AAC 10.1060](#) (incorporating [7 AAC 10.1045](#) Universal Precautions and [7 AAC 10.1050](#) Caregiver Hygiene ; Policy for inclusion/exclusion of children and staff due to communicable diseases and outbreak control 7 AAC 57.550 (i) and 7 AAC 10.1050 9 (a); Prevention of exposure to blood or bodily fluids 7 AAC 10.1040 (a) (4), are enforced through onsite inspections conducted by licensing specialists during annual unannounced monitoring inspections, and announced annual or renewal inspections. License-exempt Providers: Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care Providers health and safety standards including: Immunization 7 AAC 7 AAC 41.215(c)(3); Hand hygiene 7 AAC 41.215(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)(D)(E) and (F); 0 (12)(A) are monitored through annual onsite health and safety inspections.

**b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training**

**i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.**

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(A). License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(A) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(1) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

**ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) does not have a minimum number of pre-service or orientation training hours on health and safety topics for Approved Relative providers. The CCPO requires health and safety training for all caregivers, if taken through Better Kid Care Bundle training package it can take up to 10 hours to complete. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3

months of hire. Approved relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A) - (K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

- Pre-Service
- Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
- No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### 5.3.2 Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices.

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

A licensed child care facility and license-exempt provider must take precautions for prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and use of safe sleeping practices through a safe sleep environment and equipment including cribs or play yards that meet the safety standard of 16 C.F.R. Part 1219 & 1220, with a firm mattress and washable waterproof covering for infants and non-climbing toddlers or a child identified with special needs as appropriate to meet their needs and a mat or cot for all other children kept two feet apart for napping, in a home a couch may be used; safe sleep practices and SIDS risk reductions including ensuring infants are placed on their backs to sleep, no soft bedding materials that increase the risk of suffocation, including comforters, pillows, fluffy blankets, crib bumpers that do not stand upright, and stuffed toys placed in the crib or play yard, no use of sleeping equipment that may allow a child to fall, become entrapped, or have clothing tangled on protrusions, and clean and sanitize each crib, crib mattress, mat and cot between use of children; proper sleep supervision including children are supervised at all times when sleeping, within sight or sound in the same room or through a sound monitoring device, an opportunity for supervised rest or sleep periods for each child under the age of five who is in care more than five hours, and for any other child, if desired by the child.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers health and safety standards including: Safe sleep environment and equipment 7 AAC 57.520 (b)(5) and 7 AAC 57.630 (d); Safe sleep practices 7 AAC 57.520 (b)(5); Supervision 7 AAC 57.500(a)(b)(c)(d)(e); and SIDS risk reduction 7 AAC 57.520 (b)(5) and 7 AAC 57.630 (d), are enforced through onsite inspections conducted by licensing specialists during annual unannounced monitoring inspections, and announced annual or renewal inspections. License-Exempt Providers: Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care Providers health and

safety standards including safe sleep environment and equipment, safe sleep practices, and supervision 7 AAC 41.215(c)(5)(6)(7)(A)(B) and (C), are monitored through annual onsite health and safety inspections.

**b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training**

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(B). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(B) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(2) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A) - (K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and license exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications for regulation changes.

### **5.3.3 Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent.**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as the administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent and the following minimum training standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: Procedure for permission of administration of medication to include prescription and nonprescription medication; Storage of medication; Administration of medication; Documentation of administration of medication; and Unused medication.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior

to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Procedure for permission of administration of medication to include prescription and nonprescription medication 7 AAC 57.410 (6); Storage of medication 7 AAC 57.540 (incorporating [7 AAC 10.1070](#)); Administration of medication 7 AAC 57.540 (incorporating [7 AAC 10.1070](#)); Documentation of administration of medication 7 AAC 57.230 (a) and 7 AAC 10.1070 (g)(6); and Unused medication 7 AAC 57.540 (incorporating [7 AAC 10.1070](#)). License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(C) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(3) for Approved In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4220-1.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing, 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(C). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(C) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(3) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and

development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A) - (K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.4 Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions.**

#### **a. Standard(s)**

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions and the following minimum standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: Identifying between food allergy and food sensitivity;



Plan of care for children with food allergies to include minimization of exposure, feeding plans, and dietary modification; Response to allergic reaction due to food; Emergency intervention; and Documentation of allergic reaction occurrences.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Identifying between food allergy and food sensitivity 7 AAC 57.560 (e) and 7 AAC 57.400; Plan of care for children with food allergies to include minimization of exposure, feeding plans, and dietary modification 7 AAC 57.560 (e) and 7 AAC 57.560 (a)(1)(A) and 7 AAC 57.400; Response to allergic reaction due to food 7 AAC 57.540( incorporating [7 AAC 10.1070](#)); Emergency intervention [7 AAC 10.1070](#) and 7 AAC 57.400; Documentation of allergic reaction occurrences [7 AAC 10.1070](#) and 7 AAC 57.230 (a) License-Exempt Provider: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(D) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(4) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

## b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(D). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(D) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(4) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance

Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A) - (K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

- Pre-Service
- Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
- No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats,

written notice, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.5 Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic.**

#### **a. Standard(s)**

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

i. A licensed child care facility and license-exempt provider must take precautions for The standard is defined as building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic through the following standards: ; aActive supervision; sSafe indoor and outdoor environments, safe equipment, materials, and furnishing by ensuring the facility: premises and surrounding grounds are kept clean, sanitary, safe, and in good repair; is free of hazards, including splintered surfaces, sharp edges, protruding corners, broken or hazardous toys, steep stairways, ice on walkways, and unsafe play areas; controls insects, rodents, and other pests; is kept free of conditions that are likely to attract or harbor pests; any pesticide use is subject to the notice and other applicable requirements or hire a certified commercial pest control applicator; outdoor areas are well drained and free from deep depressions that may collect standing water; outdoor recreation area are enclosed with landscaping, a fence, or another effective barrier that prevents or deters access to a busy roadway or other potential hazard; is ventilated by natural or mechanical means provided to keep air fresh and to prevent the accumulation of heat, steam, condensation, vapors, smoke, or fumes; openings to the outside must prevent the entrance of rodents, insects, and other pests; walls and ceilings have smooth, durable, nonabsorbent, easily cleanable surfaces, except that rough-textured and acoustical tile ceilings are permitted in bedrooms and living rooms; does not have lead-based paint used, and any painted surface is free from flaking; stairways and steps have handrails and nonslip treads or covering; fixture that is accessible to children, has hot water temperature no less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit; self-dispensing or metering faucets, if used, provide a flow of water for at least 10 seconds; has an artificial light

source provided in each area of the facility; has light sufficient and appropriate for the activities performed in each area by employees or children in care; store cleaners, medicines, and other harmful substances in a place that is inaccessible to children and for a facility licensed to provide care for six or more children must provide a closet, storeroom, or other area separate from the area where children in care are present for the storage of janitorial equipment and cleaning supplies; has furniture and equipment that is durable, safe, easily cleanable, kept clean and in good repair; and provides at least two feet of floor space is provided between each crib, mat, or bed. A facility must have at least one AC (alternating current) primary powered smoke detection device with battery backup, or at least one monitored battery powered smoke detection device, located in each bedroom; in addition, if the entity is in a multi-level facility, at least one smoke detection device must be installed on each level; each device required under this paragraph must be less than 10 years old, or newer if necessary to comply with the manufacturer's recommended replacement date, and have at least one fully charged 2A:10BC dry chemical fire extinguisher is strategically located on each level of the facility, and is installed, inspected, tested, and serviced. A facility shall ensure that room temperature in the facility is maintained at the following applicable draft-free temperature, adjusted as needed for the children in care to be comfortable 65 degrees Fahrenheit for an entity licensed to provide care for children. The facility shall ensure each heating device is installed and maintained in a safe and serviceable manner and is vented to the outside if the device is fuel burning; vents or stacks leading from a heating unit must be air-tight at joints so that fumes, smoke, or unburned gases cannot pass from the device, vent, or stack into the entity; equipped with protective devices if presenting a hazard because of an exposed flame or heating element; heat sources must be shielded in a manner that prevents burn injury; the shield must be far enough from the heat source to prevent it from smoldering or burning; and not placed or located in sleeping quarters during sleeping hours, unless the entity does not have a separate sleeping area, or in exit ways or corridors at any time; and an open flame heater is not used, except for a fireplace that complies with 13 AAC 50, 13 AAC 55, and any applicable municipal building code; if a fireplace is used, it must have a protective screen or gate, and the area near the fireplace must be kept free of clutter and combustible or flammable material. The facility shall ensure that any portable electric heater is equipped with a tip-over switch and is kept out of the reach of children, or adults with impaired judgment. A portable electric heater must be kept from flammable objects in accordance with the manufacturer's

recommendations. The entity must develop and implement a policy that outlines the safe and proper use of portable heaters. A facility shall provide an ample supply of potable water from a system that complies with applicable provisions of 18 AAC 80, water supply. A facility shall ensure that solid waste is conveyed, stored, and disposed of in a manner that minimizes the development of odor; prevents waste from attracting and harboring pests; and complies with applicable provisions of 18 AAC 60 solid waste disposal. A facility that uses oil, wood, natural gas, or propane as a heating or cooking fuel shall ensure that an operating carbon monoxide detector is installed within each sleeping area, or no more than three feet from the entrance to that area, and is regularly inspected, tested, and serviced. In addition, if the entity is in a multi-level facility, at least one operating carbon monoxide detector must be installed on each level. A facility must ensure areas around and under play equipment that has a fall height of three feet or more are covered with shock absorbing material such as pea gravel, sand, or sawdust; concrete or asphalt may not be used under play equipment; in this paragraph, "fall height" means the vertical distance between a play surface and the area around and under the play equipment. .

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic 7 AAC 57.500 9(a)(i) and 7 AAC 10.1035; Supervision 7 AAC 57.500(a)(b)(c)(d)(e); Safe indoor and outdoor environments 7 AAC 10.1035 and 7 AAC 57.610; and Safety of equipment, materials, and furnishing 7 AAC 10.1035 and 7 AAC 57.610, are enforced through onsite inspections conducted by licensing specialists during annual unannounced monitoring inspections, and announced annual or renewal inspections. License-Exempt Providers: Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care Providers, identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic 7 AAC 41.220(b)(c)(4)(A)(C)(7)(8)(9)(10) and (14) are monitored through annual onsite health

and safety inspections.

b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(E). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(E) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(5) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and license exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.6 Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment.**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as the prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment and the following minimum standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: Infant and toddler appropriate developmental practices, to include how to cope with a crying/fussy infant; Knowledge of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma prevention and identification; and Recognition of signs of abusive head trauma. Behavior guidance policies at the provider level that address appropriate discipline to prevent child maltreatment.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators

of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is (are) in effect. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Infant and toddler appropriate developmental practices, to include how to cope with a crying/fussy infant 7 AAC 57.535; Knowledge of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma prevention and identification 7 AAC 57.535 and 7 AAC 57.350 (f); and Recognition of signs of abusive head trauma 7 AAC 57.350 (k); Behavior guidance policies at the provider level that address appropriate discipline to prevent child maltreatment 7 AAC 57.535 and 7 AAC 41.213. License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(F) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(6) for In-home care. Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(F) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(6) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(F). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(F) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(6) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.



Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulation changes.

**5.3.7 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.**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

i. A licensed child care facility and license-exempt provider must take precautions for emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), that shall include procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place and lock down, staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions through the following standards: A child care facility must comply with the applicable life and fire safety requirements and any additional or more stringent applicable standards established under 13 AAC 50. and 13 AAC 55; the entity shall keep any information required by those standards available for department inspection; obtain any applicable state or municipal building code approval; that approval must also be obtained before making a modification to a licensed entity if the modification is one that requires that approval; and obtain a fire safety inspection report from each state or municipal authority responsible for those inspections, and continue to obtain those reports every two years, or more often if required by the authority; the entity is responsible for any fee charged by the authority for each inspection. A facility must have a disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation plan that includes evacuation procedures that will ensure the complete evacuation of children in care, including children with limited mobility, within 150 seconds; describes in detail the procedures that will be followed for the complete evacuation of the entity, including specific procedures, for children under 30 months of age; children with limited mobility; and children who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency, including an adult or child who is mentally, visually, or hearing impaired; includes procedures for other emergency situations or natural disasters that may affect the entity, including, as appropriate, tsunami, flooding, and earthquake emergencies;

provides for drills to be conducted; train all employees in implementing the plan; and require participation of all employees who are on duty during the scheduled drill; and conduct a drill at least once each month if the entity is licensed or approved to provide care for children younger than age 12: make and retain a record of each required evacuation drill and make the record available to the department upon request. The record must include the date and time of the drill, the name of each employee on duty at the time of the drill, the name of each child in care who was present at the time of the drill but did not participate in the drill, and the reason for nonparticipation, the amount of time required to complete the drill, a critique of the drill, documentation of the reason for any postponement or any modification including a description of the nature of the modification. If an emergency affects a facility, they must notify the department by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail no later than the following working day and, within five working days, submit a detailed written report to the department that including the date and time of the emergency, a description of the nature of the emergency, a description of how the evacuation was achieved, including the amount of time necessary to achieve evacuation, and a critique of the evacuation. A facility must have a first aid kit that includes: disposable nonporous, nonlatex gloves; sealed packages of alcohol wipes or antiseptic for thermometer cleaning only, scissors, tweezers, a thermometer, adhesive bandages, bandage tape, sterile gauze pads, flexible roller gauze, triangular bandages, safety pins, an eye dressing, a note pad with a pen or pencil, a cold pack, a current American Academy of Pediatrics or American Red Cross standard first aid text or equivalent first aid guide, a CPR barrier device or mask, the telephone number for the poison control center, potable water, splints, including small child-size splints if children are in care, soap, and a working flashlight; and maintain a disaster kit that includes: at least one flashlight and batteries, at least one battery-operated radio and batteries, potable water, nonperishable food, and blankets.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the

standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Written plan and training for handling urgent medical care, threatening incidents, shelter in place, lock down, and natural disasters 7 AAC 57.350 (G) and 7 AAC 10.1010 (e); Evacuation and emergency drills, to include policy and documentation 7 AAC 10.1010 (f)(g)(h); First aid, food, and water supplies 7 AAC 10.1010 (j); and Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) 7 AAC 57.030 (c) (12) and 7 AAC 10.1010 (e), are enforced through onsite inspections conducted by licensing specialists during annual unannounced monitoring inspections, and announced annual or renewal inspections. License-Exempt Providers: Approved Relative and In-Home Child Care Providers, Life and Fire Safety 7 AAC 41.222(b)(c)(d)(1)(2)(A)(B)(C) (3)(4)(5)(6)(e) (1)(2)(3)(4),(f)(1)(2) (3)(4)(5)(6)(g)(1)(2)(3)(4)(h)(1)(2)(A)(B)(i)(ii)(3)(i)(1)(2)(3)(4)(5) and (6).210 (12)(G) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(7) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1, are monitored through annual onsite health and safety inspections and file monitor reviews.

