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

---

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems

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

1.1 CCDF Leadership

The Governor of a State or Territory shall designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint inter-agency office, to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E(c)(1)).Note: An amendment to the CCDF State Plan is required if the Lead Agency changes or if the Lead Agency official changes.

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

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

a) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Office Information:

Name of Lead Agency: Louisiana Department of Education

Street Address: 1201 North 3rd Street

City: Baton Rouge

State: Louisiana

ZIP Code: 70802

Web Address for Lead Agency: www.louisianabelieves.com

b) Lead Agency or Joint Interagency Official Contact Information:

Lead Agency Official First Name: John

Lead Agency Official Last Name: White

Title: State Superintendent

Phone Number: 225-342-3602

Email Address: john.white@la.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: Lisa

CCDF Administrator Last Name: Brochard

Title of the CCDF Administrator: Executive Director of Office of Early Childhood Operations

Phone Number: 225-342-4147

Email Address: lisa.brochard@la.gov

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

Street Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

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

CCDF Co-Administrator First Name: Daisy

CCDF Co-Administrator Last Name: Grotsma

Title of the CCDF Co-Administrator: Chief of Staff of Office of Early Childhood Operations

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator: Oversees operations of the Office

Phone Number: 225-342-4147

Email Address: daisy.grotsma@la.gov

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

Street Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

1.2 CCDF Policy Decision Authority

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

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

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

1. Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:
   - [ ] State or territory
   - [ ] Local entity (e.g., counties, workforce boards, early learning coalitions).

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

   - [ ] Other.

   Describe:

2. Sliding-fee scale is set by the:

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

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

- [ ] Other.

Describe:

3. Payment rates are set by the:

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

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

- [ ] Other.

Describe:

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

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

a) Who conducts eligibility determinations?

- [x] CCDF Lead Agency
- [ ] Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agency
- [ ] Other state or territory agency
- [ ] Local government agencies, such as county welfare or social services departments

- [ ] Child care resource and referral agencies
- [ ] Community-based organizations
- [ ] Other.

Describe

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

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

Describe

c) Who issues payments?

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

Describe

1.2.3 Describe the processes the Lead Agency uses to monitor CCDF administration and implementation responsibilities performed by other agencies as reported above in 1.2.2, including written agreements, monitoring and auditing procedures, and indicators or measures to assess performance of those agencies (98.16(b)). Note : The contents of the

written agreement may vary based on the role the agency is asked to assume or type of project, but must include at a minimum, tasks to be performed, schedule for completing tasks, budget which itemizes categorical expenditures in accordance with CCDF requirements, and indicators or measures to assess performance (98.11(a)(3)).

The contracts in place with Resource and Referal agenciesare approved annually by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Resource and Referral agencies submit monthly reports detailing their activities for the month. The reports are reviewed by LDOE program monitors. Performance is measured through contractor review, and by evaluations that are completed by the child care agencies within each region.

The agreements with local early childhood community network lead agencies are in the form of assurances that are signed by the community network's lead agency in exchange for receiving funding. As established in legislation, the state's 65 local early childhood community network lead agencies must ensure ease of access to early childhood programs by coordinating enrollment for across all publicly funded programs. This includes an information campaign, a unified application, coordinated eligibility determination, matching to seats based on family preference, and a community-wide coordinated waitlist.

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

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

Any source code owned by the state and paid for with CCDF funds is available to other public agencies.

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.

All Child Care Assistance Program records and information in client files has been deemed "confidential" by La. R.S. 17:407.29. Click here for the state 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.

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

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

Consultation
involves meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the state or territory CCDF Plan. Describe the partners engaged to provide services under the CCDF program in question 1.4.1.

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

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

The Lead Agency coordinates a legislatively mandated statewide early childhood care and education network that is literaly a network of local networks. Each of the state's 65 local networks is coordinated through agreements with local community network lead agencies. The local lead agencies ensure the engagement of local school boards, police juries, community action programs, chambers of commerce, mayor's offices etc., in order to ensure the flow of information and consultation. In addition, the Lead Agency consulted with the Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA). The LMA is the unified voice for Louisiana's municipal governments. Membership includes villages, town, cities and parishes.

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

The Lead Agency consulted the State Advisory Council on the state plan at the May 2018 Council meeting. They were also encouraged to provide any additional feedback via a survey post-meeting.

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.

The Lead Agency consulted with the Coushatta and Chitimacha Tribes on the State Plan. The Chitimacha Tribe participates in our state's public pre-K program and, therefore, participates in our Coordinated Enrollment for Birth - 4th grade with the local lead agency.

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

Not applicable

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. 05/29/2018

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

b) Date of notice of public hearing (date for the notice of public hearing identified in (a).
04/26/2018

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

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

The public was notified about the public hearing via the Early Childhood Newsletter and through other advocates. The Early Childhood Newsletter is distributed to over 10,000 recipients.

4/26/2018 notice

5/10/2018 notice

5/24/2018 notice

d) Hearing site or method, including how geographic regions of the state or territory were addressed. Sign language interpreters were provided during the public hearing. Also the public hearing was streamed statewide.

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 made public via the LDOE website and link availble directly in the Early Childhood Newsletters. Also, copies were available the day of the public hearing.

f) How was the information provided by the public taken into consideration regarding the provision of child care services under this Plan? Notes were taken from public comment concerning the state plan and were taken into consideration. Also answers to questions posed were provided.

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.

www.louisianabelieves.com

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:

All state plan amendments are presented to the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council for input.

☐ Working with child care resource and referral agencies.

Describe:

☐ Providing translation in other languages.

Describe:

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency engages stakeholders including provider groups such as the Child Care Association and the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children.

☐ Other.

Describe:

1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

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

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

This list includes agencies or programs required by law or rule, along with a list of optional

partners that Lead Agencies potentially would coordinate with over the next 3 years to expand accessibility and continuity of care and to assist children enrolled in early childhood programs in receiving full-day services.

Include in the descriptions the goals of this coordination, such as:
- -- extending the day or year of services for families;
- -- smoothing transitions for children between programs or as they age into school;
- -- enhancing and aligning the quality of services for infants and toddlers through school-age children;
- -- linking comprehensive services to children in child care or school age settings; or
- -- developing the supply of quality care for vulnerable populations (as defined by the Lead Agency) in child care and out-of-school time settings

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

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency coordinates a legislatively mandated statewide early childhood care and education network that is literaly a network of local networks. Each of the state's 65 local networks is coordinated through agreements with local community network lead agencies. The lead agencies ensure the engagement of local school boards, police juries, community action programs, chambers of commerce, mayor's offices etc., in order to ensure the flow of information across the community and that both providers and families have access to the resources they need for community wide coordinated enrollment.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

All policies are presented to the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council for input and feedback prior to rule-making. The minutes of the Council meetings are presented to our state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

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

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

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

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with the Chitimacha and Coushatta Tribes. The tribes were consulted during the draft planning process and they will continue to be engaged during quarterly meetings. The CCDF Administrator is responsible for continued coordination with the Louisiana Tribes.

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

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The state's lead agency for IDEA Part C is involved in each of the 65 local community networks through its regional service coordinatiors that are mandatory local network partners. Additionally, the lead agency is represented on the State Interagency Coordinating Counil for Part C. With the Department of Education as the lead agency for Section 619 preschool, the 65 local community networks each include the representation of local education agency Section 619 coordinators. Additionally and more importantly, every classroom that includes a Section 619-funded child is part of the state's unified accountability system thereby ensuring the same high standards for all children and teachers.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency houses the Head Start state collaboration office thus coordination for access and quality is constant.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) who is the agency responsible for immunizations. The Lead Agency

works with LDH on verifying immunizations (where applicable) for children in programs such as CCAP.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with the Louisiana Workforce Commission who is the agency responsible for employment services/workforce development. Also, the Lead Agency takes an active role in workforce development for directors and teachers as described in Section 6 of the state plan.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency is the Louisiana Department of Education which houses all public education entities including PreK; therefore, coordination is constant regarding access and quality.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency houses the Division of Licensing which is responsible for child care licensing; therefore, coordination is constant regarding health and safety, access and quality.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency houses the Division of Nutrition Assistance which is responsible for the Child and Adult Care Food Program; therefore, coordination is constant regarding nutrition, access, and quality.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency is the Louisiana Department of Education which includes the State Homeless Coordinator; therefore, coordination is constant regarding access and quality. Note that local McKinny-Vento liasons are integrated into the enrollment eligibility process by each local community network lead agency with the goal of seamless eligibility that is not impaired because a family is homeless. This integration is required to be documented in the local community's coordinated enrollment plan.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department Children and Family Services (DCFS) who is the agency responsible for TANF. The Lead Agency works with DCFS regarding access and quality as well as informing parents of the opportunity of TANF assistance.

☑ (REQUIRED) Agency responsible for Medicaid and the state Children's Health Insurance Program.

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) who is the agency responsible for Louisiana Children's Health Insurance (LaCHIP). The Lead Agency works with LDH on informing parents of the opportunity of LaCHIP.

☑ (REQUIRED) State/territory agency responsible for mental health

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) who is the agency responsible for mental health. The Lead Agency works with LDH on informing parents of mental health assistance.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency manages the Child Care Resource and Referral contracts, trainer

registry, etc.; therefore, coordination is constant regarding quality, professional development, Ancillary Certificates, workforce training, etc.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency contracts with a vendor to increase quality of after-school programs.

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

Describe the coordination goals and process:

The Lead Agency coordinates emergency management planning and response with the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (GOHSEP) and other sister agencies such as DCFS, LDH, etc in an effort to continue family access to child care and assist providers in maintaining their businesses.

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

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

Describe

All Early Head StartChild Care Partnerships are required partners in their local early childhood community network. As such, they participate in the local community wide coordinated enrollment system and the state's unified accountability system. Additionally, the state has singled out Early Head Start/Child Care Partnerships to receive specially designed support in the form of CLASS® observer training, expedited Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) assistance, and collaborative events coordinated by the state lead agency.

☑ State/territory institutions for higher education, including community colleges

Describe

The Lead Agency has worked closely with the Louisiana Board of Regents on the Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups. The Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups are

voluntary cross-agency committees, which has been led by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The Workgroups have collectively created and supported the development of all coursework and degree structures for the Birth to Kindergarten statewide curriculum that will be voluntarily implemented by interested institutions.

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

Describe

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

Describe

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) who is the agency responsible for Maternal and Child Home Visitation. The Lead Agency works with LDH on informing parents of this assistance.

☑ Agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment.

Describe

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) who is the agency responsible for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment. The Lead Agency works with LDH on informing parents of this assistance.

☑ State/territory agency responsible for child welfare.

Describe

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with Louisiana Department Children and Family Services (DCFS) who is the agency responsible for child welfare. The Lead Agency works with DCFS regarding access and quality.

☐ State/territory liaison for military child care programs.

Describe

☑ Provider groups or associations.

Describe

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with provider groups such as the Child Care Association of Louisiana (CCAL) and the Head Start Association (HSA). The Lead Agency works with CCAL and HSA on access and quality.

☑ Parent groups or organizations.

Describe

The Lead Agency has a clear line of communication with parent/family/child advocates such as the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children on access and quality.

☐ Other.

Describe

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

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

As a reminder, CCDF funds may be used in collaborative efforts with Head Start programs to provide comprehensive child care and development services for children who are eligible for both programs. In fact, the coordination and collaboration between Head Start and CCDF is

strongly encouraged by sections 640(g)(1)(D) and (E); 640(h); 641(d)(2)(H)(v); and 642(e)(3) of the Head Start Act in the provision of full working day, full calendar year comprehensive services. To implement such collaborative programs, which share, for example, space, equipment, or materials, grantees may layer several funding streams so that seamless services are provided (Policy and Program Guidance for the Early Head Start ' Child Care Partnerships:

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

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

- [ ] No (If no, skip to question 1.5.2)
- [x] Yes. If yes, describe at a minimum:

a) How you define "combine"

The Lead Agency uses additional funds to support quality initiatives for Birth through PreK including Early Head Start and Head Start and public/private PreK.

b) Which funds you will combine

CCDF, state general funds, PreK Expansion Grant, IDEA and state 8g grant funds

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

Increasing the quality of services provided to children Birth through PreK in an effort for them tobe ready for kindergarten.

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

Cost allocation is developed based on child counts

e) How are the funds tracked and method of oversight

The annual budget is developed based on the cost allocation and is tracked by the

Office of Management and Finance.

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

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

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

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

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

-- If checked, identify the source of funds:

PreK and School Readiness Tax Credits

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of public funds that the Lead Agency will receive: $ 21 million

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

☐ donated directly to the State?

☐ donated to a separate entity(ies) designated to receive private donated funds?

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

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of private donated funds that the Lead Agency will receive: $

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

If checked, provide the estimated percentage of the matching fund requirement that will be met with preK expenditures (not to exceed 30 percent): 30%

-- 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:

The Lead Agency coordinates Birth-PreK services through the local lead agencies and their coordinated enrollment efforts.

-- If known, identify the estimated amount of preK funds that the Lead Agency will receive for the matching funds requirement: $ 4.7 million

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

Public PreK in Louisiana provides full-day care for economically disadvantaged families which supports working parents.

☐ State expenditures for preK programs are used to meet the CCDF maintenance-of-effort requirements. If checked,
-- The Lead Agency assures that its level of effort in full-day/full-year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to 98.55(h)(1) and 98.15(6).

☐ No

☐ Yes

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

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

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

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

1.6 Public-Private Partnerships

Lead Agencies are required to describe how they encourage public-private partnerships among other public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith-based organizations, businesses or organizations that promote business involvement, and/or community-based organizations to leverage existing service delivery (i.e., cooperative agreement among providers to pool resources to pay for shared fixed costs and operation) (658E(c)(2)(P)). ACF expects these types of partnerships to leverage public and private resources to further the goals of the CCDBG Act. Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate how they encourage public-private partnerships to leverage existing child care and early education service-delivery systems and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children younger than age 13, for example, by implementing voluntary shared service alliance models (98.14(a)(4)).

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

In the six-year period, since the passage of Louisiana's Early Childhood Care and Education Network legislation in 2012, the state has designed, piloted, and scaled a statewide system of early childhood community networks comprised of all publicly-funded providers and the

early childhood advocates in their communities. By creating community networks of early childhood providers to be change agents that advocate synergistically for the at-risk children in their locale, Louisiana is transforming a previously disjointed system of publicly-funded early childhood programs into a network of organically grown local partnerships.

While public-private partnerships are certainly a sought-after capstone in every community, we have learned that the first hurdle in our ”network of networks” was to demolish the silos of public programs and entities and form relationships across *public* partners who, in turn, collectively reach to potential private partners in their community. This approach of community partners collaborating around local needs has proved to be effective. Now, each community has unique partnerships that have and continue to emerge organically to align with unique local objectives.

Moving forward, the state will continue to model for local community networks the benefits of partnerships with public and private entities a. For example, our partnership with the United Way of Southeast Louisiana and Louisiana State University provides an annual survey of families in every community network to evaluate progress with improving information about, and access to, programs. Our ongoing partnership with national research partners at the University of Virginia provides research in the arena of early childhood that informs not only Louisiana, but the entire nation. And, our partnerships with not-for-profit advocates such as the Louisiana Policy Institute and the Child Care Association of Louisiana will continue to result in informed stakeholders.

At the local level, the Lead Agency will continue to showcase the accomplishments of local partnerships such as those that the Natchitoches Community Network has with their area Chamber of Commerce which has resulted in funding and the city’s mayor’s office which provides staff to assist child care partners. We will continue to applaud the efforts of local philanthropic partners such as the Orchard Foundation in the central part of the state that has reached out to support nine community networks in its service area with professional development for teachers, site and lead agency leaders. The Lead Agency also recognizes the significant work of groups like Agenda for Children, who operates as a local Resource and Referral Center, a Lead Agency for Early Childhood Community Networks, and an approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program all in the New Orleans Region, and have demonstrated a deep commitment to working with local and national philanthropic partners to support the statewide initiatives.

Through Louisiana's Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, the Lead Agency will continue to support partnerships across higher-education agencies, local professional development groups, and child care centers, each of which work closely though a formal partnership with their Early Childhood Community Networks to develop training that is responsive to the needs of the local child care workforce. Finally, the Lead Agency will work to provide a pathway for local community network governance structures that will better position these local entities for formal partnerships at the local and regional levels.

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

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

- If Lead Agencies use CCDF funds for local CCR&R organizations, the local or regional CCR&R organizations supported by those funds must, at the direction of the Lead Agency, provide parents in the State with consumer education information concerning the full range of child care options (including faith-based and community-based child care providers), analyzed by provider, including child care provided during non-traditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their area.

- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance to offer the families support and assistance to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting that suits their needs and one that is of high quality (as determined by the Lead Agency).

- Collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services under Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in

areas of the state and submit the information to the State;

- Work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith- based and community-based child care providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the state and, as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the state Lead Agency and local agencies that administer funds made available through CCDF (98.52(b)).

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Lead Agency has current contracts with six CCR&R agencies to cover all parishes of the state. As part of their contract with the Lead Agency, CCR&Rs are required to provide the following services:

1. Consumer Education and Referral Services : Provide families with information about all early care and education options through referral and Community Network common enrollment activities;
2. Foundational Learning Opportunities : Support providers to build knowledge and skills through training related to:

- Louisiana Birth to Kindergarten Early Learning and Development Standards (Standards)
- The importance of teacher child interactions (including use of Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS))
- Using child assessment information to adjust instruction (including use of Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD)); and

3. Technical Assistance: Support teachers and leaders, through targeted technical

assistance and coaching to implement the Standards, CLASS and TS GOLD in order to improve quality.

Also, CCR&Rs must:

Recruit prospective providers and support them to become registered and licensed;

- Participate in programmatic reviews conducted by CCDF Lead Agency;
- Support state efforts during emergency/disaster and following related to childcare services (child care emergency planning, preparation, recovery) - May include provider training (as requested), contacting providers via phone or visit to disaster-declared areas to ensure safe and compliance; and
- Participate in preparation and readiness for child respite services in DCFS Critical Transportation Needs Shelters (CTNS) such as providing respite services at CTNS which includes having staff and volunteers who are trained and with appropriate criminal background clearance.

In addition, Louisiana law requires communities to coordinate enrollment, which covers several of the requirements indicated for CCR&Rs Currently, the state has written agreements with and has allocated funding to 64 local Community Networks to support the following through local coordinated enrollment processes:

- Provide at-risk families with information on publicly-funded child care options in their local area;
- Coordinate information about all local programs in order to help families who receive child care assistance to make 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;
- 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;
- Collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for childcare services in local areas or regions of the State/Territory and submit such information to the State/Territory; and
- 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

Louisiana policy indicates that all Community Networks are required to count all publicly-funded children, estimate demand for services and submit written Coordinated Enrollment plans with sign off from all publicly-funded providers each year. Note that all publicly-funded early learning centers are required to fully participate in coordinated enrollment activities as a condition of receiving academic approval, a requirement for their licensure.

CCR&Rs work with their local Community Network to ensure all families are supported to make informed choices that best meet the needs of their children. CCR&Rs are required to work collaboratively to support all local coordinated enrollment processes within their area or region.

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

The Lead Agency has current contracts with six CCR&R agencies to cover all parishes of the state. These six agencies are expected to provide the above described services for the parishes within their contract regions. Each agency is responsible for managing the ongoing services. The Lead Agency strongly supports collaboration between the six agencies through routine Child Care Support Meetings, Teacher Leader Summit, and other events which include participation and collaboration across the agencies. In addition to serving as CCR&R agencies, four of the six agencies also serve as the local lead agency for either one or multiple Early Childhood Community Networks. In this capacity, the CCR&R agencies are fully coordinated across the resource, referral and technical support services as well as the administrative functions of local lead agencies.

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

Lead Agencies are required to establish a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan (658E(c)(2)(U)). They must demonstrate how they will address the needs of children'including the need for safe child care, before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as defined by Section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122)'through a Statewide Disaster Plan that, for a State, is developed in collaboration with the State human services agency, the State emergency management agency, the State licensing agency, the State health department or public health department, local and State child care resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(l)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))) or similar coordinating body (98.16(aa)).

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

The Early Childhood Advisory Council, Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), Louisiana Fire Marshal, DCFS Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Resource and Referral Agencies, Louisiana Department of Health, and the LDOE Division of Licensing representative will receive and have opportunity to comment on the initial and revised Statewide Child CareDisaster Plan each year. All Agencies have reviewed, discussed and endorsed the statewide emergency preparedness plan. There are also several resources from each of these entities included in the plan to inform the public of the many services they offer. Discussion with these agencies occurs throughout the year as the procedures are updated to ensure the most recent information is displayed in our Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan. Louisiana has placed a strong emphasis on supporting child care centers to utilize our Child Care Facility Tool Kit to access templates to develop a comprehensive child care emergency plan to cover the hazards our state faces throughout the year, additional checklists have also been added to our statewide child care disaster plan.

Annual updates to the Statewide Child Care Emergency Plan will be approved by the Department’s executive staff and subsequently posted on the Louisiana believes website.

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

To support continuity of operations during an emergency, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) operations plan is in place. On a daily basis, they provide comprehensive information on all Early Childhood services which includes resource and referral services. In an emergency, the CCAP staff will continue to make parent services available to the general public and all families who may be eligible for child care subsidy. The CCAP staff is cross

trained to assure core functions are able to be performed immediately following the disaster.The CCAP staff prioritize families that have been affected by a disaster to allow them to continue to access child care services. CCAP staff or Resource and Referral agencies may visit the affected area to serve families who have been placed in shelters. The Department will assess the need for respite care services in the shelter depending on the needs of families in Louisiana. The Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and local Lead Agencies in the affected areas assess the need for child care in the disaster declared areas and identify providers and other programs not required to be licensed to determine whether they can offer temporary child care services.

Following a disaster, the Department may allow temporary operating standard waivers in an effort to continue child care access while maintaining health and safety.

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

On a daily basis, the departmentprovides comprehensive information on all Early Childhood services which includes resource and referral services. Following the emergency, the CCAP staff will prioritize families affected by the disaster to ensure services are adjusted and available to all families who may be eligible for subsidized child care. The CCAP staff is cross trained to assure core functions are able to be performed if the disaster affects state employees. The Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and local Lead Agencies in the affected areas assess the need for child care in the disaster declared areas and identify providers and other programs not required to be licensed to determine whether they can care for children. The Department also assess the affected disaster area to determine if a temporary child care services need to be considered.

Following a disaster, the Department may allow temporary waivers in an effort to continue child care access while maintaining health and safety.

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

CCDF Providers are required to have a written emergency and evacuation plan that includes procedures for sheltering in place, lockdown, evacuation, relocation, reunification and specific procedures and supplies to handle infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions (BESE Bulletin 137 section 1921 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 313). These plans are reviewed before CCDF approval is given and they are reviewed annuallythereafter.

LDOE has created a child care facility tool kit which includes a Basic Emergency plan template, and Emergency Checklists for all Child Care providers to use as a guide to meet all of these necessary requirements.

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

During annual inspection visits the emergency plans and checklists are reviewed for accuracy to ensure all staff and volunteer personnel receive the required training and participate in practice drills as required. Practice drills shall be conducted at least twice per year to include all children and shall be documented. LDOE has addedchecklist templates for all providers to utilize to document all necessary practice drills as required by BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1921 and Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.17.

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

https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/child-care-providers/early-learning-center-emergency-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=2

2 Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education

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

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

In this section, Lead Agencies will delineate the consumer and provider education information related to child care, as well as other services, including developmental screenings, that is made available to parents, providers, and the general public and the ways that it is made available. This section also covers the parental complaint process and the consumer education website that has been developed by the Lead Agency and the manner in which it links to the national website and hotline. Finally, this section addresses the consumer statement that is provided to parents supported with CCDF funds.

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

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

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

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency works in collaboration with partners such as Local Education Agency staff, universities, Head Start grantees, and local programs with access to bi-lingual staff and programs that support limited English proficiencyspeaking children and their families. Child Care Assistance Program applications are in other languages including Spanish and Vietnamese. Interpreters are available via a contract with Language Link that provides access to over 240 languages/dialects. Lastly the Lead Agency website can be translated in 103 languages through a selection option visible on the site.

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.

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

Describe:

The local coordinated enrollment process involves:

- Providing at-risk families with information on publicly-funded care options in their local area
- Providing families with information about the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) categorically eligible status of families of children with disabilities
- Coordinating information about all local programs in order to help families who receive CCAP make informed decisions about child care options
- Collecting Data and providing information on the coordination of services and supports including services provided through the individuals with Disabilities Education Act for children with disabilities
- Collecting data and providing information on the supply and demand for child care services in local areas or regions of the State/Territory and submitting such information when needed
- Working to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities including faith-based and community-based child care centers and family child care homes
- Helping families complete online applications for CCAP

- Hosting trainings and inviting families and providers with assistance in understanding and navigating the CCAP processes
- Attending trainings and disseminating the information from those trainings to participants

2.2 Parental Complaint Process

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

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

CCAP complaints about childcare providers can be received via email at LDECCAPfraud@la.gov or the department's call center at 1-877-453-2721, as well as the fraud hotline, 225-342-6230. For child care licensed providers and licensed-exempt providers, parents or the public can submit a complaint via email at ldelicensing@la.gov, fax at 225-342-2498, phone at 225-342-9905 or 1-855-4LA-KIDS (1-855-452-5437) toll free, or through the national website. For licensed-exempt providers, parents or the public can also submit a complaint via email at providercertification@la.gov, fax at 225-342-4180, phone at 225-342-0694, or through receiving referrals from DCFS or Division of Licensing.

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

The staff of the Fraud Management Unit (FMU) monitors and investigates all CCAP complaints. Complaints are investigated through attendance tracking and other reports and are entered into the CCAP Fraud and Recovery (CFR) system where response status is tracked. Site visits are conducted when necessary. Complaints involving health and safety are referred to the licensing for investigation.

All complaints are reviewed to ascertain if it is a licensing issue. If the complaint is not a licensing issue, the reporter is informed at the time of the complaint. Any emails/calls received that are not a licensing issue are documented and closed out. If the complaint is a licensing issue and enough information is obtained, a monitoring visit is conducted. Upon completion of the monitoring visit, if the complaint allegations are substantiated, a deficiency is issued.

If the complaint is not a licensing issueProvider Certification reviews the complaints/incident report for license-exempt providers and assigns priority level based on the established priority guide. Provider Certification uses the complaints/Incident Report to conduct interviews with providers. If it is deemed necessary by management, Licensing will conduct a visit and send a copy of the report to Provider Certification. Necessary action on the provider is taken based on results of Licensing Specialist's monitoring visit and subject to BESE Bulletin 139 and the CCAP Provider Agreement. If no cause for further concern, the case will be closed and logged. If there is cause for further concern the provider will face one of the following: immediate termination, ineligibility for up to 24 months with required corrective action, or a written notice is sent to provider to advise them of their status.

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

All provider complaints are reviewed to ascertain if it is a licensing issue. If the complaint is not a licensing issue, the reporter is informed at the time of the complaint. Any emails/calls received that are not a licensing issue are documented and closed out. If the complaint is a licensing issue and adequate information is obtained, a monitoring visit is conducted. Upon completion of the monitoring visit, if the complaint allegations are substantiated, a deficiency

is issued.

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

Substantiated parental complaints are entered in our Licensing data system. The system allows us to track complaints and create reports to view on-going or repeat violations.

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

When the monitoring visit is complete and reviewed, the statement of deficiencies is made web viewable under that center's history of inspections and it is noted on the inspection that it is complaint visit.

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

Bulletin 137, Section 315 and Section 1509

2.3 Consumer Education Website

States and Territories are required to provide information to parents, the general public, and when applicable, child care providers through a State website, which is consumer-friendly and easily accessible (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(III)). The website must include information to assist families

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

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

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

The Louisiana Department of Education has recently reorganized the early childhood website to make the available resources additionally consumer-friendly and easily accessible. By organizing the set of resources into common populations of website visitors (families, teachers, lead agencies, child care providers) the public is more easily able to access the materials they are seeking. The website includes information to assist families in understanding the policies and procedures for licensing child care providers that is linked throughout. We also launched a new family friendly school and center finder website that includes provider-specific information, monitoring and inspection reports for the provider, the quality of each provider, the age ranges the provider serves, and shows where they are located visually on a map. Families are also able to compare multiple sites to choose the provider that is best for them.

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 Louisiana Department of Education posts commonly accessed resources in multiple

languages on the website. This includes resources commonly accessed by families and teachers. In cases where this is not sufficient, the LDOE has a contract with Language Link which can provide translation to over 240 languages/dialects. Additionally, the Louisiana Department of Education website can be translated in 103 languages through a selection option visible on the left hand corner of thesite.

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

The LDOE has adopted Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative standards and guidelines as the benchmark to meet the objective of achieving universal accessibility for web sites. All LDOE web sites are designed to meet or exceed all Section 508 requirements and all Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) Priority 1 checkpoints and Priority 2 and 3 checkpoints as needed. Many of the WCAG Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility are incorporated into Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, which establishes accessibility standards for federal agencies.

The LDOE is currently expanding the processes and options for access for persons with disabilities. The LDOE is developing a process which will enable the collection of any request or complaints regarding accessibility of the webpage and related documents.

2.3.4 Lead Agency processes related to child care.

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

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

Licensing regulations can be found in Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) Bulletin 137 - Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations. CCAP providers such as schools are exempt from licensing however they are subject to numerous health and safety regulations found in BESE Bulletin 119 - Louisiana School Transportation Specification and Procedures, BESE Bulletin 135 - Health and Safety and BESE Bulletin 741 - Handbook for School Administrators. In addition, school facilities are inspected twice annually and school kitchens are inspected four times annually by the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health. Schools are also inspected annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal. Family child care and in-home providers receiving CCAP are inspected annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal (La. R.S. 17:407.64) and the Division of Licensing. Additionally, BESE Bulletin 139 - Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Program sets forth health and safety requirements for providers applying for registration and certification for CCAP.

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

See BESE Bulletin 137 - Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations, Sections 703 and 713 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309 and 313

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

Louisiana law details prohibited offenses. Click here for details.

2.3.5 List of providers

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

need to be included. The list of providers must be searchable by ZIP Code.

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

http://www.louisianaschools.com/

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

- [ ] License-exempt center-based CCDF providers
- [x] License-exempt family child care (FCC) CCDF providers
- [ ] License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- [x] Relative CCDF child care providers
- [x] Other.

Describe

Louisiana Schools

c) Identify what informational elements, if any, are available in the searchable results. Note: Quality information (if available) and monitoring results are required on the website but are not required to be a part of the search results.

Licensed Providers

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

Describe:

Ages served, parish, center type, license type, director information, transportation, before care, after care, physical address, phone number, email address, hours of operation, inspection visit information, capacity, and performance profile (if applicable).

License-Exempt, non-CCDF Providers

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

  Describe:

License-Exempt CCDF Center Based Providers

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

  Describe:

License-Exempt CCDF Family Child Care

- ☑ Contact Information
- ☐ Enrollment Capacity
- ☐ Years in Operation
- ☐ Provider Education and Training
- ☐ Languages Spoken
- ☐ Quality Information

- [x] Monitoring Reports
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Ages served, parish, center type,director information, transportation, before care, after care, physical address, phone number, email address, hours of operation, inspection visit information

Relative CCDF Providers

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

Describe:

Ages served, parish, center type,director information, transportation, before care, after care, physical address, phone number, email address, hours of operation, inspection visit information

Other.

Describe:

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

☐ Other.

Describe:

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

☑ Quality rating and improvement system

☐ National accreditation

☐ Enhanced licensing system

☐ Meeting Head Start/Early Head Start requirements

☐ Meeting prekindergarten quality requirements

☐ School-age standards, where applicable

☐ Other.

Describe

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

☑ Licensed CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

Performance Profiles

☐ Licensed non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

☐ License-exempt center-based CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

☐ License-exempt FCC CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

☐ License-exempt non-CCDF providers.

Describe the quality information:

☐ Relative child care providers.

Describe the quality information:

☑ Other.

Describe

All publicly funded PreK programs are given Performance Profiles

2.3.7 Lead Agencies are required to post monitoring and inspection reports on the consumer education website for each licensed provider and for each non-relative provider eligible to provide CCDF services on the consumer education website. These reports must include results of required annual monitoring visits and visits due to major substantiated complaints about a provider's failure to comply with health and safety requirements and child care policies. The reports must be in plain language and be timely to ensure that the results of the reports are available and easily understood by parents when they are deciding on a child care provider. Lead Agencies must post at least 3 years of reports when available, going forward (not retrospectively), beginning October 1, 2018.

Certify by responding to the questions below:

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

Louisiana defines plain language as writing that is clear, concise, well-organized, and

appropriate to the subject or field and intended audience.The inspection reports are in plain language and include the following: center's name and physical address in the upper left hand corner and the date of the visit, license number of the center, and what type (compliance, complaint, etc) of inspection was conducted at the center in the upper right hand corner. Any questions or feedback about the readability of reports can be received via phone, email or fax to the LDOE or directly to the Division of Licensing.

b) Are monitoring and inspection reports in plain language?

☑ If yes,

include a website link to a sample monitoring report.

Full monitoring and inspection reports are in plain language and have a plain language summary/description of each deficiency. Click here for a sample report.

☐ If no,

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

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

☑ Date of inspection

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

Describe how these health and safety violations are prominently displayed.

The inspection report provides the regulation that the provider was deficient in as well as the specifics for the finding given to the provider. See sample report above.

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

Describe

The provider is given a corrective action plan at the end of each monitoring visit. See sample here.

d) The process for correcting inaccuracies in reports.

The Inspection Reviewer will review the narrative and deficiencies, as applicable, and

make the following determinations:

1. Determine whether any deficiencies were cited in error or pertinent information was omitted.

- If any deficiencies were cited in error or pertinent information was omitted, the Inspection Reviewer will notify the Specialist via email to remove the deficiency from the template; or add the critical information to the deficiency on the template.

2. The Specialist will provide a correction letter or new Statement of Deficiency report to the Provider within a goal of 5 calendar days.

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

1. Provider submits a written request timely to Licensing for a Licensing Deficiency Review (LDR) within 7 calendar days of provider's receipt of the deficiency to review of the accuracy of a cited deficiency or a statement within a cited deficiency.
2. Documentation is reviewed by Licensing upper management.

- If deficiency is upheld, Licensing sends provider a "justified" letter (267LD decision letter)

3. If the provider submits a timely second request for a Licensing Deficiency Review within 7 calendar days of provider's receipt of the LDR decision, the Licensing Review Panel reviews documentation.

- If deficiency is upheld, Licensing sends provider a "justified" letter (267LD decision letter)
- If decision is determined to be in error, Licensing sends provider an "error" letter (268LD decision letter) and documentation is updated.

4. If decision is determined to be in error, Licensing sends provider an "error" letter (268LD decision letter) and documentation is updated

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

A bi-weekly report is generated and reviewed to ensure reports are posted within 14 days. In some instances, the Lead Agency may go beyond 14 days, depending on the case.

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

Inspection reports for centers may go beyond the required minimum of 3 years if the Provider has had only 1 visit a year, then it would show up to 15 years as state law requires the last 15 inspection visits to be posted.