**b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training**

**i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.**

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(G). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(G) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(7) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

**ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?**

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12

hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.8 Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants.**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

A licensed child care facility and license-exempt provider must take precautions for handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants must ensure standards are followed by the facility including: the use and safe storage of hazardous materials; universal precautions adopted, to include prevention and exposure to blood and bodily fluids; the facility is free of any accumulation of combustible waste material and other fire hazards in or around the premises; ensure solid waste is conveyed, stored, and disposed of in a manner that minimizes the development of odor; prevents waste from attracting and harboring pests; and complies with applicable provisions of 18 AAC 60 solid waste disposal; store any flammable or combustible liquid in a container with a tight-fitting lid specifically designed for holding flammable or combustible liquids, and ensure that these liquids are kept out of the reach of children; cleaners, medicines, and other harmful substances are stored in a place that is inaccessible to children; for a facility licensed to provide care for six or more children, they must provide a closet, storeroom, or other area separate from the area where children in care are present for the storage of janitorial equipment and cleaning supplies. The facility must meet cleaning and sanitation requirements, and ensure each table or highchair used for food is in good repair, is easily cleanable, and is cleaned and sanitized after each use; uncarpeted floors, low shelves, walls, door knobs, and other surfaces often touched by children in care are cleaned and sanitized at a frequency to keep the surfaces clean and sanitary; in each carpeted area, the entity shall ensure that the carpet is vacuumed and shampooed at a frequency to keep it clean; each interior waste receptacle is kept clean and emptied as often as necessary to prevent overflow; any surface contaminated by a body fluid, including saliva, blood, mucus, vomit, urine, feces, and an injury discharge, is immediately cleaned and disinfected using universal precautions, including the use of gloves and caregiver hygiene; cleaning that may present a hazard to children is done only when a room is not occupied by children in care; and all bedding is laundered. A facility must have at least one AC (alternating current) primary powered smoke detection device with battery backup, or at least one monitored battery powered smoke detection device, located in each bedroom; in addition, if the entity is in a multi-level facility, at least one smoke detection device must be installed on each level; each device required under this paragraph must be less than 10 years old, or newer if necessary to comply with the manufacturer's

recommended replacement date, and have at least one fully charged 2A:10BC dry chemical fire extinguisher is strategically located on each level of the facility, and is installed, inspected, tested, and serviced. A facility with an animal must ensure animal waste present around children in care. A facilities diaper changing area is not located in a food preparation area and is not used for temporary placement or serving of food; has one accessible hand sink located in, or immediately adjacent to, that area; each surface used for changing diapers is smooth, durable, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable; sufficient quantities of clean diapers are available and are neatly stored; nonlatex gloves and handwashing supplies are available to prevent contamination, and are used in accordance with universal precautions; for soiled clothing or cloth diapers, solid waste contents are disposed of by dumping the contents into a toilet and placing the diapers, without rinsing, in an impervious bag to be given to the parent for laundering, or an easily cleanable container with a firmly fitted cover; the container must be lined with plastic, designed to prevent the caregiver from contaminating the exterior surface of the container or the caregiver when inserting a soiled diaper, provided within the caregiver's reach of the diaper changing area, and emptied, cleaned, and sanitized daily; each diaper changing surface is cleaned and sanitized after each use, if a single-use, disposable cover is placed on the diapering surface before diapering, the entity shall ensure that the cover is disposed of immediately after diapering, the use of a single-use, disposable cover does not preclude or substitute for cleaning and sanitizing the surface or area after each use even if the surface or area is not visibly contaminated; after a soiled disposable diaper is removed, it is folded inward and resealed before disposal into an appropriate container; if single-use, disposable wipes are used during diapering, the disposable wipes are discarded after use; if a non-disposable cloth is used, that cloth must be placed immediately, without rinsing, in an impervious bag to be given to the parent for laundering or an appropriate container; diaper changing supplies, including containers of cream and lotion, are kept clean and sanitary; and children do not handle diaper changing supplies. The facility must ensure that individual cloth towels used for bathing, toothbrushes, and combs used by a child in care are stored separately to prevent contamination and are labeled with the child's name, and if a storage rack is used, the rack must be cleaned and sanitized or replaced when visibly soiled and after contamination with blood or another body fluid. A facility must ensure toys used by children are kept clean and sanitary, and if a toy has been mouthed or is otherwise contaminated, that toy is cleaned and sanitized before use by another child. A facility with a water play table used by

children, must ensure water in the table is maintained at 2 - 10 parts per million chlorine solution during use, the water table is cleaned frequently use chemical test strips to ensure that proper chlorine concentration levels are maintained, each child using the table has hands washed before and after playing at the water play table, a child with open sores or wounds does not play at the table, water is discarded after each day of use, and the table is cleaned and sanitized after each day of use. A facility must ensure each crib, crib mattress, cot, mat, and play yard is cleaned and sanitized at least once every seven days, before assignment to another child in care, and whenever soiled. . ;

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed provider: Use and safe storage of hazardous materials 7 AAC 10.1035 (a)(12) and 7 AAC 10.1095(a); and Universal precautions, to include prevention and exposure to blood and bodily fluids 7 AAC 10.1045 (2) and 7 AAC 10.1040 (4), are enforced through onsite inspections conducted by licensing specialists during annual unannounced monitoring inspections, and announced annual or renewal inspections. License-Exempt Provider: Approved Relative providers shall meet the requirements of toxic substances and poisonous plants under 7 AAC 10.1095. In-home Child Care Providers shall inform parents of children in care if any animal is present on the premises. Exempt providers must adhere to 7 AAC 41.240(b)(c)(d)(1)(2)(e) (1)(2) (f)(g)(1)(2)(3)(4)(5) (6) (A)(B) and 7 AAC 41.210(12)(H), are monitored through annual onsite health and safety inspections.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(H). Child Care Assistance Program



regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(H) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(8) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

- Pre-Service
- Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- Yes
- No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the

standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulation changes.

### 5.3.9 Precautions in transporting children (if applicable).

#### a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as appropriate precautions in transporting children and the following minimum standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: Qualifications of drivers; Child passenger safety; Procedures for supervision and accountability of children; First aid and emergency road side supplies, to include emergency contact information; and Knowledge of environmental hazards, to include indoor and outdoor temperatures of vehicle.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Providers: Qualifications of drivers 7 AAC 57.310 9(a); Child passenger safety 7 AAC 57.565; Procedures for supervision and accountability of children 7 AAC 57.565 and 7 AAC 57.500 (a); First aid and emergency road side

supplies, to include emergency contact information 7 AAC 10.10759(c); and Knowledge of environmental hazards, to include indoor and outdoor temperatures of vehicle 7 AAC 57.350 (l). License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(l) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(9) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(l). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(l) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(9) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4220-1.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and license-exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.10 Pediatric first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as valid current Pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the following minimum standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: pediatric first aid and CPR certification. Certifications for pediatric first aid and CPR must be maintained current throughout their license and approval periods.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home

care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Provider: Pediatric first aid and CPR certification 7 AAC 57.350 9(E)(J) and 7 AAC 57.810(e)(2). License-Exempt Provider: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.201 (e)(17) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (b)(2)(I) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures manual section 4020-9.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(J). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.201 (e)(17) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (b)(2)(I) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures manual section 4020-9.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientation, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

**5.3.11 Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Note: The description must include a certification that child care providers within the state comply with the child abuse reporting requirements of section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)).**

a. Standard(s)

i. Provide a brief description of the standard(s). This description should identify the practices which must be implemented by child care programs.

The standard is defined as recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, as required by section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)); trained in compliance with Alaska's child abuse reporting laws under AS 47.17, or other child abuse reporting procedures and laws in the service area and the following minimum standards are checked during on-site monitoring and inspections: Recognition of signs of child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment; Importance of reporting; and Mandated reporting.

ii. Describe any variations in the standard(s) by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), and the age of the children in care.

There are no variations based on category of care for Approved Relative and In-home care providers. Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

iii. The Lead Agency must certify that the identified health and safety standard(s) is(are) in effect and enforced through monitoring. Provide the citation(s) for the standard(s), including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensed Provider: Recognition of signs of child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment 7 AAC 57.350 and (k) 7 AAC 57.315 (c); Importance of reporting 7 AAC 57.350 (k) 7 AAC 57.315 (c) and A.S. 47.17.020 (5); Mandated reporting A.S. 47.17.020 (5) and 7 AAC 57.350 (k) 7 AAC 57.315 (c). License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(J) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(10) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4220-3.

#### b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Provide the citation(s) for these training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers.

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.350(a)(4)(K). Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210 (12)(J) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m)(10) for In-home care both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4220-3.

ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for the standard(s). Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire.

Approved Relative providers under [7AAC 41.201](#)(d) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding the standard(s)? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update the health and safety practices as described in the standards above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, provider chats, written notices, orientations, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

**5.3.12 PLEASE ENTER 'NA' IN THE TEXT BOXES 'i', 'ii', AND 'iii' BELOW, AND COMPLETE QUESTION 5.3.12b**

a. PLEASE ENTER 'NA' IN THE TEXT BOXES 'i', 'ii', AND 'iii' BELOW, AND COMPLETE QUESTION 5.3.12b



i. Please enter 'NA' below

NA

ii. Please enter 'NA' below

NA

iii. Please enter 'NA' below

NA

5.3.12 Child Development. Lead Agencies are required to describe in their plan how training addresses child development principles, including the major domains of cognitive, social, emotional, physical development and approaches to learning (98.44(b)(1)(iii)).

b. Pre-Service and Ongoing Training

i. Describe the training content and provide the citation(s) for the training requirement(s). Include citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

All approved training is required to meet specific training content, including child development principles. The standard is defined through Program Requirements under 7AAC 57.520; Administrator qualifications under 7AAC 57.300, and Orientation and Training requirements under 7AAC 57.350. The standard is defined as providing a structure and daily activities designed to promote a child's individual physical, social, intellectual, and emotional development. Training hours required in this section are clock hours and may include any training relevant to the caregiver's responsibilities, including health and safety, child growth and development, planning learning activities, guidance and discipline techniques, linkages with community services, communication and relations with families, and detecting and reporting child abuse and neglect.

Except as provided in the training requirements of [7 AAC 57.300](#) for the administrator, and of [7 AAC 57.330](#) for a child care associate, a child care center, child care group home, or child care home shall ensure that each administrator, child care associate, and caregiver receives at least 24 hours of annual training relevant to child care and development, at least one hour of which must be on one of the health and safety training topics identified in (a)(4) of this section, based on the individual's hire date with the facility. Except as provided in (j) of this section, the 24 hours must be in addition to the orientation and training required under (a) of this section and the

training in first aid and CPR required under (e) of this section. The annual training requirements of this subsection may be satisfied each year by obtaining college credit relevant to child care and development if approved by the department. Approved coursework must include at least one of the health and safety training topics identified in (a)(4) of this section. (i) In addition to meeting the requirements of (a) and (b) of this section, a part-time caregiver working 15 hours or less a week shall complete at least 12 hours of annual training relevant to child care and development, at least one hour of which must be on one of the health and safety training topics identified in (a)(4) of this section, based on the individual's hire date with the facility. The annual training requirements of this subsection may be satisfied each year by obtaining college credit relevant to child care and development if approved by the department. Approved coursework must include at least one of the health and safety training topics identified in (a)(4) of this section. (j) An administrator, child care associate, or caregiver may count up to six hours of the orientation and pre-service training hours required under [7 AAC 57.030\(a\)](#) for the first year's training hours required under (f) of this section. Child Care Facilities Licensed Provider: 7 AAC 57.350(c),(f), and (j). License-Exempt Providers: Child Care Assistance Program regulations 7 AAC 41.210(12) and (13) and 7 AAC 41.211(c) for Approved Relative and 7 AAC 41.370 (m) and (n) for In-home care, both of which are exempt from licensing, and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4230-3 B.

**ii. Describe any variations in training requirements for this topic. Do training requirements vary by category of care (i.e. Center, FCC, In-home), licensing status (i.e. licensed, license-exempt), or the age of the children in care?**

Approved health and safety trainings for licensed child care facilities are appropriate to the child care facility type and age of children served. Administrators of newly licensed facilities must complete pre-service health and safety training prior to licensure. All other caregivers must complete health and safety training within 3 months of hire. Approved Relative providers under [7 AAC 41.201\(d\)](#) must obtain annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on one of the health and safety topics listed in paragraphs (12)(A)-(K) of 7 AAC 41.210 or an approved refresher training course under [7 AAC 57.350](#), and complete and maintain certification for the required training. Under 41.370 (n) The family shall ensure that the family's in-home caregiver obtains annually at least 12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health

and safety, early childhood and development, or both. Licensed and licensed exempt providers must complete a provider orientation prior to approval to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

iii. To demonstrate compliance, certify by checking below how the state/territory requires this training topic be completed by providers during either pre-service or during an orientation period within three (3) months of hire.

Pre-Service

Orientation within three (3) months of hire

iv. Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

Yes

No

v. How do providers receive updated information and/or training regarding this topic? This description should include methods to ensure that providers are able to maintain and update their understanding of child development principles as described in the topic above.

Annual training requirements, technical assistance during inspections, written notice, orientations, provider chats, broadcast notifications of regulatory changes.

### **5.3.13 Provide the number of hours of ongoing training required annually for eligible CCDF providers in the following settings (658E(c)(2)(G)(iii):**

a. Licensed child care centers:

24 hours of annual training, 1 hour must be in a topic of health and safety.

b. License-exempt child care centers:

Hours of training required is determined by their certifying, accrediting, or approving organization, which meet or exceed state requirements.

c. Licensed family child care homes:

24 hours of annual training, 1 hour must be in a topic of health and safety.

d. License-exempt family child care homes:

12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on health and safety.

e. Regulated or registered In-home child care:

12 hours of ongoing training pertaining to health and safety, early childhood and development, of which at least one hour must be on health and safety.

f. Non-regulated or registered in-home child care:

Not applicable.

**5.3.14 In addition to the required standards, does the Lead Agency require providers to comply with the following optional standards? If checked, describe the standards, how often the training is required and include the citation. (Please check all that apply)**

a. Nutrition:

Describe:

b. Access to physical activity:

Describe:

c. Caring for children with special needs:

Describe:

d. Any other areas determined necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety (98.44(b)(1)(iii)).

Describe:

Not applicable.

## 5.4 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices for CCDF Providers

### 5.4.1 Enforcement of licensing and health and safety requirements.

Lead agencies must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that all 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 5.4.2.

a. To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with the required Health and Safety Standards as described in Section 5.3.

License Providers: The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Child Care Licensing; per Child Care Licensing Policy and Procedure Manual Section 6080, conduct on-site monitoring and inspections to ensure the health and safety requirements are met, and complete file reviews to ensure providers are compliant with all applicable regulations. This includes entering and maintaining monitoring and inspection information in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS). License-Exempt Providers: Approved Relative Providers and In-Home Providers are required to participate in annual unannounced and announced provider inspections.

b. To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with the required Health and Safety Training as described in Section 5.3.

Licensed Provider: Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Child Care Licensing; per Child Care Licensing Policy and Procedure Manual Section 6080, conduct on-site monitoring and inspections to ensure the health and safety requirements are met, and complete file reviews to ensure providers are compliant with all applicable regulations. This includes entering and maintaining monitoring and inspection information in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS). Licensed-Exempt Provider: Per Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures manual section 4220, the Licensing orientation and pre-service/other training requirements for Licensed providers are monitored by the Licensing Staff of the State of Alaska, Department of Health and

Social Services (DHSS), Child Care Program Office (CCPO) or the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Completion of the CCAP orientation for a Licensed provider is monitored by the Designee. The owner of a Licensed facility, or the facility's Administrator, must complete the CCAP orientation prior to program approval. The accrediting, certifying, or approving entity's orientation and pre- service/other training requirements for United States (US) Department of Defense or US Coast Guard Certified, Tribally Approved or Tribally Certified, Nationally Accredited or Nationally Certified Day Camp or similar facility providers are determined and monitored by the accrediting, certifying, or approving entity. Completion of the CCAP orientation for an accredited, certified, or tribally approved provider is monitored by the Designee. The facility's Administrator must complete the CCAP orientation prior to program approval. The CCAP orientation and pre-service/other training requirements for Approved Relative and In-home providers are monitored by the Designee. Within three (3) months of the effective start date of approval for CCAP participation, an Approved Relative provider and an In-home caregiver must also complete the required new caregiver health and safety trainings. These individuals must also participate in ongoing training annually. All Approved Relative Providers and In-home caregivers must complete twelve (12) hours of professional development training annually from the effective start date of their approval for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) participation. The annual training is in addition to the training required in section 4220-3 Health and Safety Training for Approved Relative Providers and In-home Caregivers, however; at least one (1) hour of the annual training must be on one (1) of the required health and safety training topics Approved Relative Providers and In-Home providers are required to submit verification to the Designee within three months of CCAP approval. They must also submit verification of annual training. Designees monitor for compliance of these requirements. The Designee will issue a Child Care Assistance Annual Training Requirement - Information Needed notice the first (1st) of the eleventh (11th) month following the approval effective date of the Approved Relative Provider or In-home caregiver's first (1st) year of participation. The notice requires the provider to submit verification to the Designee, of the training hours completed by the last day of their first year. Random and targeted case file reviews are also conducted for additional compliance monitoring per Child Care Assistance Program manual section 4280.

c. To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with all other applicable state and local health, safety, and fire standards.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Child Care Licensing; per Child Care Licensing Policy and Procedure Manual Section 6080, and Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures manual section 4270, conduct on-site monitoring and inspections for Licensed, Approved Relative, and In-Home Child Care Providers to ensure the health and safety, and life and fire requirements are met, and completefile reviews to ensure providers are compliant with all applicable regulations. This includes entering and maintaining monitoring and inspection information in the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS). A child care facility must comply with the applicable life and fire safety requirements and any additional or more stringent applicable standards established by a municipality to which the state fire marshal has deferred building fire safety inspection and enforcement activities. Prior to issuing a Provisional or Biennial license, the facility must provide a copy of each fire safety inspection report required by a state or municipal authority responsible for those inspections, and any variance, waiver, or exemption granted by one or more of these authorities; each report from an inspection required under 18 AAC 31 (Alaska Food Code), 18 AAC 60 (solid waste management), 18 AAC 72 (wastewater treatment and disposal), or 18 AAC 80 (drinking water); in addition to the report, the applicant must provide any variance, waiver, or exemption granted under those chapters; a business license as required under AS 43.70; and any other license, permit, or certificate necessary and as required by the state or a municipality to operate a child care facility.

#### **5.4.2 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 describing, in the questions below, 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.

a. Licensed CCDF center-based child care

i. Describe your state/territory's policies and practices for pre-licensure inspections of licensed child care center providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards.

Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage Licensing Specialists conduct pre-licensure inspections on all licensed child care child care centers for compliance with health and safety and fire standards prior to issuing a Provisional License. A Provisional License is valid for a period not to exceed one year, except that the department may extend a provisional license for one additional period not to exceed one year. Child care licensing conducts at least one unannounced inspection during the Provisional Licensing year.

ii. Describe your state/territory's policies and practices for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF child care center providers.

Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage Licensing Specialists conduct at least one unannounced inspection annually.

iii. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- A. Once a year
- B. More than once a year

Describe:

iv. If applicable, describe the differential monitoring process and how these inspections ensure that child care center providers continue to comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Licensing Specialists use a checklist which contains all of the requirements of licensing including health, safety and fire standards during their on-site inspections. While on-site, the Licensing Specialists inspect the inside and outside of the facility to ensure compliance and document any areas of non-compliance, and discuss these



areas with the administrator of the child care facility prior to leaving the inspection. A Report of Inspection is issued to the child care facility, within 10 days of the inspection date, listing any areas of non-compliance, and any enforcement actions taken, if applicable. The facility is required to address any areas of non-compliance in a Plan of Correction.

v. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF center providers

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.040 inspections and evaluation by an individual or agency. Child Care Licensing Policies and Procedures Manual section 6080.

#### 5.4.2 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 describing, in the questions below, 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.