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

- [ ] License-exempt non-CCDF providers
- [ ] Relative child care providers
- [x] Other.

Describe

CCDF providers including family home, in-home and school providers have inspection reports posted.

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

Certify by providing:

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

LDOE Division of Licensing is the designated entity forLicensed child care centers and

license-exempt providers which includes: Family Child care, In-Home and School Based providers. The LDOE Division of Licensing is within the Lead Agency and they ensure the aggregate data is visible on our Louisiana Believes website.

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

Any complaints or incidents of child abuse proven to be true after further investigation by the Department of Children and Family Services.

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

Injury that occurs due to a substantiated health and safety violation while a child is in the care of an early learning center, family home provider, or in-home provider and that requires medical attention. Examples include but are not limited to broken bones, cuts requiring stitches, injury of internal organs, and head trauma.

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

Click here for the link.

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

The Louisiana Department of Education includes a list and map of the CCR&R agencies on the website. This link is posted on the web page titled “Continuing Professional Development”. The list is both a list of agencies and a color coded map to easily enable a provider or family to locate the contact information, which is posted along with the agency head on the map. This can be found here.

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

At any point of using the Louisiana School and Center Finder, the parent can click on the Louisiana Department of Education logo on the top left of the screen. By clicking this button, it brings them to the Louisiana Believes home page, which includes a phone number to call, as well as an “Ask LDOE” icon that leads to an easy to use form to submit any questions. Louisiana School and Center Finder also embeds helpful information for families directly in the website to explain metrics, ratings, and available information in the form of pop ups if families have any questions.

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

https://www.louisianabelieves.com/ and Louisiana School and Center Finder: http://louisianaschools.com/.

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

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

Not applicable

2.4 Additional Consumer and Provider Education

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

In questions 2.4.1 through 2.4.5, certify by describing:

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

Pertinent early childhood information is regularly shared with families, directly and indirectly, in several key ways:

- Through informational/tabling events held in high traffic public locations, such as The Mall of Louisiana, to provide pertinent early childhood information to families
- Through local radio spots/advertisements providing pertinent early childhood information to families and providers
- Through informational road shows, where pertinent early childhood information is brought directly to families in high traffic public locations each summer
- Through informational sessions hosted at the Lead Agency central office, several times a year, to provide families with pertinent early childhood information
- Through daily family interactions with CCAP analysts and LDOE call center staff

Pertinent early childhood information is shared with families through the Department's official website www.LouisianaBelieves.com and recently launched School and Center website: http://louisianaschools.com/

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

A core element of the work has been the establishment of the local community networks, comprised of child care, Head Start and Early Head Start, Early Steps, and public/private PreK. These community networks represent locally-based partnerships that have a lead agency that organizes the group efforts to implement key strategies to ensure that more at-risk children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

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

- ☑ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program:
  Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

- ☑ Head Start and Early Head Start programs:
  Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

- ☑ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):
  Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

- ☑ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) Program:
  Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

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

Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

☑ Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP):

Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

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

Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

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

Information is provided via website www.louisianabelieves.com, Lead Agency call center, Provider Help Desk and analyst contact.

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

The LDOE has published its early learning and development standards online and has created several basic online courses that are free and available for the public to access. In addition, the LDOE has established a definition for kindergarten readiness that is available online. In partnership with Louisiana Department of Health and Pennington Biomedical Research Center, LDOE has recently posted a toolkit regarding Louisiana Screen Time Regulations. This toolkit provides guidance to early childhood education centers and families on the recommended uses and access limitations for screen time for young children. The LDOE also provides links to several resources that are provided by the federal Administration for Children and Families. Within the “Families Library” the LDOE links to

“Child Development Resources for Families”, “Parenting Resources for Families” and “Health and Wellness Resources for Families."

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

All information about individual programs provided by the LDOE is included in the Louisiana School and Center Finder. This information includes ratings on Emotional Support (PreK) and Emotional and Behavioral Support (Toddler). These ratings are derived by using the CLASS ™ tool, which measures the quality of classroom interactions that includes supports for social emotional and behavioral issues. In addition to the rating and score, a video is provided to explain to families how these ratings are derived, and a metric description is provided for each metric in family-friendly language so they can understand what the rating is measuring. For providers, more in-depth information about Emotional Support and Emotional and Behavioral Support can come in myriad ways, including trainings and professional development offered by their community network lead agency or Resource and Referral Agency, or other CLASS ™ aligned supports that provide information about how to improve interactions in order to address social-emotional and behavioral issues.

To support the early childhood mental health of young children, the CCDF Lead Agency partners with Mental Health Consultants who work with parents whose children are in need of in-depth intervention by providing child-centered consultations which consist of conducting child behavior checklists, screenings, and interviewing teachers and parents to gather information. After gathering information on children’s mental health, Mental Health Consultants share feedback with parents, including behavior management methods for school and home as well as referrals. These Mental Health Consultants and Child Care Support Organizations who provide training and technical assistance for teachers on the knowledge and application of developmentally appropriate practices in the classroom,

understanding typical development/how to have appropriate expectations, and how to best foster healthy development. In addition, Mental Health Consultants assist teachers/directors in understanding when referrals should be made for a child and provide assistance in the referral process. For the general public,the CCDF Lead Agency has a link to mental health consultation on its website. In addition, the early learning and development standards address social-emotional development and are posted on the CCDF Lead Agency's website.

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

The CCDF Lead Agency partners with Mental Health Consultants who work with parents whose children are in need of in-depth intervention by providing child-centered consultations which consist of conducting child behavior checklists, screenings, and interviewing teachers and parents to gather information. After gathering information on children's mental health, Mental Health Consultants share feedback with parents, including behavior management methods for school and home as well as referrals. These Mental Health Consultants and Child Care Support Organizations who provide training and technical assistance for teachers on the knowledge and application of developmentally appropriate practices in the classroom, understanding typical development/how to have appropriate expectations, and how to best foster healthy development; therefore, reducing the suspension and expulsion of children. In addition, Mental Health Consultants assist teachers/directors in understanding when referrals should be made for a child and provide assistance in the referral process. For the general public, the CCDF Lead Agency has a link to mental health consultation on its website.

2.5 Procedures for Providing Information on Developmental Screenings

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

2.5.1 Certify by describing:

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

The LDOE has created a Developmental Screening Guidebook available to families and providers. The guidebook provides information on the periodicity at which developmental screenings should occur and recommendations to providers and families to ensure that they take place in the time frame for which they should be done. Although not a screener, the child assessment: GOLD® is being utilized by the state in programs serving publicly-funded children. Teachers have the ability to reflect on children's progress as they administer the assessment throughout routine activities. The LDOE has provided a number of professional development opportunities (e.g. Teacher Leader Collaboratives and the Teacher Leader Summit) to support teachers on the use of assessment information as a tool to guide conversations with families and other staff in order to make recommendations for additional screening and/or evaluation available to families and providers.

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.).
A survey is sent out to providers randomly and after any contact with the Provider Help Desk. The survey includes a required response on receiving information on Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards and FOUNDATIONS-CONNECT-Standards, Instruction and Assessment.

If the provider requests information on ELDS. The Quality Control (QC) Specialist shall download the Developmental Screening Guidebook and mail, fax or email the guidebook to the provider.

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.
At initial application and redetermination, the analyst shall ask the head of household if they are interested in receiving more information on Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards and FOUNDATIONS-CONNECT-Standards, Instruction and Assessment.

If the parent would like more information the analyst shall download the Developmental Screening Guidebook and mail, fax or email the guidebook to the parent.

d) How CCDF families or child care providers receiving CCDF can use the available resources and services to obtain developmental screenings for CCDF children at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays.
The Lead Agency provides Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), which is designed to help early childhood educators by describing the particular skills and abilities that children need to develop to be successful, and by providing ideas for fostering their development. The Development Screening Guidebook provided to families and providers is designed as a simple reference guide on how to best support growth and development of children in the provider's care and as a resource for working with their families.

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

Child care providers receive information on child development as part of the training on the Early Learning and Development Standards, as well as through training and professional development provided by the CCR&R for their region.

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

Here is a link to the resources. Processes for providing this inforrmation is in the CCAP Internal Procedures.

2.6 Consumer Statement for Parents Receiving CCDF Funds

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

2.6.1 Certify by describing:

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

The LDOE has created a birth-to-twelve grade online platform called Louisiana School and Center Finder, through which families can learn about all programs available to

them. The information included in this website meets the definition of the consumer statement, but goes beyond that to link with all other early childhood programs available to families. K-12 information is located in the same place, making it more popular and useful for families. This website was designed with families in mind, and is both user-friendly and informative, without being overwhelming or overly bureaucratic. Families can search the website either by address or by entering in the name of school or center for which they are searching. They are able to create a list of favorite sites that links to each site they bookmarked so they can return to the information as they shop for centers. Families can compare up to three sites in terms of quality, offerings, and distance from address searched. Families can also apply different filters to sites to narrow down the selection, and sort by these preferences or by quality of the center, as they would prefer. The website is designed similarly to other sites families might use to garner information, making it simple to use and easily understood. Each site has a separate and unique link within the platform, meaning they can link to this page on their own website or social media, or can include it in their community's coordinated enrollment and coordinated application processes.

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

This information is available year round to families, and can be accessed at its own unique link, as well as through the Department's website. Included on the Louisiana School and Center Finder is:

- Basic overview information, including address, license number and type, director name, phone number, email, hours of operation;
- Helpful information about the availability of before and after care, transportation, availability of pre-K scholarship, and whether a site accepts CCAP;
- Links to licensing reports, including previous inspection reports and dates of previous visits;
- Notification of serious incident or fatality;
- For type III centers, an overall rating and score as well as CLASS ™ domain-level scores and ratings and informational metrics about teacher degrees and certification, use of a high-quality curriculum, use of assessment, and use of high-quality ratios, and information about the quality of programs of the community in which it is located; and
- Capacity and enrollment information.

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

Louisiana School and Center Finder

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

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

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

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

3.1 Eligible Children and Families

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

3.1.1 Eligibility criteria based on a child's age

a) The CCDF program serves children

from birth

(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
- [x] Yes,

and the upper age is 18

(may not equal or exceed age 19).

If yes, Provide the Lead Agency definition of physical and/or mental incapacity: Physically, mentally, or emotionally incapable of care for oneself as verified by a physician or licensed psychologist, or by receipt of SSI (applies to children age 13-17) or a child with a disability as determined by an IEP.

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.
- [x] Yes

and the upper age is 18

(may not equal or exceed age 19)

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

"residing with":

A child or children who customarily resides more than 50% of the time with the parent or guardian who is applying for child care assistance. A child is considered to be residing with a parent or guardian even during scheduled absences lasting up to six weeks from the home or early learning center, if there are definite plans for the child to return to live with that parent or guardian.

"in loco parentis":

An individual who is responsible for the care, supervision, and financial support of a child residing with the individual more that 50% of the time if the child's parent is not living in the home.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

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

"Working":

Applicants must be employed an average of 20 hours or more per week and paid at least the federal minimum hourly wage, except for those receiving TANF cash assistance. Working, attending school, or a job training program for a combined minimum average of 20 hours per week. The CCDF lead Agency may reduce the criteria if the number of children served falls below a certain level of children. The 20 hour requirement may be reduced to an average of 15 hours per week for a household that qualifies for special needs care.

"Job training":

Job Training is pre-employment vocational training in technical job skills and knowledge of a specific occupational area that is offered by a public employer, an agency approved private employer, or a facility or institution. Applicants must be present at the training site for job training for a minimum average of 20 hours per week. Working, attending school, or a job training program for a combined minimum average of 20 hours per week. The CCDF Lead Agency may reduce the criteria if the

number of children served falls below a certain level of children. The 20 hour requirement may be reduced to an average of 15 hours per week for households that qualify for special needs child care.

"Education":

Enrolled as a full-time student in an education or training program resulting in a degree or certificate designed to promote job skills and employability. Full-time status is determined by the institution, which must be accredited by the state of Louisiana or a national organization. Working, attending an educational, or a job training program for a combined minimum average of 20 hours per week. The CCDF Lead Agency may reduce the criteria if the number of children served falls below a certain level of children.

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

Attending a job training or educational program for a minimum average of 20 hours per week (attendance at a job training or educational program must be verified, including the expected date of completion) One hour per day for travel to and from the activity (up to 5 hours per week). Working, attending school, or a job training program for a combined minimum average of 20 hours per week. The CCDF Lead Agency may reduce the criteria if the number of children served falls below a certain level of children. The 20 hour requirement may be reduced to an average of 15 hours per week for households that qualify for special needs child care.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

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

☐ No.

If no, describe the additional work requirements:

☑ Yes.

If yes, describe the policy or procedure:

The applicant(s) can qualify if they are enrolled as a full-time student in an education

or training program resulting in a degree or certificate designed to promote job skills and employability. Full-time status is determined by the institution, which must be accredited by the state of Louisiana or a national organization.

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

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

- [x] No.
- [ ] Yes.

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

3.1.2 Eligibility criteria based on reason for care

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

- [ ] No.
- [x] Yes. If yes:

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

Those services offered on behalf of individuals under 13 years of age or is age 13-17 and physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, as verified by a physician or certified psychologist, or by receipt of supplemental security income (SSI), or who is under court supervision; who are in danger or threatened with danger of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, or are without proper custody or guardianship and need for such services has been determined by the state agency charged with the responsibility for the provision of abuse/neglect complaint investigations. The state considers children in foster care to be in protective services. The Lead Agency may also consider children involved in a natural or man-made disaster as being in protective services.

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
- [x] Yes

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

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes

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

- [x] No
- [ ] Yes

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

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

Any type of payment that is of gain or benefit to a household. Income is either non-exempt or exempt from the budgeting process. *Household income* is defined as: the gross earnings at federal minimum wage of the head of household, that person's legal spouse or non-legal spouse, and any MUP (minor unmarried parent) who is not legally emancipated and whose children are in need of CCAP care, with the exception of income from:

1. Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS);
   - college work study; and
   - disaster-related employment;
2. Gross earning include recurring unearned income of the following types for all household members:
   - Social Security Administration benefits;

- supplemental security income;

3. Veterans' Administration benefits;
   - retirement benefits;
   - disability benefits;
   - child support or alimony;
   - unemployment compensation benefits;
   - adoption subsidy payments; and
   - workers' compensation benefits

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

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Family Size	100% of SMI($/Month)	85% of SMI ($/Month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	(IF APPLICABLE) ($/Month) Maximum Initial or First Tier Income Limit (or Threshold) if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI	IF APPLICABLE) (% of SMI) [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] Income Level if Lower Than 85% of Current SMI
1	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
2	$4169	$3544	$2403	58%
3	$5150	$4378	$2736	53%
4	$6131	$5212	$3257	53%
5	$7112	$6045	$3778	53%

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)).

Not applicable

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

d) SMI source and year. LIHEAP IM2017-03

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

Statewide income eligibility information is used.

f) What was the date (mm/dd/yyyy) that these eligibility limits in column (c) became effective? 10/01/2018

g) Provide the citation or link, if available, for the income eligibility limits.
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im2017-03

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).

A family member/applicant self certifies utilizing a checkoff option on the CCAP application with signature indicating they do not have assets that exceed $1,000,000.

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?

- [x] No.
- [ ] Yes.

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

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

A household shall be prioritized for funding if the household has members who are:

- recipients of Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) who are participating in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program;
- children in foster care;
- children requiring special needs care, as special needs care in defined in §103 of Bulletin 139;

- children experiencing homelessness; or
- children actively participating in an early head start-child care partnership (EHS-CCP).

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

- [ ] Coordinating with Head Start, prekindergarten, or other early learning programs to create a package of arrangements that accommodates parents' work schedules
- [x] Inquiring about whether the child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)
- [ ] Establishing minimum eligibility periods greater than 12 months
- [ ] Using cross-enrollment or referrals to other public benefits
- [ ] Working with IDEA Part B, Section 619 and Part C staff to explore how services included in a child's IEP or IFSP can be supported and/or provided onsite and in collaboration with child care services
- [ ] Providing more intensive case management for families with children with multiple risk factors;
- [ ] Implementing policies and procedures that promote universal design to ensure that activities and environments are accessible to all children, including children with sensory, physical, or other disabilities
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Families are able to receive child development information via the Louisiana Believes and School and Center Finder website. They also receive guidance and support in selecting a provider through two primary sources:

1. local coordinated enrollment process, and
2. CCDF Lead Agency.

The CCDF Lead Agency and Resource and Referral agencies worked with each community in the state to develop a local coordinated enrollment system that supports families needing early childhood services through a simplified process where a family

can go to one place and learn about and enroll in child care, Head Start, and Pre-K. The CCDF Lead Agency website connects families to licensing information, quality information, and general guidance on selecting among early childhood options. During the application process the applicant is asked if the child has an IEP, IFSP or receive SSI. Child care providers receive a higher reimbursement to make modifications for children who are in need of special needs care.

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

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

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

(A) Takes into account the typical household budget of a low-income family
(B) Provides justification that the second eligibility threshold is:
(1) Sufficient to accommodate increases in family income over time that are typical for low-income workers and that promote and support family economic stability
(2) Reasonably allows a family to continue accessing child care services without unnecessary disruption.

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

85 percent of SMI.

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

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

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

Describe the policies and procedures.

Redetermination of eligibility for child care services shall be made prior to the expiration of certification period, but no sooner than 12 months following the initial determination or most recent redetermination. At the time of redetermination, households whose income has risen above the initial state threshold for eligibility but remain below the federal threshold for eligibility of 85 percent of state median income, shall be eligible for 12 additional months of child care services as part of a graduated phase out. They may qualify for the graduated phase out co-pay tier that is referenced below:

Family Co-Pay Tier: $8 $10

2 person household $2,404 -$ 3,060 $3,061 -$ 3,713

3 person household $2,685 -$ 3,417 $3,418 -$ 4,148

4 person household $3,258 -$ 4,146 $4,147 -$ 5,033

5 person household $3,779 -$ 4,805 $4,806 -$ 5,831

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

BESE Bulletin 139

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

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

Describe how the second eligibility threshold:

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

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

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

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

☑ Other.