#### **b. Licensed CCDF family child care home**

i. Describe your state/territory's requirements for pre-licensure inspections of licensed family child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)

Licensing Specialists currently conduct pre-licensure inspections on all licensed familychild care homes for compliance with health and safety and fire standards prior to issuing a Provisional License. A Provisional License is valid for a period not to exceed one year, except that the department may extend a provisional license for one additional period not to exceed one year. Child care licensing conducts at least one unannounced inspection during the Provisional Licensing year.

ii. Describe your state/territory's policies and practices for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF family child care providers.

Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Licensing Specialistsconduct at least one unannounced inspection annually.

iii. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- A. Once a year
- B. More than once a year

Describe:

iv. If applicable, describe the differential monitoring process and how these inspections ensure that family child care providers continue to comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and theMunicipality of Anchorage (MOA) Licensing Specialists use a checklist which contain all of the requirements of licensing including health, safety and fire standards during their on-site inspections. While on-site, the Licensing Specialists inspect the inside and outside of the facility to ensure compliance and document any areas of non-compliance, and discuss these areas with the administrator of the child care facility prior to leaving the inspection. A Report of Inspection is issued to the child care facility, within 10 days of the inspection date, listing any areas of non-compliance, and any enforcement actions taken, if applicable. The facility is required to address any areas of non-compliance in a Plan of Correction.

v. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF family child care providers

Child Care Facilities Licensing 7 AAC 57.040 Inspections and evaluation by an

individual or agency. Child Care Licensing Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 6080.

#### 5.4.2 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 describing, in the questions below, 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.

#### c) Licensed in-home CCDF child care

i. Does your state/territory license in-home child care (care in the child's own home)?

No (Skip to 5.4.3 (a)).

Yes. If yes, answer A-D below:

A. Describe your state/territory's policies and practices for pre-licensure inspections of licensed in-home care (care in the child's own) providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards.

B. Describe your state/territory's policies and practices for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF child care in-home care (care in the child's own home) providers.

C. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

1. Once a year

2. More than once a year

Describe:

D. If applicable, describe the differential monitoring process and how these inspections ensure that in-home care (care in the child's own providers continue to comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

E. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF in-home care (care in the child's own home) providers.

#### 5.4.2 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 describing, in the questions below, 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.

d) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting pre-licensure inspections and unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers

The Child Care Program Office and the Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing Specialist conduct pre-licensure and unannounced inspections of licensed child care providers.

### 5.4.3 Inspections for license-exempt center-based and family child care providers.

The Lead Agency 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, and fire standards (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(IV); 98.42(b)(2)(ii)). Inspections for relative providers will be addressed in question 5.6.4. At a minimum, the health and safety requirements to be inspected must address the standards listed in subsection 5.3 (98.41(a)).

To certify, describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of:

- 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.

The standards used for monitoring license-exempt center based CCDF providers must be submitted to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), or Designee for review to ensure they meet or exceed the Child Care Assistance Program requirements. Health and Safety monitoring inspections for license-exempt center based providers who are United States Department of Defense or United States Coast Guard Certified; Tribally Certified; Nationally Accredited or Nationally Certified Day Camps are conducted by the certifying or accrediting agency. These inspections may be announced or unannounced and are conducted annually and copies of the annual inspections must be submitted to the CCPO or Designee.

- i. Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual sections 4270. and 4360-2.

- 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.

Approved relative providers receive an announced health and safety inspection for compliance with health and safety and fire standards conducted by the Child Care

Program Office or Municipality of Anchorage Licensing staff within 90 days of a complete Child Care Assistance Program application being received or within 90 days of program approval. Annual unannounced inspections will be conducted the subsequent years of a provider's program participation.

**i. Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure**

Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.265 and Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4270-1.

**5.4.4 Inspections for license-exempt in-home care (care in the child's own home).**

Lead Agencies have the option to develop alternate monitoring requirements for care provided in the child's home that are appropriate to the setting. A child's home may not meet the same standards as other child care facilities and this provision gives Lead Agencies flexibility in conducting more streamlined and targeted on-site inspections. For example, Lead Agencies may choose to monitor in-home providers on basic health and safety requirements such as training and background checks. Lead Agencies could choose to focus on health and safety risks that pose imminent danger to children in care. This flexibility cannot be used to bypass the monitoring requirement altogether. States should develop procedures for notifying parents of monitoring protocols and consider whether it would be appropriate to obtain parental permission prior to entering the home for inspection (98.42(b)(2)(iv)(B)).

**a. To certify, describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of license-exempt in-home care, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, and if differential monitoring procedures are used.**

In-Home providers receive an announced health and safety inspection for compliance with health and safety and fire standards conducted by the Child Care Program Office or Municipality of Anchorage Licensing specialist within 90 days of a complete Child Care Assistance Program application being received or within 90 days of program approval. Annual unannounced inspections will be conducted the subsequent years of a provider's program participation.

**b. Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure.**

Child Care Assistance Program regulation 7 AAC 41.265, 7 AAC 41.375, and Child

Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures section 4270-1.

c. List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers:

The Child Care Program Office and Municipality of Anchorage and Licensing Specialists conduct announced inspections for all license-exempt In-Home Care providers for compliance with health and safety and fire standards within 90 days of the provider's approval effective date, and unannounced inspections annually.

#### **5.4.5 Licensing Inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the Lead Agency).**

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

Licensing specialists under the State of Alaska Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), meet the job qualifications and classification for their position classification: State of Alaska Child Care Program Office position of a Community Care Licensing Specialist, and Municipality of Anchorage position of a Child Care Licensing Specialist. The CCPO specialists are required to have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college and two years of technical or professional experience in social services, education health care, mental health, juvenile justice, or a closely related field. MOA specialists may have a high school diploma, GED or equivalent and 6 college credits in early childhood development, child development or child psychology and 5 years of experience in child care licensing, administration of a child care program or closely related field; or an Associate's degree in Social Work Child Development, Early Childhood, or Elementary Education with 6 college credits in early childhood

development, child development or child psychology and 3 years of experience in child care licensing, administration of a child care program or closely related field; or a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Child Development, Early Childhood, or Elementary Education, which 6 college credits in early childhood development, child development, or child psychology, and 1 year of experience in child care licensing, administration of a child care program, or closely related field. Municipality of Anchorage licensing specialists must obtain peace officer certification within one 1 year of hire. All licensing specialists are required to be trained for their first year of employment by their supervisors in all aspects of their licensing positions including the statutory and regulatory requirements for licensing in AS 47.32, AS 47.05, 7 AAC 10, 7 AAC 57 and for the Municipality of Anchorage AMC 16.55; and continue to receive additional training throughout their time employed as a licensing specialist. The majority of the licensing specialists also have certifications in Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) National Certified Investigator/Inspector (NCIT) training, and some have completed the National Association for Regulatory Administration licensing training modules. All current licensing staff receive health and safety training appropriate to the age of the children in care and type of provider setting within their first year of employment. Licensing staff are not required to be certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.

[b. To certify, describe how inspectors and monitors 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 State of Alaska licensing specialists receive basic health and safety training appropriate to the age of the children in care and type of provider setting within their first year of employment. The licensing specialists receive Better Kid Care basic health and safety training; HIPAA training, and State of Alaska Mandated Reporter training, The Municipality of Anchorage licensing specialists also take National Association of Regulatory Administration (NARA) trainings: The Practice of Licensing: Understanding Our Profession; Culture and Communication as Partners in Regulatory Processes, Part 1 & 2, Child Development and Licensing: Two Sides of the Same Coin; Consistency, Why Does It Matter; and Reducing Noncompliance Levels: Beyond Monitoring and Enforcement within their first 6 months of employment.



c. Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdf>, section 6000-5L.

**5.4.6 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)).**

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.

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing has policies and procedures in place for ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers. When assigning a new application to a Child Care Licensing Specialist (CCLS), the Licensing Supervisor will to the extent possible, not assign a caseload that exceeds a ratio of fifty (50) assigned child care facilities for each CCLS. The ratio may increase when caseload redistribution is necessary for coverage during a CCLS absence or vacancy, or in the event the CCPO Child Care Licensing Program has or projects shortfalls in state or federal funding.

b. Provide the policy citation and state/territory ratio of licensing inspectors.

The Child Care Program Office or Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing  
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/Documents/Manuals-Brochures/Child-Care-Licensing-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual.pdf>, section 6040-3.

## 5.5 Comprehensive Background Checks

The CCDBG Act requires states and territories to have in effect requirements, policies and procedures to conduct comprehensive 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 family child care 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)). Exemptions for relative providers will be addressed in 5.6.5.

A comprehensive background check must include eight (8) separate and specific components (98.43(2)(b)), which encompass three (3) in-state checks, two (2) national checks, and three (3) interstate checks (if the individual resided in another state in the preceding 5 years).

**5.5.1 Background Check Requirements. In the table below, certify by checking that the state has policies, and is conducting checks for the required background check components, ensuring that these requirements are in place for all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers and for all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i), 98.43(a)(2) and 98.16(o).**

### a. Components of In-State Background Checks

#### i. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

7 AAC 10.900 (a) & (b)

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

ii. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

7 AAC 10.900 (a) & (b)

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

iii. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

7 AAC 10.900 (a) & (b)

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

**5.5.1 Background Check Requirements. In the table below, certify by checking that the state has policies, and is conducting checks for the required background check components, ensuring that these requirements are in place for all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers and for all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i), 98.43(a)(2) and 98.16(o).**

b. Components of National Background Check

i. FBI Fingerprint Check

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

7 AAC 10.900 (a) & (b)

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

ii. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) name-based search

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

**5.5.1 Background Check Requirements. In the table below, certify by checking that the state has policies, and is conducting checks for the required background check**

**components, ensuring that these requirements are in place for**

all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers and for all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services

(e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i), 98.43(a)(2) and 98.16(o).

c. Components of Interstate Background Checks

i. 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.

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 to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources (unless the responding state participates in the National Fingerprint File program).

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

ii. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years.

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) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources.

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

iii. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years

Note: This is a name-based search

Licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers

Citation:

All other providers eligible to deliver CCDF Services

Citation:

### **5.5.2 Procedures for a Provider to Request a Background Check.**

Child care providers are required to submit requests for background checks for each of their

staff members to the appropriate state or territorial agency, which is to be defined clearly on the state or territory Web site. Family child care home providers must also submit background check requests for all household members over the age of 18. The requests must be submitted prior to when the individual becomes a staff member and must be completed at least once every five years per Â§ 98.43(d)(1) and (2). The state or territory must ensure that its policies and procedures under this section, including the process by which a child care provider or other state or territory may submit a background check request, are published on the web site of the state or territory as described in Â§ 98.43(g) and the web site of local lead agencies.

a. Describe the state/territory procedure(s) for a provider to request the required background checks. If the process is different based on provider type, please include that in this description. If the process is different based on each background check component, please include that in this description.

Licensed and Approved (Relative and In-home) Providers: Any caregiver or household member over the age of sixteen, must have a valid background check through the Background Check Program. [7 AAC 10.910](#). The applicant or provider must submit the following with each request for a background check to the Background Check Program: confirmation that a current release of information authorization, on a form provided by the department and signed by the individual for whom the request is submitted, is on file with the provider; confirmation that an authorization, on a form provided by the department, signed by the individual for whom the request is submitted, and permitting the department to mark the individual's name in the Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN); one set of fingerprints for the individual for whom the request is submitted; and the fees required by the Department of Public Safety and the Background Check Program.

The provider applicant must have a myAlaska user name and password, and valid email address to apply to the Background Check Program. myAlaska account can be established by accessing the website at: <https://my.alaska.gov>. The provider applicant must have a facility created in the same child care name in the New Alaska Background Check System (NABCS), as is listed on the facility application based on child care provider type. The provider must regularly monitor the email address provided on their application for ongoing communication and information from the Background Check Program and the Child Care Program Office or Municipality of Anchorage.

Upon receipt of an acceptable application, The Background Check conducts a series of criminal and civil registry checks including Child Protection Services (CPS), for those providers and household members. If no barrier crimes or conditions are found during the

registry checks, the individual is eligible to be hired provisionally while the Background Check Program is waiting for fingerprint results. This information is available to the provider by accessing their case in the New Alaska Background Check System (NABCS). The provider may hire the individual at that time which associates them with the provider's case in NABCS. Individuals who are eligible for provisional hire may work in a child care facility under direct supervision, for up to thirty (30) days while waiting for fingerprint results to be received and a final determination to be made by the Background Check Program.

The Child Care Program Office and Municipality of Anchorage staff will continue to monitor applications received, or until an eligibility determination of Eligible for Permanent Hire is made by the Background Check Program. When the Background Check Program receives an individual's fingerprint results and there are no barring charges, crimes, or conditions, a determination of eligible for permanent hire is made in NABCS. The provider must take action in NABCS to permanently hire the individual. These individuals are now "flagged" for the Background Check Program to receive notification of any law enforcement involvement from Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN). Results of the fingerprint based background checks are valid for five (5) years.

If a barring crime and/or condition is found during this initial process, the Background Check Program issues a determination of "Ineligible" for the individual in NABCS. If this check is for a new or existing household member of a participating provider, the provider must take action to immediately remove the individual from the child care facility. When a barring condition is identified for a provider or household member the provider applicant and the caregiver are sent notification from the Background Check Program advising of the barrier, allowing for a request for redetermination, and if applicable, the option of applying for a variance.

The individual may not apply for a variance if the barring crime or condition is identified in: 1. 45 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 98.43 (a)(2) A child care provider shall be ineligible if the provider employs a staff member who is ineligible for employment. Household members of an Approved Relative provider are considered to be "staff" in the regard they may have unsupervised access to children in care; or 2. 45 CFR 98.43 (c) (1) A child care member is ineligible for employment if the individual: a. Refuses to consent to the criminal background check; b. Knowingly makes a materially false statement in connection with the criminal background check; c. Is registered, or is required to be registered on a State sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender

Registry; or d. Has been convicted of a felony consisting of: Murder; Child abuse or neglect; A crime against children, including child pornography; Spousal abuse; a crime involving rape or sexual assault; Kidnapping; Arson; Physical assault or battery; or Has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

When a barring condition is found, notification is also sent from the Background Check Program to the Child Care Program Office, Municipality of Anchorage or CCAP Designee as the oversight agency. Should a barring crime and/or condition be identified for a provider or household members, action is taken to deny the application advising the individual of the right to request a variance from the Alaska Background Check Program. The individual identified with a barring crime or condition may request redetermination from the Background Check Program of their eligibility determination if they believe the information is incorrect or if they are not the individual identified.

In order to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) all providers and household members must have the required background check prior to making an eligibility determination. Fingerprint based background checks for Licensed, Approved Relative providers and In-home child care caregivers are conducted by the Alaska Background Check Program before they can be approved for CCAP participation. License Exempt Providers: United States (US) Department of Defense or US Coast Guard; Tribally Approved or Tribally Certified; Nationally Accredited or Nationally Certified Day Camps or similar facility or program. These providers must meet or exceed the DHSS requirements in order to be approved for CCAP participation. Background checks for these applicants are conducted by the entity issuing the certification, accreditation, or approval.

b. The state/territory must ensure 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. What are the fees and how do you ensure that these fees do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administering the background checks? Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable (98.43(f)).

There is a \$40 application fee plus the fees (\$48.25) required by the Department of Public Safety under [13 AAC 68.900\(a\)\(2\)\(B\)](#) and (5). The application fee will be waived for an unpaid volunteer who provides services to a provider that is operated by the state



or recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a nonprofit entity under 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3). The State of Alaska Child Care Program Office ensures that these fees do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administering the background checks by paying for the fingerprint processing portion of the background Checks for child care providers.

c. Describe the state/territory policy(ies) related to prospective staff members working on a provisional basis. Pending completion of all background check components in 98.43(b), the prospective staff member must be supervised at all times by an individual who received a qualifying result on a background check described in 98.43(b) within the past 5 years (98.43(c)(4)) and the prospective staff member must have completed and received 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 prospective staff member resides. Describe and include a citation for the Lead Agency's policy: [7 AAC 10.920. Provisional valid background check](#) - the department may issue notification of a provisional valid background check after screening an applicant under [7 AAC 10.915\(a\)](#) and reviewing the criminal justice information supplied by the Department of Public Safety, if a barrier crime or condition is not discovered in that screening and review and if (1) the department determines that further review time by the department might unduly delay the process; (2) the provider has requested an expedited review and has included justification for the expedited review; submitted, at a minimum, the documents required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(1\)](#) and (2) and the fees required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(4\)](#) and (5); and agreed to submit within 30 days the fingerprints required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(3\)](#) and any items required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(4\)](#) and (5) that were not included with the request; or (3) a request for a background check does not include the required fingerprints because fingerprinting acceptable to the Department of Public Safety is not available within 100 miles by road, and the provider agrees to submit within 30 days the fingerprints required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(3\)](#) and any items required under [7 AAC 10.910\(b\)\(4\)](#) and (5) that were not included with the request. A provisional valid background check issued is valid for 90 days, pending completion of the background check or during the pendency of any request for a redetermination, a variance, or a reconsideration of a variance request. A provider shall ensure that if an applicant requests a redetermination under [7 AAC 10.927](#), a variance under [7 AAC 10.930](#) and [7 AAC 10.935](#), or reconsideration under [7 AAC 10.950](#) of a variance request, the applicant has direct onsite supervision. The department may extend the 90-day limit if

any delay occurs that was not caused by any failure of the applicant or provider. If the provider fails to submit fingerprints and other required items within 30 days, or if the department determines that a barrier crime or condition exists with respect to the applicant, the provisional valid background check is automatically revoked, and the provider must terminate association with the applicant in accordance with [7 AAC 10.960](#).

d. Describe the procedure for providers to request background checks for staff members that resided in another state within the previous 5 years.

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

e. Describe the procedure to ensure each staff member completes all components of the background check process at least once during each 5-year period. If your state enrolls child care staff members in the FBI Rap Back Program or a state-based rap back program, please include that in this description. Note: An FBI Rap Back program only covers the FBI Fingerprint component of the background check. If child care staff members are enrolled in a state-based rap back, please indicate which background check components are covered by this service.

At the time of association or re-association, and annually after that date, each provider must verify that each applicant has a valid background check. If the department determines that the background check is not valid, the department will notify the provider that a request for a new background check must be submitted, subject to any applicable fee. Each provider, and each applicant described in [7 AAC 10.902](#), is responsible for ensuring that a background check is renewed before it expires.

f. Describe the procedure to ensure providers who are separated from employment for more than 180 consecutive days receive a full background check.

If an applicant remains out of association with a provider for 100 days or longer, or if an applicant described in [7 AAC 10.902](#) fails to become associated with a provider within

100 days after the department's notification, the background check becomes immediately invalid without prior notice. A new background check must be requested if the applicant wishes to become associated with any provider in any manner described in [7 AAC 10.900\(b\)](#).

g. Provide the website link that contains instructions on how child care providers should initiate background check requests for a prospective employee (98.43(g)).

<https://dhss.alaska.gov/dhcs/Pages/cl/bgcheck/default.aspx>

### **5.5.3 Procedures for a Lead Agency to Respond to and Complete a Background Check.**

Once a request has been initiated, the state shall carry out the request of a child care provider for a criminal background check as expeditiously as possible, but not to exceed 45 days after the date on which such request was submitted. The Lead Agency shall make the determination whether the prospective staff member is eligible for employment in a child care program (98.43(e)(1)). Lead Agencies must ensure the privacy of background checks by providing the results of the criminal background check to the requestor or identified recipient in a statement that indicates whether a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member or a family child care household member over the age of 18) is eligible or ineligible for employment, without revealing any documentation of criminal history or disqualifying crimes or other related information regarding the individual. In the following questions, describe the Lead Agency's procedures for conducting background checks. These responses should include:

- The name of the agency that conducts the investigation; include multiple names if multiple agencies are involved in different background check components
- How the Lead Agency is informed of the results of each background check component
- Who makes the determinations regarding the staff member's eligibility? Note: Disqualification decisions should align to the response provided in 5.5.7.
- How the Lead Agency ensures that a background check request is carried out as quickly as possible and not more than 45 days after a request is submitted.
  - a. Describe the procedures for conducting In-State Background Check requests and making a determination of eligibility.

Licensing, Certification, and Approvals regulations 7 AAC 10 require all child care providers and caregivers to obtain a valid fingerprint based criminal history check prior to having unsupervised access to children in care. Child Care Licensing Policies and Procedures manual section 6050 requires individuals applying to become licensed to obtain a final background check clearance prior to the issuance of their child care license. Staff of a licensed child care facility or household members 16 years of age and older must also obtain a valid fingerprint based criminal history check prior to having access to children in care. The Alaska Background Check Program (BCP) is the agency responsible for conducting the required criminal history checks. Per 7 AAC 10.915 (b), the BCP will review fingerprint based criminal justice information supplied by the Alaska Department of Public Safety, court or other applicable government agency records, and registry checks in order to make a determination of clearance or barrier crime existence, and update NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) in order for providers to obtain their results. If the provider fails to submit fingerprints and other required items within 30 days, or if the department determines that a barrier crime or condition exists with respect to the applicant, the provisional valid background check is automatically revoked, and the provider must terminate association with the applicant in accordance with [7 AAC 10.960](#).

[b. If the procedure is different for National Background checks, including the name-based NCIC NSOR check and FBI fingerprint check, please describe here.](#)

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another provider type can be identified so these additional required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

[c. Describe the procedures for conducting Interstate Background Check requests and making a determination of eligibility. \(Note this response should detail how a state conducts an interstate check for a provider who currently lives in their state or territory but has lived in another state\(s\) within the previous five years\).](#)

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are

completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another provider type can be identified so these additional required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed

d. Describe the procedure the Lead Agency has in place to make an eligibility determination in the event not all the components of the background check are completed within the required 45-day timeframe.

If the provider fails to submit fingerprints and other required items within 30 days, or if the department determines that a barrier crime or condition exists with respect to the applicant, the provisional valid background check is automatically revoked, and the provider must terminate association with the applicant in accordance with [7 AAC 10.960](#).

e. Describe procedures for conducting a check when the state of residence is different than the state in which the staff member works.

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another provider type can be identified so these additional required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

#### **5.5.4 State designation as a "Compact State" and participation in the National Fingerprint File program.**

a. "Compact States" are states that have ratified the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Act of 1998 in order to facilitate electronic information sharing for noncriminal justice purposes (such as employment) among the Federal Government and

states. More information can be found here: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/compact-council>. The Compact allows signatory states to disseminate its criminal history record information to other states for noncriminal justice purposes in accordance with the laws of the receiving state. For the most up-to-date Compact States and Territories map visit: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/compact-council/maps>. Is your state or territory a Compact State?

No

Yes

b. The National Fingerprint File (NFF) is a database of fingerprints, or other unique personal identification information relating to an arrested or charged individual, which is maintained by the FBI to provide positive fingerprint identification of record subjects. Only a state or territory that has ratified the Compact (a Compact State) may join the NFF program. An FBI fingerprint check satisfies the requirement to perform an interstate check of another state's criminal history record repository if the responding state (where the child care staff member has resided within the past 5 years) participates in the NFF program. It is unnecessary to conduct both the FBI fingerprint check and the search of an NFF state's criminal history record repository (refer to CCDF-ACF-PIQ-2017-01). For the most up-to-date NFF Participation map visit: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/compact-council/maps>. Is your state or territory an NFF State?

No

Yes

### **5.5.5 Procedures for a Lead Agency to Respond to Interstate Background Checks:**

#### **a. Interstate Criminal History Registry Check Procedures**

Provide a description of how the state or territory responds to interstate criminal history check requests from another state and whether there are any laws or policies that prevent the state from releasing certain criminal history information to an out-of-state entity for civil purpose (i.e., for purposes of determining employment eligibility).

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in

the last 5 years can be completed.

#### b. Interstate Sex Offender Registry Check Procedures

Provide a description of how the state or territory responds to interstate sex offender history check requests from another state and whether there are any laws or policies that prevent the state from releasing certain sex offender information to an out-of-state entity for civil purpose (i.e., for purposes of determining employment eligibility).

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed

#### c. Interstate Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Check Procedures

Provide a description of how the state or territory responds to interstate child abuse and neglect history check requests from another state and whether there are any laws or policies that prevent the state from releasing certain child abuse and neglect information to an out-of-state entity for civil purpose (i.e., for purposes of determining employment eligibility).

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

## 5.5.6 Consumer Education Website Links to Interstate Background Check Processes

Lead Agencies must have requirements, policies, and procedures in place to respond as expeditiously as possible to other States', Territories' and Tribes' requests for background checks in order to meet the 45-day timeframe (98.43(a)(1)(iii)). In addition, Lead Agencies are required to include on their consumer education website the process by which another Lead Agency may submit a background check request, along with all of the other background check policies and procedures (98.43 (g)).

State and Territory Lead Agencies are required to designate one page of their existing Consumer Education Website as a landing page for all interstate background check related processes and procedures pertaining to their own state. The purpose of having a dedicated interstate background check web page on the Lead Agency Consumer Education Website is to help state and territories implement the interstate background check requirements of the CCDBG Act (CCDF Consumer Education Website and Reports of Serious Injuries and Death (OMB #0970-0473)).

Check to certify that the required elements are included on the Lead Agency's consumer education website for each interstate background check component, and provide the direct URL/website link.

**Note: The links provided below should be a part of your consumer education website identified in 2.3.11.**

### **a. Interstate Criminal Background Check:**

- i. Agency Name
- ii. Address
- iii. Phone Number
- iv. Email



- v. FAX
- vi. Website
- vii. Instructions ((e.g. Does a portal/system account need to be created to make a request? What types of identification are needed? What types of payment is accepted? How can a provider appeal the results? How will forms will be accepted and FAQs?)
- viii. Forms
- ix. Fees
- x. Is the state a National Fingerprint File (NFF) state?
- xi. Is the state a National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact State?
- xii. Direct URL/website link to where this information is posted.

Enter direct URL/website link:

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

**b. Interstate Sex Offender Registry (SOR) Check:**

- i. Agency Name
- ii. Address
- iii. Phone Number
- iv. Email
- v. FAX
- vi. Website

- vii. Instructions ((e.g. Does a portal/system account need to be created to make a request? What types of identification are needed? What types of payment is accepted? How can a provider appeal the results? How will forms will be accepted and FAQs?))
- viii Forms
- ix. Fees
- Direct URL/website link to where this information is posted.

Enter direct URL/website link:

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

c. Interstate Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Registry Check:

- i. Agency Name
- ii. Is the CAN check conducted through a County Administered Registry or Centralized Registry?
- iii. Address
- iv. Phone Number
- v. Email
- vi. FAX
- vii. Website
- viii. Instructions ((e.g. Does a portal/system account need to be created to make a request? What types of identification is needed? What types of payment is accepted? How can a provider appeal the results? How will forms will be accepted and FAQs?))

- ix. Forms
- x. Fees
- xi. Description of information that may be included in a response to a CAN registry check (including substantiated instances of child abuse and neglect accompanied by the State's definition of "substantiated" instances of child abuse and neglect.
- xii. Direct URL/website link to where this information is posted.

Enter direct URL/website link:

As of now all background checks in the State of Alaska for all provider types are completed the same. This includes all fingerprint-based background checks and registry checks currently being conducted. The Child Care Program Office is working on developing a plan with the Background Check Unit to update the NABCS (New Alaska Background Check System) to be able to determine how to differentiate a child care provider separate from another type of provider can be identified so this additional interstate required checks for child care providers who have resided in another state in the last 5 years can be completed.

**5.5.7 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 (98.43 (c)(1)(i-iii)). 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)(iv-v)).**

- a. Does the state/territory disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for any other crimes not specifically listed in 98.43(c)(i)?

No

Yes.

If yes, describe other disqualifying crimes and provide the citation:

The citation for other disqualifying crimes is 7 AAC 10.905. Other disqualifying crimes include but are not limited to: Indecent Exposure; Arson; Offenses against Public Administration; Offenses against Public Order; Stalking; Offenses against Property; Issuing a bad check; Fraudulent use of an Access Device; Burglary, Criminal Mischief; Forgery; and or Criminal Mischief. For complete information on this citation please see the following link.

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp#7.10.905>

b. Describe how the Lead Agency notifies the applicant about their eligibility to work in a child care program. This description should detail how the Lead Agency ensures the privacy of background checks. Note: The Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. (98.43(e)(2)(iii)).

The Alaska Background Check Program is the agency responsible for reviewing an individual's background and making an eligibility determination. 7 AAC 10.915.

Background check provides the Background Check Program the authority to perform, screen and request a background check. After reviewing all available background check information, the Background Check Programs determines that a barrier crime or condition does not exist, the department will notify the requesting applicant or provider that the determination is available through the department's electronic database, NABCS. 7 AAC 10.903 requires the department to limit the use of information gathered during the background check process for that purpose and prohibits the disclosure of information to anyone outside of the department, except as authorized by state or federal law governing the program or program review or audit to which the information relates.

c. 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)).

7 AAC 10.905 Barrier Crimes describes all barring conditions including felony drug offenses charged with or convicted of.

### 5.5.8 Appeals Processes for Background Checks

States and territories shall provide for a process by which a child care program staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a background check to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in a staff member's background report. The state or territory shall ensure that:

-- The child care staff member is provided with information related to each disqualifying crime in a report, along with information/notice on the opportunity to appeal

-- A child care staff member will receive clear instructions about how to complete the appeals process for each background check component if the child care staff member wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's background report

-- If the staff member files an appeal, the state or territory will attempt to verify the accuracy of the information challenged by the child care staff member, including making an effort to locate any missing disposition information related to the disqualifying crime

-- The appeals process is completed in a timely manner for any appealing child care staff member

-- Each child care staff member shall receive written notice of the decision. In the case of a negative determination, the decision should indicate 1) the state's efforts to verify the accuracy of information challenged by the child care staff member, 2) any additional appeals rights available to the child care staff member, and 3) information on how the individual can correct the federal or state records at issue in the case. (98.43(e)(3))

-- The Lead Agency must work with other agencies that are in charge of background check information and results (such as the Child Welfare office and the State Identification Bureau), to ensure the appeals process is conducted in accordance with the Act.

a. What is the procedure for each applicant to appeal or challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the background check report? If there are different appeal process procedures for each component of the check, please provide that in this description, including information on which state agency is responsible for handling each type of appeal. Note: The FBI Fingerprint Check, State Criminal

Fingerprint, and NCIC NSOR checks are usually conducted by a state's Identification Bureau and may have different appeal processes than agencies that conduct the state CAN and state SOR checks.

The department will not grant a variance for a crime or civil finding for which federal law prohibits certain approvals, or restricts payment of benefits, during the most stringent barrier time set by federal law for that crime or civil finding. For purposes of this subsection, (1) "federal law" includes an offense described in (A) 42 U.S.C. 670 - 679c (secs. 470 - 479B of the Social Security Act), adopted by reference in [7 AAC 10.905\(f\)](#); (B) 42 U.S.C. 1320a-7(a) (sec. 1128(a) of the Social Security Act), adopted by reference in [7 AAC 10.905\(f\)](#); (C) 45 C.F.R. 1356.30, adopted by reference in [7 AAC 10.905\(f\)](#); and (D) another applicable federal statute or regulation. [7 AAC 10.927. Request for a redetermination](#) (a) If the department makes a determination under [7 AAC 10.915\(d\)](#) or (e) that a barrier crime or condition exists that is not a permanent barrier listed in 98.43(c)(i) covered in 7AAC 10.930(g)(1)(D), or if the department revokes an applicant's background check under [7 AAC 10.945\(a\)](#), the applicant who was the subject of the background check may submit a request for a redetermination under this section if the applicant (1) believes that the department's determination was made in error; (2) believes there was an error in the information that the department relied on; or (3) has new or additional factual information that could change the department's determination. (b) A request for a redetermination must be submitted within 90 days after the department issues its determination. The request for a redetermination must include (1) the requester's name, mailing address, telephone number, and, if available, electronic mail address and facsimile number; (2) a clear description of the department's determination to be reviewed; and (3) a clear and concise statement of the reason for the request, including copies of any documents or other information that would assist the department in its review. (c) Within 30 days after receiving a request for a redetermination, the department will review the request and issue a decision regarding whether to grant or deny a redetermination. If the department denies a redetermination, the department will inform the requester in the notice of decision that a barrier crime or condition exists and that (1) if the applicant for whom a barrier crime or condition exists is willing to disclose the barrier crime or condition to the provider, the provider may, if allowed under [7 AAC 10.930](#), request a variance under [7 AAC 10.935](#), within 90 days after the notice of decision is issued under this subsection; or (2) if the notice of decision under this subsection is issued to an applicant described in [7 AAC 10.902](#), the applicant may, if allowed under [7 AAC 10.930](#), request a variance under [7 AAC 10.935](#) within 90 days

after the notice of decision is issued under this subsection. (d) Unless the department grants a variance under [7 AAC 10.935](#), the decision issued under (c) of this section is a final agency decision and may be appealed to the superior court under the Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure.

b. If the appeals process is different for interstate checks, what is the procedure for each applicant to appeal or challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the background report for interstate checks?

Not applicable.

c. Interstate Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Registry Check:

Not applicable.

## 5.6 Exemptions for Relative Providers

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 certain health and safety requirements. Note: This exception applies if the individual cares only for relative children.

Check and describe where applicable the policies that the Lead Agency has regarding exemptions for eligible relative providers for the following health and safety requirements. The description should include the health and safety requirements relatives are exempt from, if applicable, as well as which of the federally defined relatives the exemption applies to.

### **5.6.1 Licensing Requirements (as described in Section 5.1)**

a. Relative providers are exempt from all licensing requirements.

b. Relative providers are exempt from a portion of licensing requirements.

Describe:

- c. Relative providers must fully comply with all licensing requirements.

### 5.6.2 Health and Safety Standards (as described in Section 5.2 and 5.3)

- a. Relative providers are exempt from all health and safety standard requirements
- b. Relative providers are exempt from a portion of health and safety standard requirements.

Describe:

- c. Relative providers must fully comply with all health and safety standard requirements.

### 5.6.3 Health and Safety Training (as described in Section 5.3)

- a. Relative providers are exempt from all health and safety training requirements.
- b. Relative providers are exempt from a portion of all health and safety training requirements.

Describe:

- c. Relative providers must fully comply with all health and safety training requirements.

### 5.6.4 Monitoring and Enforcement (as described in Section 5.4)

- a. Relative providers are exempt from all monitoring and enforcement requirements.
- b. Relative providers are exempt from a portion of monitoring and enforcement requirements.

Describe:

- c. Relative providers must fully comply with all monitoring and enforcement requirements.



### 5.6.5 Background Checks (as described in Section 5.5)

- a. Relative providers are exempt from all background check requirements.
- b. Relative providers are exempt from a portion of background check requirements. If checked, identify the background check components that relatives must complete:
  - i. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency
  - ii. Sex offender registry or repository in the current state of residency
  - iii. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency
  - iv. FBI fingerprint check
  - v. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) name based search.
  - vi. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past five years.
  - vii. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past five years.
  - viii. Child abuse and neglect registry or data base in any other state where the individual has resided in the past five years.
- c. Relative providers must fully comply with all background check requirements.