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

Graduated phase out is implemented as described above but the Lead Agency is having to work within data system constraints to make this happen. Notes are recorded for the cases who qualify. The Lead Agency is hopeful that the data system constraints can be resolved this fall.

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

☐ No

☑ Yes

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

The copayments will increase when the data system can accommodate but will still

remain at or below 7% of the monthly income this isdue data system constraints which we hope will be resolved this fall. At this time, the maximum copay for the normal tier is assigned.

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

☐ No.

☑ Yes.

Describe:

Changes in the household's gross monthly income, if the household's gross monthly income changes to more than 85 percent of state median income.

3.1.8 Fluctuation in earnings.

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

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency does not use pay periods when, due to unusual circumstances, income was not received or varied greatly and do not appear to be representative of earnings. If an atypical check was received and the circumstances are not expected to recur, the check is excluded and documented on record to reflect the basis of the decision.

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency does not use pay periods when, due to unusual circumstances, income was not received or varied greatly and do not appear to be representative of earnings. If an atypical check was received and the circumstances are not expected to recur, the check is excluded and documented on record to reflect the basis of the decision.

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

Describe:

The Lead Agency does not use pay periods when, due to unusual circumstances, income was not received or varied greatly and do not appear to be representative of earnings. If an atypical check was received and the circumstances are not expected to recur, the check is excluded and documented on record to reflect the basis of the decision.

☐ Other.

Describe:

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

☑ Applicant identity.

Describe:

The Lead Agency requires an applicant to verify identity when applying for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).The driver's license, identification card, or birth certificate is requested to verify identity.

☑ Applicant's relationship to the child.

Describe:

The Lead Agency does not require that the applicant be related to the child for whom they are applying for CCAP. Verifying relationship is not a federal regulation and therefore, not required for CCAP eligibility. The Lead Agency accepts the client's statement as sufficient documentation for verifying relationship to a child. Additionally, when the Lead Agency verifies the age of a child, the verification provided generally shows that the applicant's relationship corresponds to the client's statement.

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

Describe:

Staff must verify the age of each child in the household under 18 years of age at initial certification and when adding a child. The preferred documents for verifying a child's age include an official birth record or a baptismal certificate from a church with valid records. If these do not exist, other sources of verification include passports, naturalization papers, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documentation, insurance policies over three years old, church records, medical records, U.S. Census records,immunization or other Health Unit records, school records, or other reliable documents. The document must include the child's name and date of birth.

☑ Work.

Describe:

Employment and Training (E&T) activity hours must be verified for each Training or Employment Mandatory Participant (TEMP). The anticipated date of completion for a job-training or educational program must be verified. Acceptable forms of verification include: check stubs, a Current Past or Anticipated Wage Verification Letter (OFS 87) form, statement from the employer, self-employment records, statement from job-training or educational program, or an official class schedule.

☑ Job training or educational program.

Describe:

Employment and Training (E&T) activity hours must be verified for each Training or

Employment Mandatory Participant (TEMP). The anticipated date of completion for a job-training or educational program must be verified. Acceptable forms of verification include: check stubs, a Current, Past or Anticipated Wage Verification Letter (OFS 87) form, statement from the employer, self-employment records, statement from job training or educational program, or an official class schedule.

☑ Family income.

Describe:

Non-exempt income must be verified at initial application, redetermination, and when reported as an interim change. Sources of earned income verification may include pay stubs, W-2 forms, income tax returns, sales records, and employers' statements. Sources of unearned income verification may include DCFS child support account payment verification, award letters, court orders to verify support payments and statement. Staff must document verification and computation of household income at the initial application, when a change is reported, and at each redetermination or subsequent application (recording all sources, amounts, dates and computations).

☑ Household composition.

Describe:

A Child Care Assistance household is defined as individuals who live together. The child must be living with the head of household more than half the time to be included as household member. Factors affecting the composition of the household must be verified only if questionable. The following individuals who live together must be included in the Child Care Assistance household: head of household; head of household's legal spouse or non-legal spouse (including a disabled adult parent who is unable to care for himself/herself and his/her children who are in need of care as verified by a doctor's statement or by worker determination); and all children under the age of 18 who are dependent on the head of household and/or spouse or non-legal spouse including foster children, the Minor Unmarried Parent (MUP) who is not legally emancipated, and the MUP's children.

☑ Applicant residence.

Describe:

The Lead Agency does not require an applicant to verify residency when applying for

the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Verifying residency is not a federal regulation and therefore, not required for CCAP eligibility.

☑ Other.

Describe:

Sufficient evidence of immunity or immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases recommended by the Office of Public Health schedule must be provided for each child in need of care less than 18 years of age. Sufficient evidence that such an immunization program is up -to-date or in progress may be substituted for proof of immunity immunization and must be obtained at initial application, redetermination, changing provider(s) and when assistance is requested for an additional child. If vaccination is contraindicated for medical reasons, the parent shall provide a written statement from a physician indicating said medical reasons. Parent may also object to the immunizations for any other reason and the parent shall provide a written statement of dissent.

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

☑ Time limit for making eligibility determinations

Describe length of time:

The application for assistance must be processed and a notice of decision must be sent within 30 days of the application received date.

☑ Track and monitor the eligibility determination process

☑ Other.

Describe:

Applications which pend over 30 days and redeterminations which are not extended or closed by the last workday of the month must be reported as being out of conformity. Each Case that is not processed within these timeframes is reported on the Out of Conformity Report (OFS OC 1). The report includes an explanation of the reason the case was processed untimely and the corrective action taken to eliminate or minimize its recurrence.

☐ None

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

Lead Agencies are required to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child younger than age 6 (98.16(v); 98.33(f)).

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

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

Note: The TANF agency, not the CCDF Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record.

a) Identify the TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions: Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

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

"Appropriate child care":

Child care provided by any state-licensed facility, childcare provided by a state registered provider, or child care provided by a state-certified relative or private party of the parent's choice.

"Reasonable distance":

30 minutes from the participants home or work site.

"Unsuitability of informal child care":

Child care is unavailable or unsuitable if basic health and safety standards are not

met.

"Affordable child care arrangements":

Child care is unavailable if costs exceed established maximum limits for the state administered CCAP.

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

- [x] In writing
- [x] Verbally
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Case managers explain responsibilities and sanction policy to participants. If the participant claims they cannot participate the case manager determines good causes based on the resonson listed above. When the determination is made the client is informed that they have been granted good cause.

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

Chapter 4. B-1410-FITAP Work Requirements. Chapter 4 P-410-STEP Participation requirements.

3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

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

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

3.2.1 Describe how the Lead Agency defines:

a) "Children with special needs":

A child with special needs is a child with and Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or who is determined disabled through Social Security Disability determinations process and receives SSI benefits.

b) "Families with very low incomes":

Families with very low incomes under 40% of the state medium income have no copayment requirement the sliding fee scale is mentioned below. The Louisiana Department of Education/Childcare program ensures co-payments that are specific to income level and offers lower income families services at 100% reimbursement. This ensures this most vulnerable population is least affected by copayments that may make affordable childcare difficult. Additionally, services for homeless families and families participating in the Findwork (STEP) program, many who qualify under very low income, are not placed on the waiting list.

These income ranges are defined as very low income and the copayments are waived:

2 Person Household with income under 1,602

3 Person Household with income under 1,789

4 Person Household with income under 2,171

5 Person Household with income under 2,519

6 Person Household with income under 2,866

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

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

- [x] Prioritize for enrollment

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

Describe:

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

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

Describe:

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

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

Describe:

Families experiencing homelessness are certified eligible and receive a 90 day grace period to secure eligibility documentation. In addition, they are referred to the homeless liaison to provide assistance in securing necessary documentation. The CCDF Lead Agency contains the State's Homeless Coordinator. The State's Homeless Coordinator works with local education agencies to coordinate these services. In addition, through coordinated enrollment, Community Networks reach out to families experiencing homelessness.

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

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

Describe:

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

Children in need of protective services or in foster care automatically qualify for child care assistance and can begin receiving assistance from the initial referral by DCFS. The CCDF Lead Agency collaborates with the Department of Children and Family Services on these cases. Also children in Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships are prioritized and are not placed on the waiting list.

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

The priority groups are not put on the waitlist and are eligible for 100% payment of the child care costs up to the appropriate state maximum allowable rate if they select an eligible provider.

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

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

Families experiencing homelessness are certified eligible and receive a 90 grace period to secure eligibility documentation. In addition, they are referred to the homeless liaison to provide assistance in securing necessary documentation. The CCDF Lead Agency contains the State's Homeless Coordinator. The State's Homeless Coordinator works with local education agencies to coordinate these services. In addition, through coordinated enrollment, Community Networks reach out to families experiencing homelessness.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

State law and policy allow for a grace period of 90 days for families experiencing homelessness to comply with reporting and documentation requirements of child care assistance. Such families can start receiving child care assistance prior to producing such documentation. In addition, the CCDF Lead Agency providers receive 100% of the state payment for child care assistance to families experiencing homelessness. The Division of Licensing is within the Lead Agency and therefore, they are under constant consultation.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

BESE Bulletin 139, Section 503

Children who are in foster care.

Children in need of protective services or in foster care automatically qualify for child care assistance and can begin receiving assistance from the initial referral by DCFS. The CCDF Lead Agency collaborates with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on these cases . The Lead Agency has a Memorandum of Understanding with DCFS.

Provide the citation for this policy and procedure.

BESE Bulletin 139 Section 505 - Households Categorically Eligible for CCAP. The Lead Agency has a Memorandum of Understanding with DCFS as well.

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)).

State law and policy allow for a grace period for families experiencing homelessness to comply with reporting and documentation requirements of child care assistance. Such families can start receiving child care assistance prior to producing such documentation. In addition, the CCDF Lead Agency providers receive 100% of the state payment for child care assistance to families experiencing homelessness. The Division of Licensing is within the Lead Agency; therefore, consultation is constant.

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

- [ ] No.
- [x] Yes.

Describe:

Families not compliant with necessary immunizations and other health and safety requirements are allowed a 90 day grace period for compliance. Families can also make an appointment and provide the appointment information for additional time.

3.3 Protection for Working Families

3.3.1 12-Month eligibility.

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

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

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

The Lead Agency has established policy in Bulletin 139 that allows for a family to maintain eligibility for at least 12 months and up to 24 months with no adverse action when changes occur after certification unless the family exceeds 85% of the state median income (SMI) .Families are required to report to the CCDF Lead Agency when changes to their income is above 85% SMI.

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

The Lead Agency defines a temporary changeaccording to 98.21(a)(1)(ii):

1. disruption in work for a employed head of household/MUP/Spouse due to the need to care for a family member or an illness for less than 90 days;
2. disruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons (change reviewed only at initial determination and redetermination);
3. disruption in employment and/or training of the head of household/MUP/Spouse with a plan to return to work within 90 days (change reviewed only at initial determination and redetermination);
4. any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education;
5. any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education during a certification period;

Temporary changes do not negatively impact continued eligibility once the family is certified.

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

BESE Bulletin 139 Section 517, CCAP Household Reporting Requirements.

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

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

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

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

- [x] No, the state/territory does not allow this option to discontinue assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program.
- [ ] Yes, the Lead Agency discontinues assistance during the 12-month eligibility period due to a parent's non-temporary loss of work or cessation of eligible activity and provides a minimum 3-month period of job search. If yes:

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

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

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

iv. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

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

☐ Not applicable.

☑ Excessive unexplained absences despite multiple attempts by the Lead Agency or designated entity to contact the family and provider, including the prior notification of a possible discontinuation of assistance.

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

Excessive unexplained absences are defined as six or more unexplained absences from the child care provider during any certification month.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

BESE Bulletin 139 Section 103, Definitions

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

Provide the citation for this policy or procedure:

CCAP Internal Procedures B-0930

☑ 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.

Violations may include - any act of fraud, such as the submission of false or altered documents or information, intentionally making a false or misleading statement, or misrepresenting, concealing, or withholding relevant fact.

BESE Bulletin 139 Section 519 - Termination or Refusal of Renewal of Household

3.3.3 Change reporting during the 12-month eligibility period.

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

Note: Responses should exclude reporting requirements for a graduated phase-out, which were described in question 3.1.7(b).

Families are required to report a change to the Lead Agency at any time during the 12-month eligibility period if the family's income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income, taking into account irregular fluctuations in income (98.21(e)(1)). If the Lead Agency chooses the option to terminate assistance, as described in section 3.3.2 of the plan, they may require families to report a non-temporary change (as described in section 3.3.3 of the plan) in work, training or educational activities (otherwise known as a parent's eligible activity).

a) Does the Lead Agency require families to report a non-temporary change in a parent's eligible activity?

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes

b) Any additional reporting requirements during the 12-month eligibility period must be limited to items that impact a family's eligibility (e.g., income changes over 85 percent of SMI or that impact the Lead Agency's ability to contact the family or pay the child care providers (e.g., a family's change of address, a change in the parent's choice of child care provider).

Check and describe any additional reporting requirements required by the Lead Agency during the 12-month eligibility period. Check all that apply.

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

Describe:

A CCAP household shall report any change that affects CCAP eligibility or the

calculation of the amount of the monthly CCAP payment. Changes in the household's gross monthly income, if the household's gross monthly income changes to more than 85 percent of state median income shall be reported within 10 days of knowledge of the change.

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

Describe:

Families use a change form to report the following:

1. a change in provider; or a child receiving CCAP leaves the household or is added to the household;
2. a change in address including residency outside of the state or phone number
3. the CCAP head of household and the provider begin sharing the same address. (The child care provider moves into the CCAP household, or the family moves into the child care provider's residence).

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

Describe:

BESE Bulletin 139 Sections 301 and 305 provide details:

Section 301. Certification of Child Care Provider's Eligibility for Participation in CCAP

A. A child care provider must be certified by the Department of Education (department) as eligible for participation in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) in order to become a CCAP provider and receive CCAP payments. No CCAP payments may be made to a child care provider until the provider is certified by the department.

B. To be certified as a CCAP provider, a child care provider must meet all general and specific certification requirements set forth in this Chapter. Section 305 General Certification Requirements for All Child Care Providers

A. To be certified as a CCAP provider, a child care provider must meet the following requirements:

1. provider agreement. Complete and sign a provider agreement furnished by the department and meet all requirements contained therein;

2. email address. Provide a current email address and notify the department immediately upon a change in such email address by submitting written notice to the LDOE by fax or email;

3. time and attendance. Participate in the time and attendance system designated by the department and possess the minimum equipment necessary to operate the system;

4. direct deposit. Provide complete and accurate documentation and information required for direct deposit;

5. photo identification. Provide copies of government-issued photo identification and Social Security cards for the person signing the provider agreement;

6. mandatory reporting requirements. Comply with all mandatory reporting requirements for suspected cases of child abuse or neglect; and

7. additional requirements. Meet additional requirements for the specific type of child care provider set forth in §309-317

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

c) How does the Lead Agency allow for families to report changes to ensure that reporting requirements are not burdensome and to avoid an impact on continued eligibility between redeterminations? Check all that apply.

- [ ] Phone
- [x] Email
- [x] Online forms
- [ ] Extended submission hours
- [x] Postal Mail
- [x] FAX
- [ ] In-person submission
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Forms can be submitted electronically, by mail, through the provider, Local Educational Agency, or Resource and Referral Agency.

d) Families must have the option to voluntarily report changes on an ongoing basis during the 12-month eligibility period. Lead Agencies are required to act on information reported by the family if it will reduce the family's co-payment or increase the family's

subsidy. Lead Agencies are prohibited from acting on information reported by the family that would reduce the family's subsidy unless the information reported indicates that the family's income exceeds 85 percent of SMI after considering irregular fluctuations in income or, at the option of the Lead Agency, the family has experienced a non-temporary change in eligible activity.

i. Describe any other changes that the Lead Agency allows families to report.

Changes include such items as change of address, household composition change, etc. Families can submit forms (CCAP 10) through the CAFE portal, they can mail or fax forms directly to the Louisiana Department of Education. If families are unsure of how to make changes there is a call center where staff will assist them through the process. When families go to their provider for assistance, the provider can contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk and receive assistance with helping the family to report a change.

ii. Provide the citation for this policy or procedure.

BESE Bulletin 139 Section 517(A) - A CCAP household shall report any change that affects CCAP eligibility or the calculation of the amount of the monthly CCAP payment.

3.3.4 Prevent the disruption of employment, education, or job training activities

Lead Agencies are required to have procedures and policies in place to ensure that parents (especially parents receiving assistance under the TANF program) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment, education, or job training activities to comply with the Lead Agency's or designated local entity's requirements for the redetermination of eligibility for assistance (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii); 98.21(d)).

Examples include developing strategies to inform families and their providers of an upcoming redetermination and the information that will be required of the family, pre-populating subsidy renewal forms, having parents confirm that the information is accurate, and/or asking only for the information necessary to make an eligibility redetermination. In addition, states and territories can offer a variety of family-friendly methods for submitting documentation for eligibility redetermination that considers the range of needs for families in accessing support (e.g. use of languages other than English, access to transportation, accommodation of parents working non-traditional hours, etc.).

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.

- [x] Advance notice to parents of pending redetermination
- [x] Advance notice to providers of pending redetermination
- [ ] Pre-populated subsidy renewal form
- [x] Online documentation submission
- [ ] Cross-program redeterminations
- [ ] Extended office hours (evenings and/or weekends)
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Families that receive TANF are categorically eligible for CCAP. Parents are notified within 45 days of redetermination to ensure that all documents are received by LDOE/CCAP prior to redetermination. If the family has signed permission on the application to notify the provider listed on the application about decisions that affect their case, a separate Provider Redetermination Notice is mailed to the provider to inform them of the date of redetermination and the required documentation needed.

b) How are families allowed to submit documentation, described in 3.1.9, for redetermination? Check all that apply.