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.

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). This section addresses the quality improvement activities implemented by the Lead Agency related to the support of the child care workforce and the development and implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines. It asks Lead Agencies to describe the measurable indicators of

progress used to evaluate state/territory progress in improving the quality of child care services. (98.53 (f)) in either of these two areas.

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 in programs that serve children of all ages. This framework should be 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.**

a) Describe how the state/territory's framework for training and professional development addresses the following required elements:

i. State/territory professional standards and competencies. Describe:

The Core Knowledge and Competency sub-committee of Alaska's System for Early Education Development (SEED), updated Alaska's Early Care and Learning Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) in January 2021. The CKC's are based on National and State standards including: the National Association for the Education of Young

Children (NAEYC) Teacher Standards; the Alaska Teaching Standards; and the Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching in Alaska as a basis for the Core Knowledge and Competencies. Additionally, Alaska's CKC's are inclusive of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) standards, Head Start Performance Standards, and the Council for Professional Recognition CDA Competency Standards. The CKC's are designed to provide information about what early childhood professionals who work with young children need to know, understand, and demonstrate to best facilitate children's learning and development. They are the foundation for training required to meet approval requirements, to correspond with the Early Learning Guidelines and to be utilized in curriculum and degree requirements within the University of Alaska System.

The CKC's encompass a variety of learning topics including: Child growth, development and learning; Health, nutrition, and safety; Learning environment and curriculum; Interactions with children; Family and community relationships; Professionalism and leadership; Observation and assessment; and Program planning and management. These areas of professional development have been broken down into levels of depth of knowledge and application, and aligned with the SEED registry.

Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies can be found at: [CKC 3rd Edition October 2020 WEB.indd \(threadalaska.org\)](#)

Alaska's CKC's have been endorsed by the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (state advisory council), Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development State School Board.

## ii. Career pathways. Describe:

The Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) is Alaska's early childhood professional development system. A part of SEED is the SEED Registry, a database tracking and supporting early childhood professionals. This database tracks educational and professional development milestones of early educators on an individual basis, according to the Alaska SEED Career Ladder. The Alaska SEED Career Ladder is a path articulating advancement in the early care and learning profession. It is common to professionals in licensed child care centers, homes, or group homes, school district Pre-

Elementary and Elementary schools, private Pre-Elementary and Elementary schools, military child care, tribal child care, Early Head Start/Head Start, and in-home visiting. The SEED Career Ladder aligns with Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies. The SEED Professional Development Committee has a subcommittee of members specifically for looking at data, conducting research, and making recommendations for updates to the SEED Career Ladder, or aligning credentials and trainings of other programs with the ladder. The SEED career ladder is an active document that is reviewed and updated by the SEED Professional Development Committee every two years, and was most recently updated in 2019.

The SEED Career Ladder consists of two tracks, one for Early Care and Education (ECE) and/or School-Age professionals working in the field, and one for Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) Professionals. The ECE track consists of twelve levels that range from Level 1: Working in the early childhood and/or school-age education profession, to Level 12: Doctorate in ECE or related field or unrelated field with thirty Early Childhood (EC) credits. The EI/ILP track ranges from Level 7: Current CDA or current Parents As Teachers credential and completion of applicable sections of the Part C credential to level 12: Ph.D. in related field with current certification or licensure (as required) and completion of the Part C Credential. The SEED Professional Development Committee is/will be exploring the possibility of future tracks on the SEED Career Ladder for school-age, Montessori, and Head Start Programs. In addition, part of the SEED strategic plan (FY19-21) is to identify additional credentials for school-age, and infant/toddler development. The SEED strategic plan also includes goals for increasing the workforce by supporting entry level professionals; new partnerships with the University system; incorporating experience into a pathway; and exploring racial and gender equality in the field.

Currently, participation in the SEED Registry is voluntary across the programs mentioned earlier with the exception of professionals working in Early Intervention/Infant Learning Programs. All initiatives funded by the Child Care Program Office require participation in the SEED registry, and Professional Development reimbursements are linked to the SEED Career Ladder, and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System requires participation in the SEED registry. The SEED Career Ladder is also used in: determining wage incentives in pilot programs; informing decisions by administrators of individual program staff wages; and in aligning the field with salaries and wages. It is a future goal of the Child Care Program Office to further explore phase in

of required placement for all providers working in programs that are licensed or regulated to serve children birth to age 13.

**iii. Advisory structure. Describe:**

The Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) is a professional development system for early educators in Alaska. Managed by "thread," Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, SEED is a collaborative of the following entities with active representation on the SEED Steering Committee from:

- Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children
- Alaska Family Child Care Association;
- Alaska Head Start Association;
- Best Beginnings;
- Camp Fire Alaska USA: Before/After School program;
- Military Child Care;
- Anchorage School District;
- Municipality of Anchorage, Child Care Licensing Program;
- State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services: Child Care Program Office (Child Care Assistance Program, Child Care Licensing, Child Care Grant, Alaska Inclusive Child Care (Alaska IN!) Program); Infant Learning Program (ILP, TACSEI/Pyramid Model Partnership); Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems; Strengthening Families; and Early Childhood Mental Health;
- State of Alaska, Department of Education and Early Development (includes Head Start Collaboration Office and Pre-Elementary School Programs);
- thread, Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network;
- Tribal Child Care ;
- University of Alaska: Anchorage and Fairbanks;
- Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System;
- After School Network; and
- Private Child Care.

This group meets regularly with quarterly meetings of the full Steering Committee to track and inform progress and activities in the Alaska Statewide Professional Development Strategic Plan (2019). This plan was updated on July 27th, 2018 and provided the scope for FY19-2021. This includes action steps and goals in: the Core Knowledge and Competencies; access and outreach to create a continuum of supports for recruitment

and retention; qualifications, credentials, and pathways; quality assurance for training and trainers; funding; and governance.

The SEED Steering Committee will update the Statewide Professional Development Strategic Plan beginning Fall 2021. The updated plan will provide the scope for FY 2021-2023.

**iv. Articulation. Describe:**

In Alaska, the two-year and four-year University System is rolled into one. Alaska has three Universities that work together, University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). Both UAA and UAF have Early Childhood (EC) programs. UAA currently offers two EC programs, a workforce development certificate/Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC in Infant and Toddler Development and the AAS in Early Childhood Development. There are pathways for graduate courses in the MEd in Teaching and Learning as well. The AAS in EC is accredited by NAEYC/. UAA regularly transfers credits from other University of Alaska (UA) institutions and others that are NAEYC accredited. The Child Development Associate (CDA) articulates into six credits through the UA system. In addition to the CDA articulation agreement, UAA articulates the completed military child care modules with the same trade; six credits toward the AAS. UAA does not articulate partial credits toward the Child Development Associate (CDA), individual military modules, or informal credits from Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. Only the completed credential is articulated. The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) offers an AAS In Early Childhood Education and Baccalaureate in Child Development and Family studies. The UAF AAS Degree articulates directly into the Child Development and Family Studies BA. UAF does accept transfer credits from other accredited institutions. UAF regularly transfers credits from other University of Alaska (UA) institutions. The Child Development Associate (CDA) articulates into six credits through the UA system. In addition to the CDA articulation agreement, UAF articulates the completed military child care modules as 12 credits towards the UAS degree, nine of which articulate into the CDFS BA. UAF works with students for credit for prior learning when appropriate. UAF does not articulate particle credits toward the CDA or individual military modules, informal credits from Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. Only the completed credential is articulated

#### v. Workforce information. Describe:

The state child care database used by child care licensing is the Integrated Child Care Information System (ICCIS). The Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) Registry is the database supporting early childhood professionals that track educational and professional development milestones of early educators on an individual basis. Additionally, SEED captures compensation information as well as employment history. Participation in the SEED Registry is voluntary. Data is collected from early childhood partners by the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and includes: the demographic characteristics of practitioners or providers working directly with children, training records of individuals and their qualifications, compensation information, retention rates, programs they are working in, and the number of scholarships or financial incentives they are receiving. Alaska's Resource and Referral Network, thread, is in the process of developing and implementing a new database, Salesforce. With the completion and launching of Salesforce it will bring a robust customer portal leading to more access, and increased data and reporting opportunities. In 2019, the CCPO funded an Alaska Early Childhood and School-Age Wage Compensation study by completed by Johns Hopkins IDEALS Institute. The study included recommendations to Alaska for improvements to the early childhood system, which will inform planning and updates to the SEED strategic plan moving forward. The final report can be found at: [JHU IDEALS 2019 EC Wage and Compensation Study Final Report.pdf \(threadalaska.org\)](https://www.threadalaska.org/threads/2019-ec-wage-and-compensation-study-final-report)

#### vi. Financing. Describe:

Financing is available to support individuals working in the field. Individuals working in licensed child care and registered in the SEED registry have access to Professional Development Reimbursements (PDR) for training or higher education. Training that meets the Health and Safety Training requirements are reimbursed at 100%. Travel Reimbursements (TR) are also available for travel expenses for higher education/training directly related to early childhood and/or school age education. Funding is available for a Child Development Associates (CDA) application or renewal fee. The PDR fund also supports CPR/First aid costs, and the costs associated with obtaining a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) up to \$160.00. Additionally, scholarships are available through the University of Alaska system through a Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with the Child Care Program Office (CCPO). This scholarship provides students working in the field with funds to support higher education in Early Childhood Education. SEED implemented a wage incentive program in the Fall of 2019, Alaska SEED

Retaining Our Outstanding Teachers Award (ROOTS). ROOTS provides a funding award on a first come first serve basis to those in the SEED Registry. Since ROOTS was preparing to launch when the COVID-19 Pandemic hit, the first version of this program was called the COVID ROOTS award and had basic requirements of working in the field. As the program further develops beyond the pandemic crisis, SEED will develop ROOTS into a long-term sustainable incentive program with the goal of retention and rewarding movement on the career ladder.

b) The following are optional elements, or elements that should be implemented to the extent practicable, in the training and professional development framework.

- i. Continuing education unit trainings and credit-bearing professional development to the extent practicable

Describe:

- ii. Engagement of training and professional development providers, including higher education, in aligning training and educational opportunities with the state/territory's framework

Describe:

The System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development Committee has representation from the University of Alaska system, Department of Education and Early Development, and trainers in the field. Through that representation it ensures through the strategic plan goals and actions that training and education opportunities are aligned with the state's framework.

- iii. 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.**

The Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development



Committee develops the professional development framework through strategic planning and ongoing meetings. The SEED committee ensures the framework aligns with workforce development priorities of Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC), and Early Childhood Alaska, A Strategic Direction for 2020-2025. The SEED committee is focused on the early care and learning professional development planning as part of the overall focus of early childhood workforce development. The AECCC recognizes the SEED committee as state experts and is made up of Child Care Program Office representation to guide and inform professional development requirements. SEED members also participate on the AECCC to ensure updates are provided during regular meetings. The AECCC endorsed the SEED Core Knowledge and Competencies following a presentation and request by the SEED committee. SEED has worked to receive additional endorsements of the Core Knowledge and Competencies from the Alaska State School Board of Education.

### **6.1.3 Describe how the framework improves the quality, diversity, stability, and retention of caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.44(a)(7)).**

The states professional development framework is made up of many components to provide a well-rounded strategy for improving the quality, diversity, stability, and retention in the workforce. The career ladder provides a path for individuals to follow as they advance their education and training in the field. The ladder offers caregivers, teachers, and directors a means of identifying where individuals are in the spectrum of professional development and can be used to ensure stability within a child care program. A child care program can use the framework to ensure they have staff at multiple levels of professional development and assist them in a path to advancement. The Training and Trainer Approval system ensures the training received by individuals in the field meet a level of standards and quality. This approval system can be used to ensure trainings offered are quality trainings that meet certain criteria. There are financial assistance opportunities to assist any individual in obtaining education and training. This resource assists providers in obtaining training and higher education, which promotes retention and stability. Alaska SEED ROOTS is a wage compensation program that provides financial awards to individuals in the SEED Registry. The System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development Committee is collaborative with a variety of representation from professionals in the field, including but not limited to university representation, family child care providers, center based child care

providers, tribal representation, school-age representation, infant learning representation, and both state and non state representatives. This collaborative approach ensures diversity is cared for in the framework. The SEED committee works closely with Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System, which ensures aligned activities around supporting the workforce.

## 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 into training and professional development opportunities:**

-- 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 mental health intervention models for young children, which can include positive behavior intervention and support models that reduce the likelihood of suspension and expulsion of children (as described in Section 2 of the Pre-Print) (98.44(b)).

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), offers approved training and/or makes training referrals to the workforce. Thread's trainings include topics that support social-emotional/ behavioral health topics, positive behavior intervention and support models that

reduce the likelihood of suspension and expulsion of children. All thread training includes alignment to Alaska's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies, the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, and developmentally and age-appropriate strategies and national best practices. Thread requires all its trainings and trainers to go through Alaska's Training and Trainer Approval System. Providers have access to these trainings to meet ongoing training requirements. Alaska's Health and Safety Orientation content requirements were developed using Alaska's State Child Care Regulations and policies, Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's), Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC's), Caring for Our Children standards, Association for Education of Young Children (AEYC) standards, and national best practice. All of these tools were used to develop the content requirements of the required health and safety orientation training, and thread collectively incorporate early learning guidelines, health and safety, social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models and behavior guidance supports.

**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)).**

The professional development supports in Alaska are available to tribal entity's including the following through Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread: training and technical assistance; presentations at tribal conferences; Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) Registry; and Professional Development Reimbursements. Members of Tribal Organizations receiving CCDF participate in the SEED Professional Development Committee which ensures they have knowledge of the supports and resources offered through SEED. Additionally, thread partners through community outreach with Tribal Organizations receiving CCDF to align with or inform them of training and professional development opportunities. All of thread's training is accessible and available to tribal child care providers and programs through thread's website. In addition to training, SEED Registry (Career Ladder), and utilization of the Core Knowledge and Competencies are available and accessible to tribal organizations receiving CCDF. The CCPO also provides access on the website to Alaska's Approved Health and Safety Training list.

**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 in the subsidy system:**

**a) with limited English proficiency**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and its designees/grantees have access to a language line, and assistance in communicating with providers for whom English is not their first language. As part of continued recruitment and retention efforts, the CCPO, in partnership with thread, will outreach to providers who do not use English as their primary language. Child Care Licensing staff and Child Care Assistance staff collaborate and deliver training and informational meetings together when possible, to facilitate recruitment efforts into the Child Care Assistance Program as well as retention of current participants in both programs. Goals for recruitment and retention of this population include collaboration with tribal organizations, including CCPO participation in Head Start Association meetings when possible. Additionally, Alaska's System for Early Education Development (SEED) and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System, have both expanded to include regular participation from several tribal representatives. Strategies we will continue to work on include recruiting participants who can attend trainings or meetings that can translate into other languages and answer questions

**b) who have disabilities**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) makes available applications, participating forms, and notices, available on the website. A vast majority of these documents follow the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and are ADA accessible. These forms are created through PDF and are checked through running accessibility reports prior to making them available on our website. Child Care Licensing chats are held in locations that offer access for persons with disabilities, such as colleges, libraries, and other community organizations. Child Care Licensing staff and Child Care Assistance staff collaborate and deliver training and informational meetings together when possible, to facilitate recruitment efforts into the Child Care Assistance Program as well as retention of current participants in both programs. The CCPO also participates in the Governor's Council on Disabilities and

Special Education monthly meeting and shares updates and information on the Child Care Assistance Program and the Alaska IN! Program for families who have a child with a special need. Through those connections, recruitment and retention efforts can be routinely explored.

**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 as defined in Section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (including Alaska Natives) and Native Hawaiians (98.44(b)(2)(iv)).**

Alaska's Training and Trainer Approval system is a voluntary system. The approval system ensures Professional Development training aligns with Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines, Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies, and national best practices. Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, thread, has held several trainings in Spanish, as well as attempts to recruit professional development staff who speak multiple languages when possible and can deliver training and technical assistance to providers who are second language learners. The Child Care Program Office, in coordination with thread, collaborate on the training needs of the field and work to offer training both in a broad range as well as narrowed down to the needs of certain topics or populations. The training requirements are applicable and offered to 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 Alaska Native and American Indians.

**6.2.5 The Lead Agency must provide training and technical assistance (TA) to providers and appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving children and families experiencing homelessness (658E(c)(3)(B)(i)).**

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).

Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, provides training to child care providers. Some thread staff who deliver training have received trainings themselves on indicators to assist them in identifying and serving families experiencing homelessness, so they are able to incorporate that knowledge into trainings they deliver to child care providers. Additionally, there are resources on the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) website to assist any staff, grantee, or child care provider in being responsive to families experiencing homelessness. Licensing discusses the regulatory requirement related to supporting families experiencing homelessness during the licensing orientation. This orientation will also be available in an online training platform in the coming years.

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 3.3.6).

In Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, ensures all staff who provide child care referrals to families as well as training staff who deliver training to child care providers, have received training and indicators to assist them in identifying and serving families experiencing homelessness. Information was presented to Child Care Assistance Program grantees that administer the program and some CCPO staff who work in the program during the Local Administrators teleconference on August 25, 2016. Child Care Assistance brochures were emailed to all the school district McKinney-Vento liaisons asking them to share our information with a particular focus on reaching families who are experiencing homelessness.

**6.2.6 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.**

a. Describe the strategies that the state/territory is developing and implementing for strengthening child care providers' business practices.

Training and TA efforts are made throughout the year as well as when requested, to assist providers with strengthening business practices. These trainings and/or TA can be obtained through provider meetings (licensing chats) held by Child Care Program Office's Licensing Specialists, or through the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. Additionally, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System, Learn & Grow, incorporates training requirements in strengthening business practices, to include Human Resource Management and Fiscal Management. The CCPO is also the lead for an Alaska team participating in the First Children's Finance Business Collaboratory- which is a technical assistance and planning effort to strengthen business practices for the child care industry. The Business Collaboratory is a year long effort that began in Fall 2020. The CCPO will use this opportunity to develop and implement at least one strategy from these efforts for strengthening business practices.

b. Check the topics addressed in the state/territory's strategies for strengthening child care providers' business practices. Check all that apply.

- i. Fiscal management
- ii. Budgeting
- iii. Recordkeeping
- iv. Hiring, developing, and retaining qualified staff
- v. Risk management
- vi. Community relationships
- vii. Marketing and public relations
- viii. Parent-provider communications, including who delivers the training, education, and/or technical assistance

ix. Other

Describe:

## 6.3 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce with CCDF Quality Funds

Lead Agencies can invest CCDF quality funds 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 of the CCDF Rule, and those included in the activities to improve the quality of child care also addressed in Section 7 (98.53(a)(1)).

### 6.3.1 Training and professional development of the child care workforce.

a. In the table below, describe which content is included in training and professional development activities and how an entity is funded to address this topic. Then identify which types of providers are included in these activities. Check all that apply.

i. 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 (98.53 (a)(1)(i)(A)).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), offers approved training and/or makes training referrals to the workforce. All thread training includes alignment to Alaska's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies, the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, developmentally and age appropriate strategies and national best practices. Licensed child care providers have caregiver qualifications including an orientation which includes but is not limited to nutrition and age-appropriate feeding; and access to physical activity. Training offered by thread in FY19 includes: My Plate For My Family series; STEAM For Infants and Toddlers series; Understanding Developmental Stages; The Power of Child Nutrition; and Using Brain Research to Guide Your Program. Training on nutrition



and physical activity is also available through GO NAPSAC, which is a training program that works with child care providers focused on improving the health of young children through practices, policies, and environments for health and well-being. Funded with CCDF and a grant to the Division of Public Health.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

ii. Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models that promote positive social-emotional development and the mental health of young children 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 2.4.5.) (98.53(a)(1)(iii)).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), provides an array of positive behavioral interventions and approved training to the workforce. All thread training includes alignment to Alaska's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies, the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, developmentally appropriate and age appropriate strategies and national best practices. Specific trainings include, but are not limited to: Pyramid Model Foundations; Adverse Childhood Experiences, and Brain Development; Building Bridges with Words; Kindness Starts With You; and Reality Bites- Teething and Biting. The University Early Childhood programs offer courses in these topic areas as well. (Additionally, thread provides individual child consultation when requested by programs. Scholarships are available through the University of Alaska system through a Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with the CCPO. This scholarship provides students working in the field with scholarship funds to support higher education in early childhood courses including behavior management strategies, 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 5 for such behaviors. Finally, the CCPO provides behavior guidance chats to licensed programs. Funded through CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

iii. 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. (98.53(a)(1)(iv)).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office, offers training on engaging families. One of the prominent trainings is Strengthening Families (SF). The SF framework is based on engaging families, programs, and communities in building five protective factors that help families succeed and thrive, even in the face of risk and challenges. Trainings offered by thread in FY19 included: Adaptations and Considerations to Make When Welcoming New Families; Diversity and Inclusion Workshop; and Empathy and Critical Thinking Workshop. Funded through CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

iv. 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 (98.15 (a)(9)).

Describe the content and funding:

Training offered through thread focused on teachers using practices and designing their environment in FY19 included: Helping Young Children to Understand and Respect Differences in Others; Developmental Screening and Assessment with a Cultural Lens; and Diversity and Inclusion Workshop. Funded by CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

v. 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 the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office, offers training on Strengthening Families (SF). One of the SF protective factors is for families to have an understanding of child development and appropriate expectations for their child's age/skill level, and another is for families to get connected with resources and supports, and the providers can be assisted in developing community resources files. Funded by CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based

- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

vi. Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement 98.53(a)(1)(ii).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office, provides an array of training and technical assistance around guiding programs through continuous improvement practices. SEED, housed and managed at thread, administers Alaska's Early Childhood Administrator Credential, which includes courses that instruct a program on how to use data-based decision making to guide program evaluation and ensure continuous improvement. Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) requires administrators to achieve this credential. Training offered by thread in FY19 included: Intro into the Environmental Rating Scale; behavioral Procedures Configuration; and Using Brain Research to Guide Your Program. Funded through CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

vii. Caring for children of families in geographic areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment.

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office, offers training on Strengthening Families (SF). Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the CCPO, offers training on Strengthening

Families (SF). One of the protective factors within SF is "concrete supports in time of need" and talks about how family situations change and the need to provide concrete supports. There is information about community resources to support families for a variety of situations including homelessness or unemployment. Thread training offered during FY20 included: Recognizing Signs of Trauma and How to Instill the Keys That Increase Resiliency in Children; and ACES and Trauma Sensitive Practices. Funded through CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

viii. Caring for and supporting the development of children with disabilities and developmental delays 98.53 (a)(1)(i)(B).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, funded by a grant through the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), offers a variety of courses related to supporting the individual needs of children with disabilities and developmental delays. All thread training includes alignment to Alaska's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies, the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate strategies and national best practices. Some training topics include: Positive Behavioral Supports and working with challenging behaviors; Designing Inclusive Learning Environments; Autism Practices; and Understanding the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and IDEA law. Additionally, scholarships are available through the University of Alaska system through a Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with the CCPO. This scholarship provides students working in the field with scholarship funds to support higher education in early childhood courses including caring for and supporting the development of children with disabilities. Funded through CCDF.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

ix. Supporting the positive development of school-age children (98.53(a)(1)(iii)).

Describe the content and funding:

Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, offers courses related to supporting the positive development of school age children. Training offered in FY20 included: Back to School, What We All Need to Know; Prevention of Harassment and Bullying; LGBTQIA + Me- Why it is Essential to Know your Identity Alphabet; and The Promise of Adolescence. In addition, the Alaska After School Network and the Department of Education (DEED) also have training available for child care providers on this topic. Funded through CCDF, After School Network, and DEED.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

x. Other

Describe:

Not applicable.

Which type of providers are included in these training and professional development activities?

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

**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 and then identify which providers are eligible for this activity. Check all that apply.**

- i. Coaches, mentors, consultants, or other specialists available to support access to post-secondary training, including financial aid and academic counseling.
  - Licensed center-based
  - License exempt center-based
  - Licensed family child care home
  - License- exempt family child care home
  - In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- ii. Statewide or territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e., an online calendar, a listing of opportunities) of relevant post-secondary education opportunities.
  - Licensed center-based
  - License exempt center-based
  - Licensed family child care home
  - License- exempt family child care home
  - In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- iii. Financial awards such as scholarships, grants, loans, or reimbursement for expenses and/or training, from the state/territory to complete post-secondary education.
  - Licensed center-based
  - License exempt center-based

- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- iv. Other.
  - Licensed center-based
  - License exempt center-based
  - Licensed family child care home
  - License- exempt family child care home
  - In-home care (care in the child's own home)

Describe:

**6.3.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 6.3 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 Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, conducts training evaluations following each in-person or web-based training. The percentage of respondents who report increased knowledge after attending a training is the indicator of success. The financial supports made available to child care providers are consistently expended to the fullest. As individuals continue to use these funds the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) can track the progress of the individuals advancement on the System for Early Education Development (SEED) Career Ladder. This advancement data will be a measure of progress on the use of these funds improving the quality of the workforce and child care programs. Additional measures the CCPO is exploring, together with SEED: Number of Participants in the SEED Registry; Number of Participants Receiving a Wage Incentive; Number of Scholarships awarded through University Of Alaska System. Additionally, SEED will use the recommendations for Alaska's Wage and Compensation Model developed by Johns Hopkins IDEALS Institute to identify or develop new strategies and relevant measures of progress.



## 6.4 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

**6.4.1 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.**

a. Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines address the following requirements:

i. Are research-based.

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) in partnership with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) are the lead agencies for the development of Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) published in 2007. In January 2020, The ELG's were updated through a revision funded by The Preschool Development Grant. The development of the ELG's included many early childhood stakeholders and partners, consultants, and content specialists including researched based organizations. Contributors also included individuals who had knowledge and expertise regarding multicultural and linguistic diversity of Alaska. ELG's provide indicators and strategies for providers, parents, and children birth to Kindergarten entry on fifty-two specific goals across five domains.

ii. Developmentally appropriate.

The ELG's use indicators and strategies within and across age ranges, identifying specific goals, indicators, and strategies, ensuring they are developmentally appropriate.

### [iii. Culturally and linguistically appropriate.](#)

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines are designed to strengthen culturally responsive practices: recognizing the diverse cultures of children as strengths, building understanding and respect in children for their own and other cultures, and empowering children through the cultural values and touchstones of their family heritage. Family and cultural stories help children build strong and positive identities, especially if their culture is different from the dominant culture in their region. By including all children's cultures as much as possible in the learning environment, early educators help foster positive identities, which leads to academic success.

### [iv. Aligned with kindergarten entry.](#)

The ELG's were developed by a workgroup led by the Department of Education and Early Development. Alignment with Kindergarten readiness was among the strategies and resources used in the 2020 update.

### [v. Appropriate for all children from birth to kindergarten entry.](#)

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) outline the developmental milestones for children from birth to 5, as they prepare for kindergarten. The ELG's include information on social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children.

### [vi. Implemented in consultation with the educational agency and the State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body.](#)

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) in partnership with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) are the lead agencies for the development of Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG), published in 2007 and updated in 2020 through support of the Preschool Development Grant. The implementation and updates of the ELG are coordinated through the Department of Education and in coordination with the Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC); System for Early Education Development (SEED) Professional Development Committee; Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) Executive and Stakeholder Committees; and the ELG steering committee.

b. Describe how the required domains are included in the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines. Responses for "other" are optional.

i. Cognition, including language arts and mathematics.

Domain 4- Cognition and General Knowledge

ii. Social development.

Domain 2: Social and emotional Development

iii. Emotional development.

Domain 2: Social and emotional Development

iv. Physical development.

Domain 1: Physical wellbeing, health, and motor development

v. Approaches toward learning.

Domain 3: Approaches toward learning

vi. Describe how other optional domains are included, if any:

Domain 5: Communication, language, and literacy

c. 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.

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines were first published in 2007. Update was completed in January 2020 as a priority of Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council and funded by the Preschool Development Grant.

d. If applicable, discuss the state process for the adoption, implementation, and continued improvement of state out-of-school time standards.

Not applicable at this time.

e. Provide the Web link to the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines and if available, the school-age guidelines.

[Alaska Early Learning Guidelines \(alaskaelg.org\)](http://alaskaelg.org)

#### 6.4.2 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.

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines were developed to help families, early educators, and communities work together to support children's early learning and growth by: Helping clarify the complexities, progression, and connection of learning from birth to kindergarten age; honoring and embracing the tremendous diversity and individuality of children and families; supporting parents and early educators to observe, recognize and celebrate children's growth and plan for the next stage of development; providing practical ideas to support children's learning; showing the alignment of early childhood education with K-12 standards; and strengthening the relationship between early childhood and K-12 so schools are ready for children and children are ready for school. ELG's provide indicators and strategies for providers, parents and children birth to Kindergarten entry on fifty-two specific goals across five domains. These goals set the standards and expectations for Alaska's youngest children. The ELG's use indicators and strategies within and across age ranges, identifying specific goals, indicators, and strategies. The ELG's are distributed to child care providers through many avenues including the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, the Child Care Program Office, and Best Beginnings. The ELG's are used by trainers submitting training content for approval through Alaska's Training and Trainer Approval System, as training applications must define the specific ELG's addressed in each training. Family-friendly activity guides based on Alaska's ELGs are available in Spanish, English, and Yup'ik through Best Beginnings (Public-Private Partnership. The web address is [Search Results for "early learning guidelines" – Alaska's Early Childhood Investment \(bestbeginningsalaska.org\)](#)

**6.4.3 If quality funds are used to develop, maintain, or implement early learning and development guidelines, describe the measurable 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)).**

CCDF quality funds are not currently used to develop, maintain, or implement Alaska's early learning and developmental guidelines.

## 7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to use a portion of their CCDF 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 CCDF Plan, the ACF 118, states and territories will describe the types of activities supported by quality investments over the 3-year period (658G(b); 98.16(j)).
2. In the annual expenditure report, the ACF-696, ACF will collect data on how much CCDF funding is spent on quality activities. 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 Quality Progress Report, the ACF 218, that will include a description of activities 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 (Addressed in Section 6)
- Improving on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines (Addressed in Section 6)
- Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system or other systems of quality improvement 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, and all categories of care. It is important that while Lead Agencies have the flexibility to define "high quality" and develop strategies and standards to support their definition, Lead Agencies should consider how that definition and those strategies for different provider types reflect and acknowledge their unique differences and how quality varies in different settings, including family child care and small care settings as well as child care centers.

This section covers the quality activities needs assessment, 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)).**

In January 2019, the Child Care Program Office convened a statewide group called Alaska's Early Childhood Joint Task Force (JTF). JTF had an 8-member Leadership Team, which in turn engaged with and guided a full 40+ member JTF. The representation on the JTF included representation from public and private members in the field and cross-sector programs for children and families. The JTF formed to leverage leadership and resources and align work on two goals: A statewide Early Childhood Needs Assessment and a Strategic Plan. This effort was coordinated among three grants: the initial Preschool Development Grant received by the Department of Early Education and Development (DEED) and jointly managed by DEED and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS); an Impact Project grant from the State Capacity Building Center to align Early Care and Education (ECE) systems with programs and services, led by the DHSS Child Care Program Office; and an Indigenous Project LAUNCH grant to prepare Alaska Native children 0-8 with skills to succeed in school, led by Southcentral Foundation, a health and wellness organization serving the Alaska Native population in Southcentral Alaska. A Needs Assessment of Alaska's Mixed-Delivery System of Early Childhood Care and Education was finalized in 2020. Access, Affordability, and Quality were all included in the needs assessment and were used to inform and develop Early Childhood Alaska: A Strategic Direction for 2020-2025. That Statewide strategic plan is used as a decision-making resource in identifying strategies to invest quality dollars in. The System for Early Education

Development (SEED) professional development system and Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System are both integral systems in which the Child Care Program Office coordinates with to carry out quality activities. The SEED committee does a strategic plan every three years to assess needs and will be developing a 2022-2024 plan beginning Fall 2021. Learn & Grow has an annual operating plan which assesses needs, as well as a 5-year strategic plan, updated 2021. Other committees engaged in assessing state needs and working on quality activities include but are not limited to: Alaska's Early Childhood Coordinating Council; Alaska's Mental Health Trust; All Alaska Pediatric Partnership; and Women's Children's Families Health. Each individual committee/organization has its own frequency of updating assessments and plans, which can range from quarterly to every 3-5 years.

**7.1.2 Describe the findings of the assessment and if any overarching goals for quality improvement were identified. If applicable, include a direct URL/website link for any available evaluation or research related to the findings.**

Overarching goals that were identified by Early Childhood Alaska: A Strategic Direction for 2020-2025 for quality improvement for early care and education include: Accessibility: Families have access to early childhood education programs that are high quality, culturally responsive, and affordable. Families have access to information that allows them to make choices that meet their individual needs. Affordability: Alaska families have affordable early care and education program options. High Quality: Alaska's children are in high quality early childhood programs. Workforce: The early childhood workforce is stable, qualified, compensated, diverse, and supported. The full report can be found at [www.earlychildhoodalaska.com](http://www.earlychildhoodalaska.com).



## 7.2 Use of Quality Funds

### 7.2.1 Check the quality improvement activities in which the state/territory is investing

a. Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce as discussed in 6.2 (Related Section: 6.3). Check all that apply.

i CCDF funds

ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

b. Developing, maintaining, or implementing early learning and developmental guidelines (Related Section: 6.4). Check all that apply.

i CCDF funds

ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

Preschool Development Grant funds supported the revision of the Early Learning Guidelines

c. Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system (Related Section: 7.3). Check all that apply.

i CCDF funds

ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

d. Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers (Related Section: 7.4). Check all that apply.

i CCDF funds

ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

e. Establishing or expanding a statewide system of CCR&R services, as discussed in 1.7 (Related Section: 7.5). Check all that apply.

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

- f. Facilitating Compliance with State Standards (Related Section: 7.6). Check all that apply.

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

- g. Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the state/territory (Related Section: 7.7). Check all that apply.

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

- h. Accreditation Support (Related Section: 7.8). Check all that apply.

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

- i. Supporting state/territory or local efforts to develop high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development (Related Section: 7.9). Check all that apply.

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

- j. 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 (Related Section: 7.10). Check all that apply

- i CCDF funds
- ii. State general funds

Other funds. Describe:

### 7.3 Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) or Another System of Quality Improvement

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

#### **7.3.1 Does your state/territory have a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality improvement?**

- a. No, the state/territory has no plans for QRIS development. If no, skip to 7.4.1.
- b. No, but the state/territory is in the QRIS development phase. If no, skip to 7.4.1.
- c. 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.
- d. 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. The link to Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS), Learn & Grow is: <http://threadalaska.org/>

e. Yes, the state/territory has another system of quality improvement.

Describe the other system of quality improvement and provide a link, if available.