- [x] Postal Mail
- [x] Email
- [x] Online forms
- [x] FAX
- [ ] In-person submission
- [ ] Extended submission hours
- [x] Other.

Describe:

Families can contact the call center and receive assistance with the application process.

3.4 Family Contribution to Payments

Lead Agencies are required to establish and periodically revise a sliding-fee scale for CCDF families that varies based on income and the size of the family to determine each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) that is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(5)). In addition to income and the size of the family, the Lead Agency may use other factors when determining family contributions/co-payments. Lead Agencies, however, may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

Note: To help families transition off of child care assistance, Lead Agencies may gradually adjust co-pay amounts for families determined to be eligible under a graduated phase-out. However, section 3.4 applies only to families in their initial/entry eligibility period. See section 3.1.7 Graduated Phase-Out regarding co-pays during the graduated phase-out period.

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

a) Fill in the chart based on the most populous area of the State (area serving highest number of CCDF children).

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Family Size	**Lowest Initial or First Tier Income Level Where Family Is First Charged Co-Pay (Greater Than $0)**	**What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (a)?**	**The Co-Payment in Column (b) is What Percentage of the Income in Column (a)?**	**Highest Initial or First Tier Income Level Before a Family Is No Longer Eligible**	**What Is the Monthly Co-Payment for a Family of This Size Based on the Income Level in (d)?**	**The Co-Payment in Column (e) is What Percentage of the Income in Column (d)?**
1	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
2	$1603	$2	0.03%	$2403	$3	0.03%
3	$1790	$2	0.02%	$2684	$3	0.02%
4	$2172	$2	0.02%	$3257	$3	0.02%

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
5	$2520	$2	0.02%	$3778	$3	0.02%

b) What is the effective date of the sliding-fee scale(s)? 06/01/2016

c) Identify the most populous area of the state used to complete the chart above.

Statewide information was used.

d) Provide the link to the sliding-fee scale:
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/ccap-sliding-fee-scale.pdf?sfvrsn=2

e) If the sliding-fee scale is not statewide, describe how many jurisdictions set their own sliding-fee scale (98.16(i)(3)).

3.4.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated, and to whom will it be applied? Check all that apply.

- [x] The fee is a dollar amount and:
  - [x] The fee is per child, with the same fee for each child.
  - [ ] The fee is per child and is discounted for two or more children.
  - [ ] The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
  - [x] No additional fee is charged after certain number of children.
  - [ ] The fee is per family.
  - [ ] The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

    Describe:

  - [ ] Other.

    Describe:

- [ ] The fee is a percent of income and:
  - [ ] The fee is per child, with the same percentage applied for each child.

- [ ] The fee is per child, and a discounted percentage is applied for two or more children.
- [ ] The fee is per child up to a maximum per family.
- [ ] No additional percentage is charged after certain number of children.
- [ ] The fee is per family.
- [ ] The contribution schedule varies because it is set locally/regionally (as indicated in 1.2.1).

  Describe:

- [ ] Other.

  Describe:

3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's co-payment (658E(c)(3)(B))? Reminder ' Lead Agencies may NOT use cost of care or amount of subsidy payment in determining copayments (98.45(k)(2)).

- [x] No.
- [ ] Yes, check and describe those additional factors below.
  - [ ] Number of hours the child is in care.

    Describe:

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

    Describe:

  - [ ] Other.

    Describe:

3.4.4 The Lead Agency may waive contributions/co-payments from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size (98.45(k)) or for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined for purposes of CCDF eligibility, or who meet other criteria established by the Lead Agency (98.45(k)(4)). Does the Lead Agency waive family contributions/co-payments for any of the following? Check all that apply.

- ☐ No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments.
- ☐ Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families with an income at or below the poverty level for families of the same size.
- ☑ Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families who are receiving or needing to receive protective services, as determined by the Lead Agency for purposes of CCDF eligibility.

  Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

  Child Care Assistance Provider Agreement (CCAP 19). Caregivers of children in foster care or in protective custody are not obligated to pay the copay because the CCAP subsidy percentage paid for children in foster care or protective custody is 100 percent of the maximum state rate or the provider's rate, whichever is less.

- ☑ Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for other criteria established by the Lead Agency.

  Describe the policy and provide the policy citation.

  LDOE waives copay for families that are in our most vulnerable populations and are deemed categorically eligible, or priority edible according to bulletin 139. These waivers are found in Bulletin 139 sections (507) "Certification for Categorically Eligible Households", and (513), (A)1-5 "Prioritization of Funding". These families include those that are in the EHS-CC active Partnership households, FITAP and STEP participants, and homeless families.

4 Ensure Equal Access to Child Care for Low-Income Children

A core purpose of CCDF is to promote parental choice and to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suit their family's needs. Parents have the option to choose from center-based care, family child care or care provided in the child's own home In supporting parental choice, the Lead Agencies must ensure that families receiving CCDF funding have the opportunity to choose from the full range of eligible child care settings and must provide families with equal access to child care that is comparable to that of non-CCDF families. Lead Agencies must employ strategies to increase the supply and to improve the quality of child care services, especially in underserved areas. This section addresses strategies that the Lead Agency uses to promote parental choice, ensure equal access, and increase the supply of child care. Note: In responding to questions in this section, the Office of Child Care (OCC) recognizes that each State/Territory identifies and defines its own categories and types of care. The OCC does not expect States/Territories to change their definitions to fit the CCDF-defined categories and types of care. For these questions, provide responses that closely match the CCDF categories of care.

4.1 Parental Choice in Relation to Certificates, Grants, or Contracts

The parent(s) of each eligible child who receive(s) or is offered financial assistance for child care services has the option of either receiving a child care certificate or, if available, enrolling his or her child with a provider that has a grant or contract for providing child care services (658E(c)(2)(A); 98.30(a)). Even if a parent chooses to enroll his or her child with a provider who has a grant or contract, the parent will select the provider, to the extent practicable. If a parent chooses to use a certificate, the Lead Agency shall provide information to the parent on the range of provider options, including care by sectarian providers and relatives. Lead Agencies must require providers chosen by families to meet health and safety standards and has the option to require higher standards of quality. Lead agencies are reminded that any policies and procedures should not restrict parental access to any type of care or provider (e.g. center care, home care, in-home care, for-profit provider, non-profit provider or faith-based provider, etc.) (98.15 (a)(5)).

4.1.1 Describe the child care certificate, including when it is issued to parents (before or after the parent has selected a provider) and what information is included on the certificate (98.16 (q)).

The applicant must submit all necessary documentation, including the selected provider, prior to certification. Decision notices are issued to the applicant stating the certification period and benefit amount for every certified application. The CCAP 13 (Notice of Certification and Payments) is sent to the applicant on the same day the case is certified which includes the child's name being certified, provider number where authorization is approved, coverage, first month payment and full months payment.

4.1.2 Describe how the parent is informed that the child certificate allows the option to choose from a variety of child care categories, such as private, not-for-profit, faith-based providers; centers; FCC homes; or in-home providers (658E(c)(2)(A)(i); 658P(2); 658Q). Check all that apply.

- [ ] Certificate that provides information about the choice of providers
- [ ] Certificate that provides information about the quality of providers
- [ ] Certificate not linked to a specific provider, so parents can choose any provider
- [x] Consumer education materials on choosing child care
- [x] Referral to child care resource and referral agencies
- [ ] Co-located resource and referral in eligibility offices
- [ ] Verbal communication at the time of the application
- [x] Community outreach, workshops, or other in-person activities
- [x] Other.

Describe:

LDOE School and Center finder website: http://www.louisianaschools.com/ and local lead agencies

4.1.3 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.

- [x] No. If no, skip to 4.1.4.
- [ ] Yes, in some jurisdictions but not statewide.

  If yes, describe how many jurisdictions use grants or contracts for child care slots.

- [ ] Yes, statewide. If yes, describe:

  i. How the Lead Agency ensures that parents who enroll with a provider who has a grant or contract have choices when selecting a provider:

  ii. The type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts:

  iii. The entities that receive contracts (e.g., shared services alliances, CCR&R agencies, FCC networks, community-based agencies, child care providers):

  iv. The process for accessing grants or contracts:

  v. How rates for contracted slots are set through grants and contracts:

  vi. How the Lead Agency determines which entities to contract with for increasing supply and/or improving quality:

  vii. If contracts are offered statewide and/or locally:

4.1.3 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to increase the supply and/or quality of specific types of care? Check all that apply.

- [ ] Programs to serve children with disabilities
- [ ] Programs to serve infants and toddlers
- [ ] Programs to serve school-age children
- [ ] Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
- [ ] Programs to serve children experiencing homelessness
- [ ] Programs to serve children in underserved areas
- [ ] Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
- [ ] Programs that serve specific geographic areas
  - [ ] Urban
  - [ ] Rural
- [x] Other

Describe

At this time, grants and contracts are not being used. However, it may be considered in the future.

4.1.3 Child care services available through grants or contracts.

c) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to increase the quality of specific types of care? Check all that apply.

- [ ] Programs to serve children with disabilities
- [ ] Programs to serve infants and toddlers
- [ ] Programs to serve school-age children
- [ ] Programs to serve children needing non-traditional hour care
- [ ] Programs to serve homeless children
- [ ] Programs to serve children in underserved areas
- [ ] Programs that serve children with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds
- [ ] Programs that serve specific geographic areas
  - [ ] Urban
  - [ ] Rural
- [x] Other

Describe

At this time, grants and contracts are not being used. However, it may be

considered in the future.

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 payments are made to Type III licensed early learning centers or certied family home, in-home or schools. BESE Bulletins 137 (Section 1509(A)6(a)) and 139 (section 309(A)19) contain requirements that parents must have access to their children when in care and during working hours.

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

    Describe:

  - ☑ Restricted based on the provider meeting a minimum age requirement. (A relative provider must be at least 18 years of age based on the definition of eligible child care provider (98.2).

    Describe:

    Bulletin 139, §311. Specific Certification Requirements for In-Home Child Care Providers states age must be at least 18 and provide verification of identity.

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

Describe:

☑ Restricted to care by relatives.

Describe:

In-Home Provider must not live at the same residence as the child(ren) for whom care is being provided or share the head of household's physical mailing address.

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

Describe:

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

Describe:

In-home providers must meet the same health and safety requirements as family child care providers including training, criminal background checks and inspections.

☐ Other.

Describe:

4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs

Lead Agencies have the option to conduct a statistically valid and reliable (1) market rate survey (MRS) reflecting variations in the price to parents of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child and/or (2) an alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model (658E(c)(4)(B)). A cost estimation model estimates the cost of care by incorporating both data and assumptions to model what expected costs would be incurred by child care providers and parents under different cost scenarios. Another approach would be a cost study that collects cost data at the facility or program level to measure the costs (or inputs used) to deliver child care services. The MRS or alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than 2 years before the date of submission of the Plan.

Note - Any Lead Agency considering using an alternative methodology, instead of a market rate

survey, is required to submit a description of its proposed approach to its ACF Regional Child Care Program Office for pre-approval in advance of the Plan submittal (see https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/ccdf-acf-pi-2016-08). Advance approval is not required if the Lead Agency plans to implement both a market rate survey and an alternative methodology. In its request for ACF pre-approval, a Lead Agency must:

- Provide an overview of the Lead Agency's proposed approach (e.g., cost estimation model, cost study/survey, etc.), including a description of data sources.

- Describe how the Lead Agency will consult with the State's Early Childhood Advisory Council or similar coordinating body, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, organizations representing child care caregivers, teachers and directors, and other appropriate entities prior to conducting the identified alternative methodology.

- Describe how the alternative methodology will use methods that are statistically valid and reliable and will yield accurate results. For example, if using a survey, describe how the Lead Agency will ensure a representative sample and promote an adequate response rate. If using a cost estimation model, describe how the Lead Agency will validate the assumptions in the model.

- If the proposed alternative methodology includes an analysis of costs (e.g., cost estimation model or cost study/survey), describe how the alternative methodology will account for key factors that impact the cost of providing care'such as: staff salaries and benefits, training and professional development, curricula and supplies, group size and ratios, enrollment levels, licensing requirements, quality level, facility size, and other factors.

- Describe how the alternative methodology will provide complete information that captures the universe of providers in the child care market.

- Describe how the alternative methodology will reflect variations by provider type, age of children, geographic location and quality.

- Describe how the alternative methodology will use current, up to date data.

- Describe the estimated reporting burden and cost to conduct the approach.

4.2.1 Please identify the methodology(ies) used below to assess child care prices and/or costs.

☑ MRS

☐ Alternative methodology.

Describe:

☐ Both.

Describe:

4.2.2 Prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency is required to consult with the (1) State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities and (2) organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.45 (e)).

Describe how the Lead Agency consulted with the:

a) State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body:

At one of their regular meetings, the Lead Agency presented the purposes and the plan for the survey, the content of the survey and requested feedback.

b) Local child care program administrators:

An article was included in the Early Childhood newsletter announcing the market rate survey and discussing its purposes. Feedback on all of our projects is encouraged.

c) Local child care resource and referral agencies:

The MRS was discussed with R&Rs at one of their regular meetings. Also, an article was included in the Early Childhood newsletter announcing the market rate survey and discussing its purposes. Feeback on all of our projects is encouraged.

d) Organizations representing caregivers, teachers, and directors:

An article was included in the Early Childhood newsletter announcing the market rate survey and discussing its purposes. Feedback on all of our projects is encouraged.

e) Other. Describe:

The Department also sought the recommendations of Louise Stoney, an outside expert on the content of the surveys.

4.2.3 Describe how the market rate survey is statistically valid and reliable. To be considered valid and reliable, the MRS must represent the child care market, provide complete and current data, use rigorous data collection procedures, reflect geographic variations, and analyze data in a manner that captures other relevant differences. For example, market rate surveys can use administrative data, such as child care resource and referral data, if they are representative of the market. If an alternative methodology, such as cost modeling, is used, demonstrate that the methodology used reliable methods.

Two surveys were created--one designed for child care centers and school sites, and one for family home and in-home providers. All 1,829 providers were sent a postcard informing them that they would receive an email with a link to the online version of the survey. This was done in an effort to make sure the email containing the link was not disregarded as junk mail. Two weeks after the postcard was sent, an email was sent to each provider with a link to the online survey. For the next month, providers were sent a weekly follow up email if they had not completed the online survey. In addition, the Department had staff call providers reminding them to complete the survey. After one month, the first paper copy of the survey was sent along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Respondents were told that they could complete the paper copy of the survey or complete the online survey. The following month, a second paper copy of the survey was sent to those who had not completed either the online survey or the paper survey.

The Lead Agency solicited the help of resource and referral agencies, and other groups and organizations to encourage providers to complete the survey. A notice ran in the Early Childhood newsletter for a several months reminding providers to complete the survey. Providers also received phone calls to remind them to complete the survey. The overall response rate for the survey was 65.17% (1,229 responses). The response rate for Type III providers was 72.84%. The response rate for In-Home and Family Child Care Providers was 56.92% (173 responses).

4.2.4 Describe how the market rate survey or 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 survey reported costs by rural vs urban areas.

b) Type of provider. Describe:

The survey reported costs by the type of provider - Type I centers, Type II centers, Type III centers, Family Home, and In-Home providers.

c) Age of child. Describe:

The survey reported costs by age group - infant, toddler, three year olds, four year olds, and five year olds.

d) Describe any other key variations examined by the market rate survey or alternative methodology, such as quality level.

The survey also included the percent of providers serving CCAP children by age, provider type, and zone.

4.2.5 After conducting the market rate survey or alternative methodology, the Lead Agency must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or alternative methodology. The detailed report must also include the estimated cost of care (including any relevant variation by geographic location, category of provider, or age of child) necessary to support (1) child care providers' implementation of the health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements and (2) higher quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality indicators, at each level of quality. For States without a QRIS, the States may use other quality indicators (e.g. provider status related to accreditation, pre-K standards, Head Start performance standards, or State defined quality measures.)

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

a) Date of completion of the market rate survey or alternative methodology (must be no earlier than July 1, 2016, and no later than July 1, 2018). 06/29/2018

b) Date the report containing results was made widely available - no later than 30 days after the completion of the report. 07/23/2018

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

The MRS is posted on the LDOE webiste. The link can be found here.

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

The most feedback we received from the data in the report was on the rates especially the rates charges by provider types. We made sure this was clear in the report.

4.3 Setting Payment Rates

The Lead Agency must set CCDF subsidy payment rates, in accordance with the results of the current MRS or alternative methodology, at a level to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services that are comparable with those provided to families not receiving CCDF funds. The Lead Agency must re-evaluate its payment rates at least every 3 years.

4.3.1 Provide the base payment rates and percentiles (based on the most recent MRS) for the following categories below. Percentiles are not required if the Lead Agency conducted an alternative methodology only (with pre-approval from ACF), but must be reported if the Lead Agency conducted an MRS alone or in combination with an alternative methodology. The ages and types of care listed below are meant to provide a snapshot of the categories on which rates can be based and are not intended to be comprehensive of all categories that might exist or to reflect the terms used by the Lead Agency for particular ages. Please use the most populous geographic region (area serving highest number of CCDF children) to report base payment rates below, if they

are not statewide. Note: If the Lead Agency obtained approval to conduct an alternative methodology, then reporting of percentiles is not required.

a) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ 22.50 per day unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 9%

b) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed FCC home in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ N/A per N/A unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: N/A

c) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ 22.50 per day unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 10%

d) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ N/A per N/A unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: N/A

e) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ 21.50 per day unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: 9%

f) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ N/A per N/A unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: N/A

g) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region

Rate $ 2.68 per hour unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)

Percentile of most recent MRS: N/A

h) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
Rate $ N/A per N/A unit of time (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)

Percentile of most recent MRS: N/A

i) Describe how part-time and full-time care were defined and calculated.