### 7.3.2 Indicate how providers participate in the state or territory QRIS or another system of quality improvement.

a. Are providers required to participate in the QRIS or another system of quality improvement? Check all that apply if response differs for different categories of care.

Participation is voluntary

Participation is partially mandatory. For example, participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving a subsidy, participation is mandatory for all licensed providers or participation is mandatory for programs serving children birth to age 5 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).

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 QRIS or another system of quality improvement? Check all that apply.

i. Licensed child care centers

ii. Licensed family child care homes

iii. License-exempt providers

iv. Early Head Start programs

v. Head Start programs

vi. State Prekindergarten or preschool programs

vii. Local district-supported Prekindergarten programs

viii. Programs serving infants and toddlers

- ix. Programs serving school-age children
- x. Faith-based settings
- xi. Tribally operated programs
- xii. Other

Describe:

c. Describe how the Lead Agency's QRIS, or other system for improving quality, considers how quality may look different in the different types of provider settings which participate in the QRIS or other system of quality improvement. For instance, does the system of quality improvement consider what quality looks like in a family child care home with mixed-age groups vs. child care centers with separate age groups? Or are standards related to quality environments flexible enough to define quality in home-based environments, as well as child care center environments?

Learn & Grow, Alaska's QRIS has one set of standards for all program types. Homes are exempt from quality standards related to personnel and education level. Flexibilities are built in for programs to choose between the Environmental Rating Scale or the CLASS Tool, as well as what type of Quality Improvement plan is preferred, Learn & Grow's, or their own.

### **7.3.3 Identify how the state or territory supports and assesses 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 or another system of quality improvement. 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).

Do the state/territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards?

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.
  - a. 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) .
  - b. 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).
  - c. 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).
  - d. Programs that meet all or part of state/territory school-age quality standards.
  - e. Other.  
Describe:

**7.3.4 Do the state/territory's quality standards build on its licensing requirements and other regulatory requirements?**

- No
- Yes. If yes, check any links between the state/territory's quality standards and licensing requirements
  - a. Requires that a provider meet basic licensing requirements to qualify for the base level of the QRIS.
  - b. Embeds licensing into the QRIS
  - c. State/territory license is a "rated" license
  - d. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office requires that a provider meet basic licensing requirements to qualify for the base level of the QRIS.

**7.3.5 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 or another system of quality improvement.**

No

Yes. If yes, check all that apply

a. If yes, indicate in the table below which categories of care receive this support.

i. One-time grants, awards, or bonuses

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

ii. Ongoing or periodic quality stipends

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

iii. Higher subsidy payments

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

iv. Training or technical assistance related to QRIS

- Licensed center-based

- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

v. Coaching/mentoring

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

vi. Scholarships, bonuses, or increased compensation for degrees/certificates

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

vii. Materials and supplies

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

viii. Priority access for other grants or programs

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

ix. Tax credits for providers

- Licensed center-based



- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

x. Tax credits for parents

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

xi. Payment of fees (e.g. licensing, accreditation)

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home (care in the child's own home)

b. Other:

Not applicable.

**7.3.6 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.3 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.**

Learn & Grow has three internal program goals associated with Phase I. 1) 25% eligible program participants; 2) 85% of enrolled programs will achieve Level 1; and 3) 20% of Level 1 programs will achieve Level 2. The Child Care Program Office has also developed a performance measure for Learn & Grow by the number and percent of child care facilities advancing annually to the next level of Learn & Grow. The target for this performance measure is 5% or more of facilities participating in Learn & Grow advance to the next level annually. Learn & Grow has a system implementation goal of: All 5 levels of quality will be accessible to participating programs in 2024.

## 7.4 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

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.

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the required 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.

### **7.4.1 Identify and describe the activities that 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 and check which of the activities are available to each provider type.**

- a. 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:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home

- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- b. Establishing or expanding the operation of community-based, neighborhood-based, or provider networks comprised of home-based providers, or small centers focused on expanding the supply of infant and toddler care.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- c. Providing training and professional development to enhance child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers.

Describe:

The Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, offers training and professional development in a number of topics to support the field. There are specific courses to infants and toddlers on developmentally appropriate practices and focuses on Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines and Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies. The training titles included in FY21 were: STEAM: Science with Infants and Toddlers; STEAM Technology with Infants and Toddlers; STEAM Engineering with Infants and Toddlers; Brain Development and Early Literacy for Infants and Toddlers. Keeping Children Safe: SIDS/SBS and Child Abuse (English and Spanish). Infant and Toddler Symposiums have also occurred within the last two years.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- d. 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:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

## 7.4 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

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.

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the required 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.

### **7.4.1 Identify and describe the activities that 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 and check which of the activities are available to each provider type.**

- e. 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:

The Child Care Program Office holds regular and ongoing meetings with the Infant Learning Program under Part C. The purpose of these meetings is to coordinate and collaborate on efforts to support the needs of infants and toddlers in child care.

Results of this coordination include but are not limited to: shared training opportunities; memorandum of understanding to provide access to developmental screenings for families through their child care provider; coordination on committees and councils;

and coordination on consumer education resources to staff, families, and child care providers.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- f. Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's QRIS, including classroom inventories and assessments.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- g. Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's child care licensing regulations.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- h. Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and developmental guidelines.

Describe:

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines are broken down by four age groups and are structured as follows: 5 Domains; Domain Component; Goal Statement; Age Group; Indicators; and Strategies. Each goal is accompanied by a specific set of indicators for each of the four age groups. The four age groups are birth-9 months; 9-18 months; 18-36 months; and 36-60 months.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

## 7.4 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

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.

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the required 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.

### **7.4.1 Identify and describe the activities that 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 and check which of the activities are available to each provider type.**

- i. 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:

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's) are accessible and available to parents from the websites of thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Department of Education and Early Development, and Best Beginnings. Best Beginnings is a public-private partnership that mobilizes people and resources to

ensure all Alaska children begin school ready to succeed. Best Beginnings offers additional activities that accompany Alaska's ELG's for parents to use. The activity guides are available for infants, toddlers, or preschool, and are available in English, Spanish, and Yup'ik.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- j. 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:

Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, offers Quality Initiatives (QI) to licensed child care providers. A QI is an opportunity for early care and learning programs to participate in professional development around a specific early care and learning topic. All Quality Initiatives through thread involve training, goal setting with the development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), as well as consultation and a financial stipend to support goal implementation. Upon completion of the Quality Initiative requirements, programs may receive financial support to defray the costs of training and/or implementing goals based on the QIP. Thread offers a QI on infant/toddler to support the quality of infant and toddler care. The design of this QI ensures the wrap around supports a provider would need to ensure the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health, safety, and overall wellbeing.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- k. Coordinating with child care health consultants.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- l. Coordinating with mental health consultants.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- m. Establishing systems to collect real time data on available (vacant) slots in ECE settings, by age of child, quality level, and location of program.

Describe:

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)
- n. Other.

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office administers the Child Care Grant (CCG) program. The purpose of the CCG is to promote quality child care by assisting licensed child care providers who care for children of families participating in the State of Alaska Child Care Assistance Program, with costs associated with their facilities. The CCG promotes quality child care by supporting and encouraging professional development, the retention of early childhood care and education professionals, and safe and healthy environments for children in care. As part of the CCG, eligible providers can receive a monthly reimbursement towards improving the quality of their facility. The



areas of quality supported are as follows: to support staff salaries, wages, and benefits; costs for substitute care providers; health and safety related costs; supplies, activities, and equipment for the children in care; and education and training related to child development.

- Licensed center-based
- License exempt center-based
- Licensed family child care home
- License- exempt family child care home
- In-home care (care in the child's own home)

**7.4.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.4 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 Child Care Program Office is collecting data to implement the following measures of progress: 1. Number of infants and toddlers enrolled in a Learn & Grow Program. 2. Number of Infants and Toddlers on the Child Care Assistance Program; 3. Number of Providers participating in Infant and Toddler Trainings; 4. Number of providers serving infants and toddlers participating in the Child Care Grant Program.

## 7.5 Child Care Resource and Referral

A Lead Agency may expend funds to establish, expand, or maintain 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.

7.5.1 What are the services provided by the local or regional child care and resource and referral agencies?

The Child Care Program Office administers child care resource and referral services via a grant with Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread. thread sub-grants to Thrivalaska in Fairbanks, serving Interior/Northern Alaskan communities and the Association for the Education of Young Children-Southeast Alaska (AEYC-SEA) in Juneau, serving communities in Southeast Alaska.

[7.5.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.5 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 four (4) target populations served are: Families, Child Care Providers, Communities and the Early Care and Learning System. The proposal must describe performance measures ("what" they are going to measure and "how" they are going to measure it) in order to achieve the desired outcomes. To support the goals of the Office of Child Care (OCC), Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Public Assistance (DPA), and the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), the programs goals and performance measures for each target population for this grant are outlined below.

Families: Goal 1: Increased family knowledge of the characteristics of high quality child care. Performance measure: Family survey results indicate an increased knowledge of characteristics of high quality child care. Target: 1-2% increase each year until 65% or more of family survey respondents indicate increased knowledge of the characteristics of quality. After 65% reassess maximum threshold. Goal 2: Market and provide child care referral services statewide. Performance measure: As measured by the number of child care referrals. Target: Provide a minimum of 10,000 referrals each year. Child Care Providers: Goal 1: Advance the knowledge in early care and learning of staff working in licensed and regulated child care facilities. Performance measure: Number and percent of early educators who reported an increase in their knowledge after receiving training. Target: 1-2% increase each year until 75% of survey respondents indicated an increase in their knowledge. After 75% is achieved, reassess maximum threshold possible. Communities: Goal 1: Engaging, educating, and advocating with entities and organizations about the importance of high quality child care, its impact on the economy and how they can make a difference. Performance measure: Measured by collaboration and outreach efforts. Target: A minimum of 5 collaboration and outreach efforts per year. Early Care and Learning System: Goal 1: Increase the quality of child care facilities in

Alaska. Performance measure: Number and percent of child care facilities advancing annually to the next level of Learn & Grow. Target: 5% or more of child care facilities participating in Learn & Grow advance to the next level annually. Goal 2: Advance the professional development of staff working in licensed and regulated child care facilities. Performance measure: Number and percent of staff working in a licensed or regulated child care facility advance on the System for Early Education Development (SEED) Career Ladder. Target: 10% or more of participants advance on the SEED Career Ladder annually.

## 7.6 Facilitating Compliance With State Standards

7.6.1 What activities does your state/territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers' compliance with state/territory health and safety requirements? These requirements may be related to inspections, monitoring, training, compliance with health and safety standards, and with state/territory licensing standards as outlined in Section 5.

Describe:

**7.6.1 What activities does your state/territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers' compliance with state/territory health and safety requirements? These requirements may be related to inspections, monitoring, training, compliance with health and safety standards, and with state/territory licensing standards as outlined in Section 5.**

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs through on-site health and safety inspections and compliance with the Child Care Licensing or Child Care Assistance Program regulations. The CCPO uses CCDF quality funds to administer the Child Care Licensing Program to ensure compliance with state standards. The CCPO provides financial assistance through a scholarship funding through the University of Alaska, which supports individuals in meeting education and training requirements. All Health and Safety training can be 100% reimbursed by the System for Education Early Development (SEED). Additionally, the CCPO administers the Child Care

Grant (CCG) program. The purpose of the CCG is to promote quality child care by assisting licensed child care providers who care for children of families participating in the State of Alaska Child Care Assistance Program, with costs associated with their facilities. The CCG promotes quality child care by supporting and encouraging professional development, the retention of early childhood care and education professionals, and safe and healthy environments for children in care. As part of the CCG, eligible providers can receive a monthly reimbursement towards improving the quality of their facility. The areas of quality supported are as follows: to support staff salaries, wages, and benefits; costs for substitute care providers; health and safety related costs; supplies, activities, and equipment for the children in care; and education and training related to child development.

**7.6.2 Does the state/territory provide financial assistance to support child care providers in complying with minimum health and safety requirements?**

- 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:  
Not applicable.

**7.6.3 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.6 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) invests CCDF quality funds to facilitate compliance with child care health and safety requirements: 1. Licensing specialists conduct one announced and one unannounced inspection annually; Child Care Program office oversees

regulated subsidy providers that are accepting Child Care Assistance; Child Care Licensing ensures Health and Safety training requirements are met.

## 7.7 Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Programs and Services

### **7.7.1 Does the state/territory measure the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services in both child care centers and family child care homes?**

No

Yes.

If yes, describe any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the state/territory evaluates how those tools positively impact children.

Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) is housed and managed at thread, Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Currently phase I of Learn & Grow is available to all licensed child care programs with a biannual license throughout the state of Alaska. Participation is voluntary. Phase I includes Levels 1 and 2 of a five leveled system. In level 2 of Learn & Grow, the facility will use an environmental rating self- assessment using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) or the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ICERS).

### **7.7.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.7 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) will monitor annually the number and percent of

facilities participating in Learn & Grow that advance to the next level.

## 7.8 Accreditation Support

### **7.8.1 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?**

- a. Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for both child care centers and family child care homes. Is accreditation available for programs serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children?  
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  
Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, thread, offers a Quality Initiatives (QI) to licensed child care providers. A QI is an opportunity for early care and learning programs to participate in professional development around a specific early care and learning topic. All Quality Initiatives through thread involve training, goal setting with the development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), as well as consultation and a financial stipend to support goal implementation. Upon completion of the Quality Initiative requirements, programs may receive financial support to defray the costs of training and/or implementing goals based on the QIP. The QI on Accreditation is open to any provider interested in becoming accredited, and assists them in becoming familiar with the accreditation requirements and allows programs the opportunity to reflect on the quality of their services and how these compare to national practices  
The measurable indicators of progress is the amount of providers who become accredited after receiving the support of the Quality Initiative attached to the evaluation process for the mini grant.
- b. 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:

- c. 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:

- d. Yes, the state/territory has supports operating as a pilot-test or in a few localities but not statewide or territory-wide

- i. Focused on child care centers

Describe:

- ii. Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

- e. No, but the state/territory is in the in the development phase of supporting accreditation.

- i. Focused on child care centers

Describe:

- ii. Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

- f. No, the state/territory has no plans for supporting accreditation.

**7.8.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.8 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 measurable indicators of progress is the amount of providers who become accredited after receiving the support of the Quality Initiative attached to the evaluation process for the mini grant.

## 7.9 Program Standards

7.9.1 Describe how the state/territory supports state/territory or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards, including standards for:

a. Infants and toddlers

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) works in coordination with Learn & Grow to encourage participation in Learn & Grow as the states Early Childhood Quality Framework.

b. Preschoolers

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) works in coordination with Learn & Grow to encourage participation in Learn & Grow as the states Early Childhood Quality Framework.

c. and/or School-age children.

Not applicable.

**7.9.2 Describe the measurable indicators of progress relevant to subsection 7.9 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 Child Care Program Office (CCPO) will measure progress by governing agencies such as CCPO, Department of Education and Early Development, and Tribal organizations full adoption of the Learn & Grow framework.



## 7.10 Other Quality Improvement Activities

**7.10.1 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 measurable 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:**

Not applicable.

## 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 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:**

- a. Verifying and processing billing records to ensure timely payments to providers

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), in conjunction with the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Contracted Services Quality Assurance and Quality Assessment, conduct monthly random reviews to include payments verified by the CCPO and CCAP grantees. The payments verified are compared to the Request for Payment submitted by the provider to ensure payments are correct and processed timely

- b. Fiscal oversight of grants and contracts

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), in conjunction with the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity, Contracted Services Quality Assurance conducts annual reviews of the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Alaska's statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R), and Child Care Licensing grantees and CCR&R sub-grantees regarding grantee services. The grant document contains measurements to be reviewed for grantees in addition to establishing reporting requirements for spending grant funds and meeting program expectations. A site visit is conducted annually at each grantee agency for grant compliance which includes review of the grantee's work product. Additionally, the CCPO reviews monthly statistical reports and quarterly fiscal and program narrative reports to ensure established reporting requirements for spending grant funds are followed.

c. Tracking systems to ensure reasonable and allowable costs

Describe:

The Child Care Program Office, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Social Services Grants and Contracts unit receives and reviews quarterly fiscal and program narrative reports to ensure spending of grant funds is reasonable and for allowable expenditures.

d. Other

Describe:

**8.1.2 Check and describe the processes that the Lead Agency will use to identify risk in their CCDF program. Check all that apply:**

a. Conduct a risk assessment of policies and procedures

Describe:

b. Establish checks and balances to ensure program integrity

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program grant documents and policies and procedures require; the individual who verifies payment to the provider to be different than the individual who authorized the care for the family; the CCAP grantee's Local Administrator or other agency individual be assigned the caseworker if a grantee staff is a program participant; and grantee staff are prohibited from accessing their own case and the case of relatives, friends, or other individuals with whom they have a personal relationship.

c. Use supervisory reviews to ensure accuracy in eligibility determination

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program grant documents and policies and procedures require the CCAP grantee to conduct monthly supervisory reviews, provide feedback to staff and report their findings to the Contracted Services Quality Assurance (CSQA).

d. Other

Describe:

**8.1.3 States and territories are required to describe effective internal controls that are in place to ensure program integrity and accountability (98.68(a)), including processes to train child care providers and staff of the Lead Agency and other agencies engaged in the administration of CCDF about program requirements and integrity.**

a. Check and 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.

i. Issue policy change notices.

Describe:

ii. Issue policy manual.

Describe:

With each revision made by the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), the Child Care Assistance Program Manual is made available to the public on the CCPO's website.

iii. Provide orientations.