Full-time care is calculated to be 20 or more hours per week that is paid in units of days or half days with an average of 22 days per month.

Part-time care is calculated to be less than 20 hours per week, paid in units of hours (total per day may not exceed daily rate) up to a maximum of 129 hours per month.

Full-time and part-time authorization may be changed depending on the need of the family. Therefore, all cases are eligible for full-time care even though the child may be in either full-time or part-time care.

j) Provide the effective date of the current payment rates (i.e., date of last update based on most recent MRS). 02/01/2016

k) Identify the most populous area of the state used to complete the responses above.

The entire state was considered.

l) Provide the citation or link, if available, to the payment rates.
http://www.doa.la.gov/osr/LAC/28v165/28v165.doc

m) If the payment rates are not set by the Lead Agency for the entire state/territory, describe how many jurisdictions set their own payment rates (98.16(i)(3)).

Not Applicable

4.3.2 Lead Agencies can choose to establish tiered rates, differential rates, or add-ons on top of their base rates as a way to increase payment rates for targeted needs (i.e., a higher rate for special needs children as both an incentive for providers to serve children

with special needs and as a way to cover the higher costs to the provider to provide care for special needs children).

Check and describe the types of tiered reimbursement or differential rates, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement. In the description of any tiered rates or add-ons, at a minimum, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates, including if the rates were based on the MRS and/or an alternative methodology, and the amount of the rate. Check all that apply.

☐ Differential rate for *non-traditional hours*.

Describe:

☑ Differential rate for *children with special needs*, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

The Lead Agency pays a differential rate for children requiring special needs care. According to BESE Bulletin 139, Special Needs Child Care is defined as the following: for the purpose of CCAP daily rates, child care for a child through age 17 who has a current individualized family services plan (IFSP) or individual education plan (IEP) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or who receives supplemental security income (SSI). In addition, this rate is further differentiated by age (infant/toddlers as under age three compared to age three and older). The rate was based on the 2015 MRS. The rate is $28.25 per day for infants/toddlers and $27.00 per day for children 3 and older.

☑ 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:

Infants and toddlers receive differential rates for both regular care and special needs care. The rate was based on the 2015 MRS. The rate for regular care is $22.50 per day and the rate for special needs care is $28.25.

☐ 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:

☑ Differential rate for higher quality, as defined by the state/territory.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program bonus payments are now tied to the performance profile via star levels as a wayto incentivize increased quality. Star levels are correlated with performance profile rating, which is Louisiana's measure of quality. As the star level increases, so do the bonus percentages. These bonuses are paid quarterly as a percentage of the payments the center is receiving for providing care.

☑ Other differential rates or tiered rates.

Describe:

Rate are differentiated based on settings as well. For example, rates vary for Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. See BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515 for rates.

☐ Tiered or differential rates are not implemented.

4.4 Summary of Facts Used To Determine That Payment Rates Are Sufficient To Ensure Equal Access

4.4.1 Lead Agencies must certify that CCDF payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible families to child care services comparable to those provided by families not receiving CCDF assistance (98.16(a)). Certify that payment rates reported in 4.3.1 are sufficient to ensure equal access by providing the following summary of facts (98.45(b)):

a) Describe how a choice of the full range of providers eligible to receive CCDF is made available; the extent to which eligible child care providers participate in the CCDF system; and any barriers to participation, including barriers related to payment rates and practices.

A variety of providers are available to families which include Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and

Military Child Care Centers. Over 80% of providers that can participate in CCAP do participate which has increased from 2007. According to the current MRS, even with the increased quality requirements for Type III centers, participation in CCAP has not been negatively affected. A barrier that has been identified is payment delay during certain holiday weeks. Due to timing in release of payments or the run of electronic payment jobs, payments are delayed. The Lead Agency has been working with the Office of Technology Support and the TOTS vendor to run payment jobs and release payments earlier in order to avoid a delay in payments during certain holiday weeks.

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.

Current payment rates are adequate as according to the 2017 MRS, the number of Type III centers serving CCAP children has risen to 82.4% from 50% in the 2007 MRS. If payment rates increase to align with the 75th percentile of the 2017 MRS, the number of children served in Louisianawill be drastically reduced as Louisiana currently has a waiting list. The Lead Agency is addressing access in order to remove families off of the waiting list.

c) Describe how base payment rates enable providers to meet health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements under CCDF.

The base payment rates to cover the cost of meeting the basic health and safety, quality and staffing requirements are supplemented through use of CCDF funds to reimburse the cost of Child Care Criminal Background Checks, issue bonus payments based on number of CCAP children served and quality rating, offer free training through CCR&Rs, CLASS observations, TS GOLD portfolios, teacher scholarships, curriculum, School Readiness Tax Credits, etc. These are provided due to provider and stakeholder feedback on the needs by the provider to cover the costs of health and safety, quality and staffing. In addition, base payment rates are sufficient as the 2017 MRS indicates that Type III centers charge less than Type I and II centers which do not have the same quality and staffing requirements. There are no quality requirements for these types and child:staff ratios are higher for Type I centers than Type II and III centers. Lastly, when including the costs of the supplemental items provided described above, the average rate is approximately $29.80 per day. This is close to the 75th percentile of $30 per day for

regular care for ages 3 and older and close to the 75th percentile of $33 for infant toddler care.

d) Describe how the Lead Agency took the cost of higher quality into account, including how payment rates for higher-quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency using a QRIS or other system of quality indicators, relate to the estimated cost of care at each level of quality. Note: For States without a QRIS, the States may use other quality indicators (e.g. provider status related to accreditation, Pre-K standards, Head Start performance standards, or State defined quality measures).

Child Care Assistance Program bonuses are now tied to the performance profile via star levels as a wayto incentivize increased quality. As the star level increases, so does the bonus percentages and resulting payments to the provider. Also, School Readiness Tax Credits provided are aligned to the performance profiles via star levels.

In addition, CCDF funds are used to supplement the rates as the Lead Agency provides funding for CCR&R training, CLASS observations, TS GOLD portfolios, teacher scholarships, curriculum, etc. , public and private pre-K allocates $4,580 per child for the school year. The maximum amount paid per CCAP child including the quality supplements described above is approximately $7,800 per calendar year. Thus cost of quality is similar annually.

e) How will the Lead Agency ensure that the family contribution/co-payment, based on a sliding-fee scale, is affordable and is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF funds (98.16 (k))? Check all that apply.

- [x] Limit the maximum co-payment per family.

  Describe: .

  The State's initial eligibility threshold copayment at eligibility remains at 1% or below the family monthly household income.

- [ ] 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

- [x] Minimize the abrupt termination of assistance before a family can afford the full cost of care ('the cliff effect') as part of the graduated phase-out of assistance discussed in 3.1.7.

The tier for graduated phase out is set at the recommended level of 85% of SMI.

☐ Other.

Describe:

f) To support parental choice and equal access to the full range of child care options, does the Lead Agency choose the option to allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment in instances where the provider's price exceeds the subsidy payment (98.45(b)(5))?

☐ No

☑ Yes. If yes:

i. Provide the rationale for the Lead Agency's policy to allow providers to charge families additional amounts above the required co-payment, including a demonstration of how the policy promotes affordability and access for families.

Rates vary across the state based on Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. Allowing providers to charge the additional amount above the required co-payment and CCAP subsidy allows families to choose the right provider for their children.

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.

The state maximum rate is $22.50 however the average a provider charges per day is $29.17 based upon the latest market rate survey. If a family choose a provider that charges above the maximum state rate they are responsible for the remainder of the payment.

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 cost of childcare over the last 14 years has steadily increased. The percent of Type III providers serving CCAP children has risen to 82.4%. Policy changes in the last few years have led to more families qualifying for CCAP. The resulting waitlist is an indication that more funds are needed to provide access to care. Current co-

payment and provider rates do not appear to be restricting access.

g) Describe how Lead Agencies' payment practices described in 4.5 support equal access to a range of providers.

The universe of child care providers (Type I, Type II, Type III, Family Child Care, In-Home Child Care, and School Child Care) were given multiple opportunities to complete the Louisiana Child Care Market Rate Survey 2017 in an online and/or paper format. The Child Care Market Rate Survey 2017 was sent to 1,829 child care providers. The overall response rate for the survey is 67.20%. The lowest response rates were from In-Home and Family Child Care Providers and School Based Providers at 56.91% and 6.98% respectively. The low response rate for School Based Providers means that these respondents will be included in overall and center based provider descriptive statistics but will not be included in type breakdowns. The overall response rate for Type III providers is 72.84%. When the response rate is broken down into Head Start and Non-Head Start providers, the response rates are 36.33% and 56.71% respectively.
MRS indicates that childcare costs have increased thus the Lead Agencies has worked closely with the Childcare association of Louisiana (CCAL) to determine the best use of additional one time funds. It was unanimous that providers preferred removing families from the wait list to immediate cost increases. Providers receive bonuses that are paid as an incentive to reward letter grades denoting high quality services, registration fees, and other incentives. Additionally, providers receive bonus payments that help to address the rise in costs and promote higher quality base payment rates. Bonuses and incentives together are a part of a payment package that helps enable providers to continually build quality and meet health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements under CCDF.

h) Describe how and on what factors the Lead Agency differentiates payment rates. Check all that apply.

☐ Geographic area.

Describe:

☑ Type of provider.

Describe:

Rates vary based on provider type:Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child

Care Centers. This is due to costs associated with the provider type such as overhead, etc.

☑ Age of child.

Describe:

Rates vary based on Infant Toddlers (under 3 years of age) compared to children 3 years and older. This is due to increased costs associated with caring and educating younger children.

☑ Quality level.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program bonuses are now tied to the performance profile via star levels as a way of rewarding providers with a higher rating. As the star level increases, so do the bonus percentages and resulting payments to providers.

☐ Other.

Describe:

i) Describe any additional facts that the Lead Agency considered in determining its payment rates to ensure equal access. Check all that apply and describe:

☐ Payment rates are set at the 75th percentile benchmark or higher of the most recent MRS.

Describe:

☐ Based on the approved alternative methodology, payments rates ensure equal access.

Describe:

☐ Feedback from parents, including parent surveys or parental complaints.

Describe:

☑ Other.

Describe:

The Lead Agency chose not to increase rates because access to child care would

be reduced as Louisiana currently has a waiting list.

4.5 Payment Practices and the Timeliness of Payments

Lead Agencies are required to demonstrate that they have established payment practices applicable to all CCDF child care providers that include ensuring the timeliness of payments by either (1) paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services or (2) paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services. To the extent practicable, the Lead Agency must also support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by (1) paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance, (2) providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time, (3) providing full payment if a child is absent for 5 or fewer days in a month, or (4) using an alternative approach for which the Lead Agency provides a justification in its Plan (658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(l)(2)).

Lead Agencies are required to use CCDF payment practices that reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers who serve children who do not receive CCDF-funded assistance. Unless a Lead Agency is able to demonstrate that the following policies are not generally accepted in its particular state, territory, or service area or among particular categories or types of providers, Lead Agencies must (1) pay providers based on established part-time or full-time rates rather than paying for hours of service or smaller increments of time and (2) pay for reasonable, mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents (658E(c)(2)(S); 98.45(l)(3)).

In addition, there are certain other generally accepted payment practices that are required. Lead Agencies are required to ensure that child care providers receive payment for any services in accordance with a payment agreement or an authorization for services, ensure that child care providers receive prompt notice of changes to a family's eligibility status that could impact payment, and establish timely appeal and resolution processes for any payment inaccuracies and disputes (98.45(l)(4) through (6); 658E(c)(2)(S)(ii); 98.45(l)(4); 98.45(l)(5); 98.45(l)(6)).

4.5.1 Certify by identifying and describing the payment practices below that the Lead Agency has implemented for all CCDF child care providers.

a) Ensure the timeliness of payments by either (Lead Agency to implement at least one of the following):

☐ Paying prospectively prior to the delivery of services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

☑ Paying within no more than 21 calendar days of the receipt of a complete invoice for services.

Describe the policy or procedure.

The Lead Agency pays within 14 days of services rendered.

b) To the extent practicable, support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences by: (Note: The Lead Agency is to choose at least one of the following):

☐ Paying based on a child's enrollment rather than attendance.

Describe the policy or procedure.

☐ Providing full payment if a child attends at least 85 percent of the authorized time.

Describe the policy or procedure.

☑ Providing full payment if a child is absent for five or fewer days in a month.

Describe the policy or procedure.

Absence paymentsare paid for 5 days per calendar month for full time child care.

☐ 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.

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).

Full-time care is calculated for 30 or more hours per week and is paid in units of days or half days with an average of 22 days per month. Part-time care is calculated at less than 30 hours per week, paid in units of hours up to a maximum of 129 hours per month.

ii. Paying for reasonable mandatory registration fees that the provider charges to private-paying parents.

Describe the policy or procedure.

The Lead Agency pays reasonable registration fees according to BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515. Which requires reasonable registration fees will be made to providers on behalf of all CCAP households. Allowable registration fees are based on the amount recorded in the provider certification agreement or the most current market rate survey and shall not exceed the state maximum.

d) The Lead Agency ensures that providers are paid in accordance with a written payment agreement or an authorization for services that includes, at a minimum, information regarding provider payment policies, including rates, schedules, any fees charged to providers, and the dispute-resolution process. Describe:

The Lead Agency has a written agreement with each CCAP provider.

The Lead Agency researches CCAP all payment inquiries. The agency provides access to providers to address conflicts and issues through the Provider Help Desk. Prior to contacting the agency the CCAP providers have the following tools to research payments:

1. TOTS Provider Portal

- Available TOTS provider reports and actual child attendance activity
- Links to provider manuals and guides are available to print and review

1. Electronic Provider Portal (CAFÉ)
2. Provider Remittance Advice
3. CCAP Provider Guide
4. Provider agreement and renewal information
5. Resource and Referral Agencies
6. Louisiana Believes Publicly Funded tab on LDOE website
7. Webinar on LDOE website explaining CCAP eligibility process

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:

Providers are sent a CCAP 12N, Provider Notice of Non-Payment, to inform providers of non-payment per CCAP for child care services they may be providing for that child.

f) The Lead Agency has a timely appeal and resolution process for payment inaccuracies and disputes. Describe:

Analyst, supervisors and other staff guide payment inquires directly to the Regional Quality Control Program Specialist or to the Provider Help Desk.

Upon receiving an issue or complaint, the program specialist addresses the issue with the provider via phone call, email, and/or letter correspondence.

If the issue cannot be resolved upon initial contact, an appointment is created with the provider and the designated program specialist to ensure the issue is properly resolved. Once all information regarding the payment issue is received, the program specialist will review the case by researching the documents and correspondence surrounding the case. Once all research has been completed and a solution has been reached, the provider will be contacted and informed of the payment decision.

g) Other. Describe:

Not Applicable

4.5.2 Do payment practices vary across regions, counties, and/or geographic areas?

- [x] No, the practices do not vary across areas.
- [ ] Yes, the practices vary across areas.

Describe:

4.6 Supply-Building Strategies to Meet the Needs of Certain Populations

Lead Agencies are required to develop and implement strategies to increase the supply of and to improve the quality of child care services for children in underserved areas; infants and toddlers; children with disabilities, as defined by the Lead Agency; and children who receive care during non-traditional hours (658 E(c)(2)(M); 98.16 (x)).

4.6.1 Lead Agencies must identify shortages in the supply of high-quality child care providers. List the data sources used to identify shortages, and describe the method of tracking progress to support equal access and parental choice.

- [ ] In licensed family child care.
- [ ] In licensed child care centers.
- [x] Other.

The state continually reviews family demand for child care and the number of child care providers. In addition, through the oversight of the Community Network coordinated enrollment systems, the CCDF Lead Agency continually gathers information about family demand and unmet need. The state tracks any shortages or under service by comparing the estimated amount of at-risk children at each level to the number of children served in publicly-funded seats, and reflects that information on the network performance profiles published on www.louisianaschools.com.

Similarly for children in underserved areas, the CCDF Lead Agency continually gathers information about family demand and unmet need at all ages - which includes infants and toddlers. The state tracks any shortages or under serviced by comparing the estimated amount of at-risk children at each level to the number of children in publicly-funded seats, and reflects that information on the network performance profiles published on www.louisianaschools.com.

Children with disabilities are tracked through their IEP or IFSP, and the CCDF Lead Agency is undergoing analysis of service rates of children with disabilities at each age level birth through five to compare to the service rates once children enter Kindergarten and first grades, to better understand identification and service gaps by community. The CCDF Lead Agency also provides supports to Community Networks to include engagement and recruitment efforts as part of their coordinated enrollment processes, particularly by incorporating Early Steps, ChildFind, and local SPED coordinators into the information campaign events and registration activities to ensure families have access to resources at the time of considering a seat for their child.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

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

☐ Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

☐ Family child care networks.

Describe:

☐ Start-up funding.

Describe:

☑ Technical assistance support.

Describe:

Local lead agencies, through their coordinated enrollment efforts, assess the need

in their respective areas across the state. They provide technical assistance and support to increase supply where needed and increase quality.

☐ Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

☑ Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2).

Describe:

Rate are differentiated based on settings. For example, rates vary for Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. See BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515 for rates.

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

Describe:

☐ Accreditation supports.

Describe:

☐ Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

☑ Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program bonuses are tied to the performance profile via star levels as a wayto incentivize increased quality. As the star level increases, so does the bonus percentages. Additionally, centers with higher star ratings are able to qualify for increased School Readiness Tax Credits, both for family tax credits and for provider tax credits.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

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

- [ ] Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

  Describe:

- [ ] Family child care networks.

  Describe:

- [ ] Start-up funding.

  Describe:

- [x] Technical assistance support.

  Describe:

  Local lead agencies, through their coordinated enrollment efforts, assess the need in their respective areas across the state. They provide technical assistance and support to increase supply where needed and increase quality.

- [ ] Recruitment of providers.

  Describe:

- [x] Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2) .

  Describe:

  Rate are differentiated based on settings. For example, rates vary for Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. See BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515 for rates.

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

  Describe:

☐ Accreditation supports.

Describe:

☐ Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

☑ Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program bonuses are now tied to the performance profile via star levels as a wayto incentivize increased quality. As the star level increases, so does the bonus percentages. Additionally, centers with higher star ratings are able to qualify for increased School Readiness Tax Credits, both for family tax credits and for provider tax credits.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

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

☐ Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

☐ Family child care networks.

Describe:

☐ Start-up funding.

Describe:

☑ Technical assistance support.

Describe:

Local lead agencies, through their coordinated enrollment efforts, assess the need

in their respective areas across the state. They provide technical assistance and support to increase supply where needed and increase quality.

☐ Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

☑ Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2).

Describe:

Rate are differentiated based on settings. For example, rates vary for Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. See BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515 for rates. In addition, rates are set higher for children with disabilities.

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

Describe:

☐ Accreditation supports.

Describe:

☐ Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

☑ Other.

Describe:

Child Care Assistance Program bonuses are now tied to the performance profile via star levels as a wayto incentivize increased quality. As the star level increases, so does the bonus percentages. Additionally, centers with higher star ratings are able to qualify for increased School Readiness Tax Credits, both for family tax credits and for provider tax credits.

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

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

- [ ] Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

  Describe:

- [ ] Family child care networks.

  Describe:

- [ ] Start-up funding.

  Describe:

- [x] Technical assistance support.

  Describe:

  Local lead agencies, through their coordinated enrollment efforts, assess the need in their respective areas across the state. They provide technical assistance and support to increase supply where needed and increase quality.

- [ ] Recruitment of providers.

  Describe:

- [x] Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2) .

  Describe:

  Rate are differentiated based on settings. For example, rates vary for Type III Early Learning Centers, School Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Provider, In-Home Provider and Military Child Care Centers. See BESE Bulletin 139 Section 515 for rates.

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

  Describe:

☐ Accreditation supports.

Describe:

☐ Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Other.

Describe:

4.6.2 Describe what method(s) is used to increase supply and to improve quality for the following.

e) Other. Check and describe all that apply:

☐ Grants and contracts (as discussed in 4.1.3).

Describe:

☐ Family child care networks.

Describe:

☐ Start-up funding.

Describe:

☐ Technical assistance support.

Describe:

☐ Recruitment of providers.

Describe:

☐ Tiered payment rates (as discussed in 4.3.2).

Describe:

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

Describe:

☐ Accreditation supports.

Describe:

☐ Child Care Health Consultation.

Describe:

☐ Mental Health Consultation.

Describe:

☑ Other.

Describe:

Not applicable

4.6.3 Lead Agencies must prioritize investments for increasing access to high-quality child care and development services for children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and do not currently have sufficient numbers of such programs.

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

Louisiana ranks 48th among states in child poverty according to the census bureau. Therefore, all areas of Louisiana are considered high poverty. Every community in Louisiana performs a count of all publicly-funded children attending early childhood programs ages 0-5, organized by funding source, twice annually. These counts support community planning for funding and seats to serve thehighest need families. These counts also help the state and communities calculate the access gaps within every

community at every age, birth through five. Communities use these counts of publicly-funded children to plan for coordinated enrollment processes across all publicly-funded early childhood programs. Coordinated enrollment requires communities to reach and recruit families for publicly-funded seats, with a focus on the highest need families. Communities submit plans for how they will recruit and enroll these families, including families of children with special needs, homeless families, and families requiring language assistance. These counts and plans also inform the state's analysis of access gaps across communities, and support state-level planning for addressing access gaps statewide.

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

Louisiana ranks 48th among states in child poverty according to the census bureau. Therefore, all areas of Louisiana are considered high poverty. The CCDF Lead Agency has increased child care assistance rates to providers (centers) statewide and drastically reduced copays. These actions support providing assistance to those families in areas of greatest need. Every community in Louisiana performs a count of all publicly-funded children attending early childhood programs ages 0-5, organized by funding source, twice annually. These counts support community planning for funding and seats to serve the highest need families. Communities use these counts of publicly-funded children to plan for coordinated enrollment processes across all publicly-funded early childhood programs. Coordinated enrollment requires communities to reach and recruit families for publicly-funded seats, with a focus on the highest need families. Communities submit plans for how they will recruit and enroll these families, including families of children with special needs, homeless families, and families requiring language assistance. These counts and plans also inform the state's analysis of access gaps across communities, and support state-level planning for addressing access gaps statewide.

5 Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes To Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings

Lead Agencies are required to certify that there are in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services in the state/territory, which supports the health and safety of all children in child care. States and territories may allow licensing exemptions. Lead Agencies must describe how such licensing exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of CCDF children in license-exempt care (98.16 (u)).

Lead Agencies also must certify that there are in effect health and safety standards and training requirements applicable to providers serving CCDF children, whether they are licensed or license-exempt. These health and safety requirements must be appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served, must include specific topics and training on those topics, and are subject to monitoring and enforcement procedures.

The organization of this section begins with a description of the licensing system for providers of child care in a state or territory and then moves to focus in on CCDF providers who may be licensed, exempt from licensing, or relative providers. The section then covers the health and safety requirements and training, and monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that CCDF child care providers comply with licensing and health and safety requirements (98.16(n)). Lead Agencies are also asked to describe any exemptions for relative providers (98.16(l)). This section also addresses group size limits; child-staff ratios; and required qualifications for caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.16(m)) serving CCDF children.

Note: When responding to questions in this section, the OCC recognizes that each State/Territory identifies and defines its own categories of care. The OCC does not expect States/Territories to change their definitions to fit the CCDF-defined categories of care. For these questions, provide responses that closely match the CCDF categories of care.

Criminal background check requirements are included in this section (98.16(o)). It is important to note that these requirements are in effect for all child care staff members that are licensed, regulated or registered under state/territory law and all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services.

5.1 Licensing Requirements

Each state/territory must certify it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services provided within the state/territory (not restricted to providers receiving CCDF funds) and provide a detailed description of these requirements and how the requirements are effectively enforced (658E(c)(2)(F)). If any types of providers are exempt from licensing requirements, the state/territory must describe those exemptions and describe how these exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, or development of children. The descriptions must also include any exemptions based on provider category, type, or setting; length of day; and providers not subject to licensing because the number of children served falls below a Lead Agency-defined threshold and any other exemption to licensing requirements (658E(c)(2)(F); 98.16(u); 98.40(a)(2)(iv)).

5.1.1 To certify, describe the licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the state/territory by identifying the providers in your state/territory that are subject to licensing using the CCDF categories listed below? Check all that apply and provide a citation to the licensing rule.

☑ Center-based child care.

Describe and Provide the citation:

See BESE Bulletin 137 Section 301- Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations.

☐ Family child care.

Describe and Provide the citation:

☐ In-home care (care in the child's own home).

Describe and provide the citation (if applicable):

5.1.2 Describe if any providers are exempted from licensing requirements and how such exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children (658E (c)(2)(F); 98.40(a)(2)).

Note: Additional information about exemptions related to CCDF providers is required in 5.1.3.

CCAP providers such as schools are subject to numerous health and safety regulations found in BESE Bulletin 119 - Louisiana School Transportation Specification and Procedures, BESE Bulletin 135 - Health and Safety and BESE Bulletin 741 - Handbook for School Administrators. In addition, school facilities are inspected twice annually and school kitchens are inspected four times annually by the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health. Schools are also inspected annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal. Family child care and in-home providers receiving CCAP are inspected annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal (La. R.S. 17:407.64). Additionally, BESE Bulletin 139 - Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Program sets forth health and safety requirements for providers applying for registration and certification for CCAP.

Family child care providers are covered by the Louisiana "Family Child Care Provider and In-Home Child Care Provider Registration Law", which requires all family child care and in-home child care providers that receive public funds to be registered. (La. R.S. 17:407.63). Each family child care and in-home provider must be inspected and approved annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal. (La. R.S.17:407.64) Additionally, BESE Bulletin 139 - Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Program, sets forth safety and health requirements for providers applying for registration and certification of eligibility for CCAP.

In-home providers are covered by the Louisiana "Family Child Care Provider and In-Home Child Care Provider Registration Law", which requires all family child care and in-home child care providers that receive public funds to be registered. (La. R.S. 17:407.63). Each family child care and in-home provider must be inspected and approved annually by the Office of State Fire Marshal. (La. R.S.17:407.64) Additionally, BESE Bulletin 139 - Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Program, sets forth safety and health requirements for providers applying for registration and certification of eligibility for CCAP.

5.1.3 Check and describe any CCDF providers in your state/territory who are exempt from licensing (98.40(2)(i) through (iv))? Describe exemptions based on length of day, threshold on the number of children in care, ages of children in care or any other factors applicable to the exemption

☑ Center-based child care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

The following are exempt from licensure: a public or non-public day school serving children in grades kindergarten and above, including any pre-kindergarten attached thereto, except as provided in §301.B and C; camps and all care given without charge; and a center operated by a recognized religious organization that is qualified as a tax-exempt organization under §501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code and that does not operate more than 24 hours in a continuous 7-day week.

☑ Family child care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

Family child care providers are covered by the Louisiana "Family Child Care Provider and In-Home Child Care Provider Registration Law", which requires all family child care and in-home child care providers that receive public funds to be registered. (La. R.S. 17:407.63). The providers must meet health and safety requirements including training, criminal background checks and inspections.

☑ In-home care.

If checked, describe the exemptions.

In-home providersare covered by the Louisiana "Family Child Care Provider and In-Home Child Care Provider Registration Law", which requires all family child care and in-home child care providers that receive public funds to be registered. (La. R.S. 17:407.63). These providers must meet the same health and safety requirements as family child care providers including training, criminal background checks and inspections.

5.2 Health and Safety Standards and Requirements for CCDF Providers

5.2.1 Standards on ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for CCDF providers.

Lead Agencies are required to establish child care standards for providers receiving CCDF funds, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, that address appropriate ratios

between the number of children and number of providers in terms of the age of the children, group size limits for specific age populations, and the required qualifications for providers (658E(c)(2)(H); 98.41(d); 98.16(m)). For ease of responding, this section is organized by CCDF categories of care, licensing status, and age categories. Respondents should map their Lead Agency categories of care to the CCDF categories.

a) Licensed CCDF center-based care

1. Infant

-- How does the State/territory define infant (age range):

0-12 months

-- Ratio:

Type I ratio is 6:1

Type II and Type III centers ratio is 5:1

-- Group size:

Type I group size is 18:1

Type II and Type III group size is 15:1

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Staff shall be age 18 or older. A person age 17 may be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member. In Type I centers only, a person age 16 may be included in the child-to-staff ratios if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

2. Toddler

-- How does the State/territory define toddler (age range):

1-2 years old

-- Ratio:

One year old - Type I ratio is8:1; Type II and Type III ratio's are 7:1

Two years old- Type I ratio is 12:1; Type II and Type III ratio's are 11:1

-- Group size:

One year old -Type I ratio is24; Type II and Type III ratio's are 21

Two years old -Type I ratio is 24; Type II and Type III ratio's are 22

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Staff shall be age 18 or older. A person age 17 may be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member. In Type I centers only, a person age 16 may be included in the child-to-staff ratios if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

3. Preschool

-- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range):

3-4 years old

-- Ratio:

Three year olds - Type I ratio is14:1; Type II and Type III ratio's are 13:1

Four year olds- Type I ratio is 16:1; Type II and Type III ratio's are 15:1

-- Group size:

Three year olds -Type Igroup size is 28; Type II and Type III group size is 26

Four year olds - Type I group size is 32; Type II and Type III group size is 30

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Staff shall be age 18 or older. A person age 17 may be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member. In Type I centers only, a person age 16 may be included in the child-to-staff ratios if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

4. School-age

-- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range):

5years and up

-- Ratio:

Type I ratio is 20:1; Type II and Type IIIratio's are 19:1; Six years and up - Type I ratio is 25:1; Type II and Type III ratio's are 23

-- Group size:

Five year olds - Type I ratio is 40; Type II and Type III ratio's are 38;
Six years and up -Type Iratio is 50; Type II and Type III ratio's are 46

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Staff shall be age 18 or older. A person age 17 may be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.3. In Type I centers only, a person age 16 may be included in the child-to-staff ratios if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt child care centers, describe which requirements apply to exempt centers

Family home and in-home providers can have a maximum of 6 children of any age.

6. Describe, if applicable, ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for classrooms with mixed age groups.

Family home and in-home providers can have a maximum of 6 chldren of any age.

7. Describe the director qualifications for licensed CCDF center-based care, including any variations based on the ages of children in care.

The director/director designee shall be at least 21 years of age. The director/director designee shall have documentation of at least one of the following upon date of hire as director or director designee:

1. a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least 12 credit hours of child development or early childhood education or elementary education or a related field, and one year of experience in a licensed early learning center or comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division.
2. an associate of arts degree in child development or a closely related area, and one year of experience in a licensed early learning center, or comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division.
3. a national administrator credential and one year experience in a licensed early

learning center, or comparable setting, plus 6 credit hours in child care, child development or early childhood or 90 clock hours of training in child care, child development or early childhood, subject to approval by the Licensing Division.
4. a child development associate credential (CDA) and one year of experience in a licensed early learning center, or comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division;
5. a diploma from a post-secondary technical early childhood education training program approved by the Board of Regents or correspondence course approved by the Licensing Division and one year of experience in a licensed early learning center, or comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division; or
6. three years of experience as a director or staff in a licensed early learning center, or comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division; plus 6 credit hours in child care, child development or early childhood education, or 90 clock hours of training approved by the Licensing Division. Up to 3 credit hours or 45 clock hours may be in management/administration education.

b) Licensed CCDF family child care provider

1. Infant

-- How does the State/territory define infant (age range):

Louisiana does not license family child care providers

-- Ratio:

Not Applicable

-- Group size:

Not Applicable

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Not Applicable

2. Toddler

-- How does the State/territory define toddler (age range):

Not Applicable

-- Ratio:

Not Applicable

-- Group size:

Not Applicable

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Not Applicable

3. Preschool

-- How does the State/territory define preschool (age range):

Not Applicable

-- Ratio:

Not Applicable

-- Group size:

Not Applicable

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Not Applicable

4. School-age

-- How does the State/territory define school-age (age range):

Not Applicable

-- Ratio:

Not Applicable

-- Group size:

Not Applicable

-- Teacher/caregiver qualifications:

Not Applicable

5. If any of the responses above are different for exempt family child care homes, please describe which requirements apply to exempt homes

Exempt family homes are allowed to become certified in Louisiana. To become certified they must be at least 18 years old and care for no more than six children who are under age 13 or children with special needs who are under age 18.

c) In-home CCDF providers:

1. Describe the ratios

An In-home CCDF provider can provide child care services for any number of children that resides in that home and are related to the provider.

2. Describe the group size

Not Applicable

3. Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time.

Not Applicable

4. Describe if the state/territory requires related children to be included in the child-to-provider ratio or group size

All children in the home are included in the child-to-provider ratio for in-home providers.

5. Describe any limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day

Not Applicable

5.2 Health and Safety Standards and Requirements for CCDF Providers

5.2.2 Health and safety standards for CCDF providers.

States and territories must establish health and safety standards for programs (e.g., child care centers, family child care homes, etc.) serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to the topics listed below, as appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served (98.41(a)). This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving CCDF funds regardless of licensing status (i.e., licensed or license-exempt). The only exception to this requirement is for providers who are caring for their own relatives because Lead Agencies have the option of exempting relatives from some or all CCDF health and safety requirements (98.42(c)).

a) To certify, describe how the following health and safety standards for programs serving children receiving CCDF assistance are defined and established on the required topics (98.16(l)). Note: This question is different from the health and safety training requirements, which are addressed in question 5.2.3.

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)

   -- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

   All CCDF providers are required to have a pre-service orientation training within 7 calendar days of hire and assuming sole responsibility for any children in health and safety and are required to complete annual training in this same topic. All CCDF providers are required to make immediate notification to Licensing and other appropriate agencies including Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) for reportable infectious diseases listed in LAC 51.II.105.Providers are required to complete training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually as well.

   -- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt programs

   BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1103.A.3 and Bulletin 139 Section 309.14

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

For licensed-exempt, immediate notification shall be made to LDOE Provider Help Desk and LDH for reportable infectious diseases. Providers must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually per BESE Bulletin 139 . Section 309.10

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider they are not exempt.