Describe:

All licensed and licensed exempt providers applying to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program are required to complete a web-based provider orientation prior to approval.

iv. Provide training.

Describe:

All licensed and licensed exempt providers applying to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program are required to complete the provider billing training prior approval. All Approved Relative and In-Home licensed exempt child care providers are required to complete additional pre-service training to include pediatric first aid

and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification prior to approval. Within three (3) months of the effective start date of approval for CCAP participation, an Approved Relative provider and an In-home caregiver must also complete the required new caregiver health and safety trainings. These individuals must also participate in ongoing training annually of twelve (12) hours of professional development training. The annual training is in addition to the training required for Approved Relative Providers and In-home Caregivers, however; at least one (1) hour of the annual training must be on one (1) of the required health and safety training topics.

- v. Monitor and assess policy implementation on an ongoing basis.

Describe:

The Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual is on an annual revision cycle.

- vi. Meet regularly regarding the implementation of policies.

Describe:

- vii. Other.

Describe:

Prior to each revision, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) sends the draft for revised Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual to Child Care Assistance Program designees, CCPO staff, and partners requesting input into the revision.

b. 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 (98.68 (a)(3)). Check all that apply:

- i. Issue policy change notices.

Describe:

With each revision, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) sends the revised Child Care Assistance Policies and Procedures Manual, revised notices, and a summary of changes to Child Care Assistance Designees, CCPO staff, and other partners. Similarly, the CCPO sends the revised Child Care Licensing Policies and

Procedures Manual to CCPO staff, Municipality of Anchorage licensing, and other partners.

ii. [Train on policy change notices.](#)

[Describe:](#)

Web based Family and Provider Child Care Assistance (CCAP) CORE Training was completed by the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) and is available to CCAP designee staff for program and policies and procedures training. As the CCAP Policies and Procedures Manual, forms, and notices are revised, the CCAP CORE Training is revised to reflect the changes. The CCPO also provides monthly Local Administrator (LA) Teleconferences, monthly LA contacts, quarterly on-site support and technical assistance visits if needed, training any time requested, and the policy mailbox is available daily for policies and procedures questions, technical assistance, and any other Child Care Assistance Program questions or assistance needed. When policy changes occur in Child Care Licensing, staff and grantees are notified of the change. Staff and grantees are trained by their supervisor and can send questions to the Child Care Licensing Policy mailbox.

iii. [Issue policy manuals.](#)

[Describe:](#)

With each revision made by the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), the Child Care Assistance Program Manual and Child Care Licensing Policy is made available to the public on the CCPO's website.

iv. [Train on policy manual.](#)

[Describe:](#)

Web based Family and Provider Child Care Assistance (CCAP) CORE Training was completed by the Child Care Program Office and is available to CCAP designee staff for program and policies and procedures training. As the CCAP Policies and Procedures Manual, forms, and notices are revised, the CCAP CORE Training is revised to reflect the changes. The CCPO also provides monthly Local Administrator (LA) Teleconferences, monthly LA contacts, quarterly on-site support and technical assistance visits if needed, training any time requested, and the policy mailbox is available daily for policies and procedures questions, technical

assistance, and any other Child Care Assistance Program questions or assistance needed.

v. Monitor and assess policy implementation on an ongoing basis.

**Describe:**

Contracted Service Quality Assurance pulls Child Care Assistance Program grantees and State of Alaska and Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing files to monitor and assess policy implementation on a monthly basis.

vi. Meet regularly regarding the implementation of policies.

**Describe:**

All CCPO policy and procedure manuals are updated in an annual revision process. Suggestions for policy changes are received through the Child Care Assistance Program and Child Care Licensing policy mailbox at any time throughout the year. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss implementation of policy.

vii. Other.

**Describe:**

Prior to each revision, the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) sends all draft manuals to Child Care Program Office grantees, designees, CCPO staff, and partners requesting input into the revision.

**8.1.4 Describe the processes in place to regularly evaluate Lead Agency internal control activities (98.68 (a)(4)). Describe:**

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) regularly go through and update and revision process to policies and procedures to ensure any necessary changes are made. There is dedicated staff to review policy questions and provide interpretation for both internal staff and grantees. Additionally, the Division of Public Assistance Program Integrity Unit assists the CCPO in monitoring activities for accuracy in implementing policies and regulations.

**8.1.5 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.**

a. Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency conducts, including the results of these activities, 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.

- i. 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 the activities and the results of these activities:

Child Care Assistance Program policies and procedures require grantees to submit a Request for Information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) prior to an eligibility determination, when there are indicators on either the family's or provider's application that are not adequately resolved during their interview. The CCPO accesses all other available data systems to either support or contradict the information provided. If during this research it is identified a family or provider is reporting information differently to other programs they are participating in, a referral is made to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit for further investigation, which includes accessing additional information and databases not accessible to the CCPO or grantee staff. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud.

- ii. Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:



iii. Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4280-1, a random review of 5% of all provider's files are to be reviewed monthly by the Designee. The review includes requesting the provider's attendance records and comparing it to the Request for Payment submitted for that month. Discrepancies identified are documented and additional information requested from the provider. If it is determined an overpayment of \$100 or more occurred it is recouped. If a discrepancy is determined to potentially be an intentional program violation or fraud, the Child Care Program Office submits a referral to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit for further investigation. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud.

iv. Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Child Care Assistance Program grant documents and policies and procedures require the CCAP grantee to conduct monthly supervisory reviews, provide feedback to staff and report their findings to the Contracted Services Quality Assurance (CSQA). Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4430-1 Designee's Local Administrators are to conduct random monthly file reviews on at least ten of the families and five (5) of the providers on their case load. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using the same staff, will consider all service areas combined as their case load and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using different staff for each service area with consider the service delivery areas as separate and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews for each service delivery area. Reviews are to include cases, both open and closed, processed by workers every month. The purpose of the review is to ensure work is completed accurately and timely and to identify training needs of staff.

v. Audit provider records.

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4280-1, a random review of 5% of all provider's files are to be reviewed monthly. The review includes requesting the provider's attendance records and comparing it to the Request for Payment submitted for that month to identify any potential intentional program violations or fraud. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud.

[vi. Train staff on policy and/or audits.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) conducts monthly teleconferences with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees to provide topic specific information and training, provide technical assistance and program policies and procedures clarifications. Web based Family and Provider Child Care Assistance (CCAP) CORE Training was completed by the Child Care Program Office and is available to CCAP designee staff for program and policies and procedures training. As the CCAP Policies and Procedures Manual, forms, and notices are revised, the CCAP CORE Training is revised to reflect the changes. The CCPO also conducts monthly LA contacts, quarterly on-site support and technical assistance visits if needed, training any time requested, and the policy mailbox is available daily for policies and procedures questions, technical assistance, and any other Child Care Assistance Program questions or assistance needed. The Continuous Improvement Monitoring Guide is also provided to CCAP grantees, which explains the State's monitoring processes. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud.

[vii. Other](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees do not have direct access to other state data systems. Policies and Procedures require CCAP grantee staff to submit a request for information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) if they believe there is a discrepancy of information submitted on the family's application and confirmed during the interview. The CCPO will access other state data systems to provide supporting or contradicting information to be addressed prior to a

determination being made on a family's or provider's application.

8.1.5 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.

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.

- i. 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 the activities and the results of these activities:

Child Care Assistance Program policies and procedures require grantees to submit a Request for Information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) prior to an eligibility determination when there are indicators on either the family's or provider's application that are not adequately resolved during their interview. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud. The CCPO accesses all other available data systems to either support or contradict the information provided.

- ii. Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

- iii. Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4280-1, a random review of 5% of all provider's files are to be reviewed monthly. The review includes requesting the provider's attendance records and comparing it to the Request for Payment submitted for that month. Discrepancies identified are documented and further reviewed to determine the cause. If it is determined an

overpayment of \$100 or more occurred it is recouped.

iv. [Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Child Care Assistance Program grant documents and policies and procedures require the CCAP grantee to conduct monthly supervisory reviews, provide feedback to staff and report their findings to the Contracted Services Quality Assurance (CSQA). Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4430-1 Designee's Local Administrators are to conduct random monthly file reviews on at least ten of the families and five (5) of the providers on their case load. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using the same staff, will consider all service areas combined as their case load and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using different staff for each service area with consider the service delivery areas as separate and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews for each service delivery area. Reviews are to include cases, both open and closed, processed by workers every month. The purpose of the review is to ensure work is completed accurately and timely and to identify training needs of staff.

v. [Audit provider records.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4280-1, a random review of 5% of all provider's files are to be reviewed monthly. The review includes requesting the provider's attendance records and comparing it to the Request for Payment submitted for that month to identify any errors and make necessary changes more quickly.

vi. [Train staff on policy and/or audits.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO) conducts monthly teleconferences with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees to provide topic specific information and training, provide technical assistance and program policies and

procedures clarifications. Web based Family and Provider Child Care Assistance (CCAP) CORE Training was completed by the Child Care Program Office and is available to CCAP designee staff for program and policies and procedures training. As the CCAP Policies and Procedures Manual, forms, and notices are revised, the CCAP CORE Training is revised to reflect the changes. The CCPO also conducts monthly LA contacts, quarterly on-site support and technical assistance visits if needed, training any time requested, and the policy mailbox is available daily for policies and procedures questions, technical assistance, and any other Child Care Assistance Program questions or assistance needed. The Continuous Improvement Monitoring Guide is also provided to CCAP grantees, which explains the State's monitoring processes.

**vii. Other**

**Describe the activities and the results of these activities:**

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees do not have direct access to other state data systems. Policies and Procedures require CCAP grantee staff to submit a request for information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) if they believe there is a discrepancy of information submitted on the family's application and confirmed during the interview. The CCPO will access other state data systems to provide supporting or contradicting information to be addressed prior to a determination being made on a family's or provider's application.

**8.1.5 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.**

**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.**

- i. 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 the activities and the results of these activities:

Child Care Assistance Program policies and procedures require grantees to submit a Request for Information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) prior to an eligibility determination, when there are indicators on either the family's or provider's application that are not adequately resolved during their interview. The CCPO accesses all other available data systems to either support or contradict the information provided. As a result, data is more accurate and reduces potential fraud.

ii. Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

iii. Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

iv. Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), in conjunction with the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Contracted Services Quality Assurance and Quality Assessment, conduct monthly random reviews to include review of the family's eligibility and payments verified by the CCPO. Results of the file review are provided to the grantee and CCPO for follow-up to include additional training as necessary. Child Care Assistance Program grant documents and policies and procedures require the CCAP grantee to conduct monthly supervisory reviews, provide feedback to staff and report their findings to the Contracted Services Quality Assurance (CSQA). Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures Manual section 4430-1 Designee's Local Administrators are to conduct random monthly file reviews on at least ten of the families and five (5) of the providers on their case load. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using the same staff, will consider all service areas combined as their case load and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews. When a Designee is providing services to more than one (1) service delivery area using different staff for each service area with consider the

service delivery areas as separate and conduct at least ten (10) family and five (5) provider file reviews for each service delivery area. Reviews are to include cases, both open and closed, processed by workers every month. The purpose of the review is to ensure work is completed accurately and timely and to identify training needs of staff.

v. Audit provider records.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Per Child Care Assistance Program Policies and Procedures manual section 4280-1, a random review of 5% of all provider's files are to be reviewed monthly. The review includes requesting the provider's attendance records and comparing it to the Request for Payment submitted for that month to identify any errors and make necessary changes more quickly.

vi. Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Child Care Program Office (CCPO), conducts monthly teleconferences with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees to provide topic specific information and training, provide technical assistance and program policies and procedures clarifications. Web based Family and Provider Child Care Assistance (CCAP) CORE Training was completed by the Child Care Program Office and is available to CCAP designee staff for program and policies and procedures training. As the CCAP Policies and Procedures Manual, forms, and notices are revised, the CCAP CORE Training is revised to reflect the changes. The CCPO also conducts monthly LA contacts, quarterly on-site support and technical assistance visits if needed, training any time requested, and the policy mailbox is available daily for policies and procedures questions, technical assistance, and any other Child Care Assistance Program questions or assistance needed. The Continuous Improvement Monitoring Guide is also provided to CCAP grantees, which explains the State's monitoring processes.

vii. Other

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) grantees do not have direct access to

other state data systems. Policies and Procedures require CCAP grantee staff to submit a request for information to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) if they believe there is a discrepancy of information submitted on the family's application and confirmed during the interview. The CCPO will access other state data systems to provide supporting or contradicting information to be addressed prior to a determination being made on a family's or provider's application.

### **8.1.6 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.**

a. Identify what agency is responsible for pursuing fraud and overpayments (e.g. State Office of the Inspector General, State Attorney).

Division of Public Assistance, Child Care Program Office and Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit.

### **8.1.6 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.**

b. Check and describe all activities, including the results of such activity, 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. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The minimum amount to be pursued is \$100.00. Overpayment claims are referred to the Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU) for recoupment. As a result, all intentional program violations/fraud cases are referred to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit to investigate and if warranted pursue repayment.

- ii. Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).



[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

All intentional program violations/fraud cases are referred to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit to investigate and as a result, pursue repayment if warranted.

[iii. Recover through repayment plans.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Overpayment claims are sent by the Child Care Program Office (CCPO) to the Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU). The BIRU works with families and providers to identify if the payment will be paid in full or if needed, the family or provider can enter into a monthly repayment plan. When an intentional program violation/fraud determination is received, the dollar amount determined to have been overpaid is generally recouped at the disqualification or intentional program violation hearing. If the full amount is not recouped at the hearing, the order is referred to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, BIRU to develop a repayment plan.

[iv. Reduce payments in subsequent months.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

If through a disqualification or intentional program violation hearing it is determined a family committed an intentional program violation, their benefits are reduced by 10% if it is their first intentional program violation with a dollar loss; or 20% if it is the family's second intentional program violation regardless if there is a dollar loss. A third IPV will result in the family's CCAP participation being permanently terminated regardless of a dollar loss.

[v. Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

[vi. Recover through other means.](#)

[Describe the activities and the results of these activities:](#)

Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend intercept .

- vii. Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

This unit includes staff from the Child Care Program Office (CCPO), and Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit and Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit. Overpayments are sent to the Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit for recoupment.

- viii. Other

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

8.1.6 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.

c. Check and describe 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:

- i. N/A. the Lead Agency does not recover misspent funds due to unintentional program violations.
- ii. Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The minimum amount to be pursued is \$100.00. Repayment is pursued for all overpayments of \$100.00 or more.

- iii. Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

All intentional program violations/fraud cases are referred to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit to investigate and as a result, pursue repayment if warranted.

- iv. Recover through repayment plans.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Child Care Program Office conducts an incorrect payment review. When an overpayment of \$100.00 or more is identified to be recovered from a family or provider, a claim is submitted to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity & Analysis, Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU) who notifies the family and provider and develops a repayment plan.

v. Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

vi. Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

vii. Recover through other means.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend intercept.

viii. Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

This unit includes staff from the Child Care Program Office, and Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity, Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU).

ix. Other

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

8.1.6 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.

d. 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.

- i. N/A. the Lead Agency does not recover misspent funds due to agency errors.
- ii. Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit may refer an accused family or provider to the appropriate authorities for criminal action in state or federal court and as a result, pursue repayment or other legal means as warranted.

- iii. Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

All Incorrect Payments to families and providers, overpayments or underpayments are submitted to the Child Care Program Office (CCPO). The CCPO provides an Incorrect Payment Preliminary Review form, which is used by the CCPO and Child Care Assistance Designees to report a potential incorrect payment. The CCPO reviews and investigates, and if an agency caused overpayment is determined, the CCPO submits a claim to the Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU) for recoupment. If an underpayment is determined, regardless of the amount, the CCPO will correct by way of a supplemental payment to the provider. If an underpayment is determined for a family, regardless of the amount, the CCPO will correct by payment of family co-pay through to the balance of the underpayment amount.

- iv. Recover through repayment plans.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Child Care Program Office conducts an incorrect payment review. When an overpayment of \$100.00 or more is identified to be recovered from a family or provider, a claim is submitted to the Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity & Analysis, Benefits Issuance and Recovery unit (BIRU) who notifies the family or provider and develops a repayment plan, and as a result repayment may be pursued.

- v. Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

vi. Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

vii. Recover through other means.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend intercept.

viii. Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

This unit includes staff from the Child Care Program Office, and Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity, Benefits Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU).

ix. Other

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

**8.1.7 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:**

a. Disqualify the client. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

A family will be disqualified from Child Care Assistance Program participation when it is determined they have committed a third intentional program violation even if there is no dollar loss

b. Disqualify the provider. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

A provider will be disqualified from Child Care Assistance Program participation when it is determined they have committed a third intentional program violation even if there is no dollar loss.

c. Prosecute criminally.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

The Division of Public Assistance, Program Integrity and Analysis, Fraud Control Unit may refer an accused family or provider to the appropriate authorities for criminal action in state or federal court.

d. Other.

Describe the activities and the results of these activities:

## Appendix A: MRS, Alternative Methodology and Narrow Cost Analysis Waiver Request Form

Lead Agencies may apply for a temporary waiver for the Market Rate Survey or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology and/or the narrow cost analysis in. These waivers will be considered "extraordinary circumstance waivers" to provide relief from the timeline for completing the MRS or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology and the narrow cost analysis during the COVID-19 pandemic. These waivers are limited to a one-year period.

Approval of these waiver requests is subject to and contingent on OCC review and approval of responses in Section 4, questions 4.2.1 and 4.2.5.

To submit a Market Rate Survey (MRS) or ACF pre-approved alternative methodology or a Narrow Cost Analysis waiver, complete the form below.

Check and describe each provision for which the Lead Agency is requesting a time-limited waiver extension.