2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers are required within 7 calendar days of hire, to ensure staffreceive safe sleep training. All CCDF providers are required within 30 calendar days of hire, staff shall receive shaken baby prevention in their orientation.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309. 10.A.b.(iii)

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

For licensed center, within 7 calendar days of hire, staff shall receive safe sleep training and within 30 calendar days of hire, staff shall receive shaken baby prevention in their orientation. For family-home and in-home providers, this training is done as part of their pre-service orientation and annual training.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers who have staff members administering medication are required to have medication administration training. Whether administering medication or not, at least two staff members are required to have training in medication administration. This training has be completed every two years with an approved child care health consultant. No medication can be administered to a child unless authorized in writing by the parent to include: name of child; drug name and strength; date(s) to be administered; directions for use, including the route (oral, topical), dosage, frequency, time and schedule and special instructions, if any. It is not acceptable to note "as indicated on bottle"; and signature of parent and date of signature. All medication shall be sent to the center must be in its original container, shall not have an expired date, and be clearly labeled with the name of the child. For prescription medication to be administered at the center, the center shall maintain the original pharmacy container with the complete pharmacy label. For non-prescription medication to be administered, the center shall maintain the original bottle packing for the medicine or a printed document from the manufacturer's website, which shall include the drug name and strength and clear directions for use.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137Section 1721 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.10.c

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

License-exempt providers, must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually per BESE Bulletin 139. Medication administration training is completed with a qualified health and safety professional, a child care health consultant approved by LDH to provide training, consultation, and technical assistance to child care providers on health and

safety topics every two years.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

4. Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers' child records shall include any special dietary needs, restrictions on food allergies or intolerances. Information regarding food allergies and special diets shall be posted in the food preparation areas. If the parent chooses to allow the center to post the child's name and allergy information, a signed and dated written authorization must be obtained. Parents of all children in a class with a child with allergies shall be advised to avoid known allergies when bringing treats or food into centers. Centers shall make immediate notification to emergency personnel when a serious illness requires medication attention or any other significant event relating to the safety or well-being of any child.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1515 and Section 1919. For License-exempt providers see BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.10

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Licensed-exempt providers must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually per BESE Bulletin 139. Licensed-exempt providers shall make immediate notification to emergency personnel when a serious illness requires medical attention or any other significant event relating to the safety or well-being of any child.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider they are not exempt for a FCC and In-home.

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury, such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers' Indoor and outdoor space shall be used exclusively by children in care and center staff during hours of operation. Exceptions are allowed only for schools or churches regarding the shared use of kitchens, dining rooms, restrooms and outdoor space. If a center is located in a school or church, the center shall have time designated for exclusive use of the outdoor play area. All CCDF providers, except one located in a church or school, shall be physically separated from any other facility, dwelling, business, or enterprise, thereby preventing unauthorized access to children in care. Indoor and outdoor areas shall be free of hazards.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137Section 1901 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.15, A.16

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

License-exempt providers shall adhere to the following regarding hazardous materials: keep items that can be harmful to children, such as medications, poisons, cleaning supplies and chemicals, and equipment, tools, knives and other potentially dangerous utensils in a secure place that is inaccessible to children.

Regarding building and physical premises, providers shall adhere to the following: identify and protect children from safety hazards in the residence and on the premises, such as uncovered electrical outlets, strings and cords, bodies of water, and vehicular

traffic .

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt for FCC and In-Home.

6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers are required to receive orientation training within 30 calendars of date of hire in child development, health and safety, and shaken baby prevention. CCDF providers are also required to receive ongoing training annually in these areas. CCDF providers are required to make immediate notification to the parent if there is any injury to a child that occurs neck or above. If an allegation of shaken baby, any head trauma, or child maltreatment, CCDF providers are required to make immediate notification to emergency personnel, law enforcement, Child Welfare and Licensing as applicable.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 §1103. Critical Incidents and Required Notifications (Licensed Providers) and Bulletin 139 Section 309. 10.V

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

License-exempt providers, must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt for FCC and In-Home.

7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1)). Emergency preparedness and response planning (at the child care provider level) must also include procedures for evacuation; relocation; shelter-in-place and lockdown; staff and volunteer training and practice drills; communications and reunification with families; continuity of operations; and accommodations for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

The provider shall consult with appropriate state and local authorities and shall establish and follow a written multi-hazard emergency and evacuation plan to protect children in the event of emergencies related to the area in which the center is located.It must include procedures for sheltering in place, lockdown and evacuation to a pre-determined site for potential threats to the safety, health and well-being of children in care, include specific procedures for handling infants through two year olds, include specific procedures for handling children with special needs, including the evacuation and transportation of children in wheelchairs; include a system to account for all children; include a system, and a back-up system, for contacting parents and authorized third party release caretakers; include a system to reunite children and parents following an emergency; include procedures for providing information about the emergency plan to parents at the time of enrollment and when changes occur; be reviewed annually for accuracy and updated as changes occur; and be reviewed with all staff at least once per year; practice drills shall be conducted at least twice per year to include all children and shall be documented. The center shall have an evacuation pack, the location of which is known to all staff, that at a minimum shall contain: a list of area emergency phone numbers; a list of emergency contact information and emergency medical authorization for all enrolled children; an emergency pick up form; first aid supplies, hand sanitizer, wet wipes, and tissue; diapers for children who are not toilet trained and plastic bags for diapers; a battery powered flashlight and radio and batteries; food for children under the age of 4, including infant food and formula;

and disposable cups and bottled water.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Bulletin 137 §1921: Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Planning and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.17.a

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Per BESE Bulletin 139, License-exempt providers shall adhere to the following in regards to an Emergency Preparedness Disaster Plan. Providers shall develop, practice, train on, and follow a written emergency preparedness disaster plan that includes at a minimum:

- procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions;
- procedures for all adults living in, or working in the residence where care is provided, or working on the property where care is provided; and
- emergency phone numbers, such as fire and police, hospitals and Louisiana Poison Control, and the physical address and phone number for the residence in which care is provided posted in a prominent, easily visible location

As part of certification, providers must complete and submit an emergency preparedness checklist.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCCDF providers shall keep in a locked cabinet or other secure place items that can be harmful to children, such as medications, poisons, cleaning supplies and chemicals, and equipment, tools, knives and other potentially dangerous utensils, that ensures they are inaccessible to children.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1901 and Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.15

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Per BESE Bulletin 139 License-exempt providers shall adhere to the following regarding hazardous materials: keep items that can be harmful to children, such as medications, poisons, cleaning supplies and chemicals, and equipment, tools, knives and other potentially dangerous utensils in a secure place that is inaccessible to children. Providers must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If a relative is a provider they are not exempt.

9. Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All CCDF providers responsible for transporting children shall receive additional orientation training in the following areas prior to assuming their transportation duties: transportation regulations, including the modeling of how to properly conduct a vehicle passenger check and demonstration by staff to director on how to conduct a vehicle passenger check; proper use of child safety restraints required by state law; proper loading, unloading, and tracking of children as required by state law; location of first aid supplies and emergency procedures for the vehicle, including actions to be taken

in the event of accidents or breakdowns.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 21. Minimum Transportation Requirements and Standards and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.12.

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

According to Bulletin 139, transportation is provided, the provider shall use child safety restraints required by law, take precautions necessary to ensure the safety of children being transported, and develop emergency procedures and actions to be taken in the event of an accident or breakdown.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is not a provider, they are not exempt.

10. Pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

CPR shall be received withinthirty calendar days of date of hire during orientation as applicable. Fifty percent of staff members on the premises of a center and accessible to children, or at least four staff on the premises and accessible to children, whichever is less, shall have current certification in adult, infant, and child CPR.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Bulletin 137 Section 1723 and Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.8,A.9

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Per BESE Bulletin 139, License-exempt providers shall provide documentation of current certification in infant, child and adult CPR and pediatric first aid as part of their application for certification.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

-- Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

An early learning center shall establish in writing and implement a child abuse and neglect policy. All staff and owners shall report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline (855) 4LA-KIDS [(855) 452-5437]. There shall not be a delay in reporting of suspected abuse or neglect to the Child Protection Statewide Hotline in order to conduct an internal investigation to verify the abuse or neglect allegations and staff shall not be required to report suspected abuse or neglect to the center or management prior to reporting it to the Child Protection Statewide Hotline. Within seven calendar days of date of hire and prior to assuming sole responsibility for any children, each staff member shall receive orientation regarding child abuse identification and reporting.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1103 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.10.a

-- Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Per BESE Bulletin 139, License-exempt providers shall comply with all mandatory reporting requirements for suspected cases of child abuse or neglect by reporting any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline (855) 4LA-KIDS [(855) 452-5437] or the LDE Provider Help Desk. LDE

Provider Certification has also developed internal procedures for responding to notices of alleged abuse, neglect and critical incidents for license-exempt providers.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care

Not Applicable

-- Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

b) Does the Lead Agency include any of the following optional standards?

☐ No, if no, skip to 5.2.3.

☑ Yes, if yes provide the information related to the optional standards addressed.

1. Nutrition

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

All meals and snacks provided by the center, and their preparation, service and storage, shall meet the requirements for meals of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and 7 CFR 226.20 and the Louisiana Sanitary Code, Title 51, Part XXIII, found at LAC 51:XXXIII.

A minimum of a breakfast or morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack shall be served to children, and meals and snacks shall be served not more than three hours apart. Centers who do not serve breakfast shall have nutritious food available for children who arrive in the morning without having eaten breakfast.

Information regarding food allergies and special diets of children shall be posted in the food preparation area with special care taken to ensure that individual names of children are not in public view.

Children shall be allowed a reasonable time to eat each meal and snack. Children shall not be forced to finish all their food.

Food shall be given to children on individual plates, napkins, paper towels or in cups, as appropriate.

Drinking water shall be readily available indoors and outdoors to children at all times.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1919 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.10.a

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

According to BESE Bulletin 139, pre-service orientation training shall consist of a four-hour training that includes at a minimum, information on record keeping, recognizing signs of child abuse, child abuse prevention and mandatory reporting of suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, communicating with parents, age appropriate activities for young children, child development, child safety and nutritional needs of children.

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

Water shall be given to infants only with written instructions from parents or a physician.

Parents shall be allowed to provide breast milk.

Infants that cannot hold a bottle shall be held while being bottle-fed.

Children under age four shall not have foods that are implicated in choking incidents.

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

2. Access to physical activity

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

There shall be in writing established and implemented procedures for physical activity.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1511 and BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.10.a

-Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Not Applicable

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

Children under age two shall be provided time and space for age appropriate physical activity for a minimum of 60 minutes per day.

Children age two and older shall be provided a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day that includes a combination of both teacher led and free play.

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

3. Caring for children with special needs

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

When the nature of a child with special health care needs or the number of children with special health care needs warrants added care, the center shall add sufficient staff as necessary. Emergency and evacuation plan shall include specific procedures for handling children with special needs, including the evacuation and transportation of children in wheelchairs. An individualized emergency plan shall be in place for each child with special needs and shall include medical contact information and additional supplies and equipment as needed.

For providers serving CCAP Children:

- Pursuant to Title III the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), child care centers, regardless of size or number of employees, including home-based centers:

1. must provide children and caregivers with disabilities with an equal opportunity to participate in the child care center's programs and services;
2. cannot exclude children with disabilities from their programs unless their presence would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others or require a fundamental alteration of the program;
3. have to make reasonable modifications to their policies and practices to integrate children, caregivers, and guardians with disabilities into their programs unless doing so would constitute a fundamental alteration;

4. must provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication with children or adults with disabilities, when doing so would not constitute an undue burden; and
5. must generally make their facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Existing facilities are subject to the readily achievable standard for barrier removal, while newly constructed facilities and any altered portions of existing facilities must be fully accessible.

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section1515, BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.A.10.a and CCAP Provider Agreement

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Licensed-exempt providers shall make immediate notification to emergency personnel when a serious illness requires medication attention or any other significant event relating to the safety or well-being of any child. Providers must complete a Pre-Service Orientation and then required training in this topic as part of their 12 clock hours of training annually per BESE Bulletin 139 Section 309.10.B.(iv)

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

Not Applicable

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

If the relative is a provider, they are not exempt.

4. 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

--Provide a brief summary of how this standard is defined (i.e., what is the standard, content covered, practices required, etc.)

Not Applicable

-- List all citations for these requirements, including those for licensed and license-exempt providers

Not Applicable

--Describe any variations by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

Not Applicable

-- Describe any variations based on the age of the children in care.

Not Applicable

--Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3 Health and safety training for CCDF providers on required topics.

Lead Agencies are required to have minimum pre-service or orientation training requirements (to be completed within 3 months), as appropriate to the provider setting and the age of children served, that address the health and safety topics described in 5.2.2, and child development. Lead Agencies must also have ongoing training requirements on the health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors of children receiving CCDF funds (658E(c)(2)(I)(i); 98.44(b)(1)(iii)). The state/territory must describe its requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing training. These trainings should be part of a broader systematic approach and progression of professional development (as described in section 6) within a state/territory. Lead Agencies have flexibility in determining the number of training hours to require, but they may consult with Caring for our Children Basics for best practices and the recommended time needed to address these training requirements.

Pre-Service or Orientation Training Requirements

a) Provide the minimum number of pre-service or orientation training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following:

1. Licensed child care centers:

4 hours

2. Licensed FCC homes:

Not Applicable

3. In-home care:

4 hours

4. Variations for exempt provider settings:

For certified family homeproviders, in-home providers, and schools - 4 hours

b) Provide the length of time that providers have to complete trainings subsequent to being hired (must be 3 months or fewer)

For licensed centers, some topics must be completed by the first 7 days and the remainder must be completed by the first 30 days; for family home and in-home providers, the training must be completed prior to certification.

c) Explain any differences in pre-service or orientation training requirements based on the ages of the children served

Not Applicable

d) Describe how the training is offered, including any variations in delivery (e.g. across standards, in rural areas, etc.) Note: There is no federal requirement on how a training must be delivered

Licensing has offered Providers training through the use of the online Licensing regulations classes and quarterly director's training. When a licensing visit is conducted, training may be administered through this visit if a deficiency is noted by a Licensing Specialist informing the Provider on how to correct the problem. Providers may also receive training from an assigned Licensing Consultant on specific regulations through phone consultations and one on one state office meetings.

e) Identify below the pre-service or orientation training requirements for each topic (98.41(a)(1)(i through xi)).

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.A.3;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.b.i;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.b.i;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.1

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719A.4;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.b.iii;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.b.iii

School Providers: 313.C.2

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719A.3;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.c;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.c;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.3

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers BESE Bulletin 127, Section 1719.A.3;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 309.A.10.b.iv;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 138, Section 311.A.9.b.iv;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.4

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719A.3;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139 Section, 309.10;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 310.9;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.5

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.B.5;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.b.v;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.b.v;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.6

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.A.2;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.10;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 310.9;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.7

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.E;

Family Homes: Bulletin 139, Section 309.10;

In-Home Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 310.9;

School Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.8

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before

caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: Bulletin 137, Section 1719.C;

Family Homes: Bulletin 139, Section 309.10;

In-Home Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 310.9;

School Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.9

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.B.6;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.8,9;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.7,8;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.10

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.A.1;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.a;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.a;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 741, Section 1135

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.B.1;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.A.10.a;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.A.9.a;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 741, Chapter 23

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

☑ Yes

☐ No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

5.2.3e 13.

Describe other training requirements, such as nutrition, physical activities, caring for children with special needs, etc..

Continuing education for all types of centers shall be conducted by trainers approved by the Licensing Division. The Licensing Division shall keep a registry of approved trainers. Continuing education hours include the areas of: child development, child guidance, learning activities, and child development and/or early childhoood.

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

BESE Bulletin 137 Section 1721 D.

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No

Does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed before caregivers, teachers, and directors in license-exempt CCDF programs are allowed to care for children unsupervised?

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No

Describe if relatives are exempt from this requirement

Not Applicable

Ongoing Training Requirements

5.2.4 Provide the minimum number of annual training hours on health and safety topics for caregivers, teachers, and directors required for the following.

a) Licensed child care centers:

12 hours

b) Licensed FCC homes:

Not Applicable

c) In-home care:

12 hours

d) Variations for exempt provider settings:

Certified Family and In-home providers - 12 hours

5.2.5 Describe the ongoing health and safety training for CCDF providers by category of care (i.e., center, FCC, in-home) and licensing status (i.e., licensed, license-exempt).

1. Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations)

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1725.D.5,

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers - CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by

caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

2. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe-sleep practices

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1725.D.5;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers - CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

3. Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1725.G;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers - CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

4. Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D5;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers - CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

5. Building and physical premises safety, including the identification of and protection from hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletitn 137, Section 1721.D.5;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 310.10;

School Providers: CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

6. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D.8;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers: CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

7. Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1921.A.9;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 310.10;

School Providers: CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

8. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1719.E;

Family Homes: Bulletin 139, Section 309.10;

In-Home Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 310.9;

School Providers: Bulletin 139, Section 313.C.8

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

9. Appropriate precautions in transporting children (if applicable)

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D.5;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers: CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

10. Pediatric first aid and CPR certification

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D.9-10;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.8,9;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.7,8;

School Providers: CCAP Provider Agreement

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

11. Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect

-- Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D.3;

Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11;

In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10;

School Providers: BESE Bulletin 741, Section 1135

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways). _

-- How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

12. Child development (98.44(b)(1)(iii))

Provide the citation for this training requirement, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Licensed Centers: BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D.1; Family Homes: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 309.11; In-Home Providers: BESE Bulletin 139, Section 311.10; School Providers: BESE Bulletin 741, Chapter 23

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

☐ Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by

caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

13. Describe other requirements such as nutrition, physical activities, caring for children with special needs, etc..

Continuing education for all types of centers shall be conducted by trainers approved by the Licensing Division. The Licensing Division shall keep a registry of approved trainers. Continuing education hoursinclude areas of child development, child guidance, learning activities, and college credit hours in child care, child development and or early childhood.

Provide the citation for other training requirements, including citations for both licensed and license-exempt providers

Child guidance and learning activities - BESE Bulletin 137, Section 1721.D2,6

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually
- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

How often does the state/territory require that this training topic be completed by caregivers, teachers, and directors in licensed-exempt CCDF programs?

- [ ] Annually

☑ Other

Describe:

Providers are allowed to choose training from a list of topics related to health and safety and train according to the providers needs. The trainers are approved via state tracked registry (Pathways).

5.3 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices for CCDF Providers

5.3.1 Enforcement of licensing and health and safety requirements

Lead agencies must certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF services comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements, including those described in 98.41 (98.42(a)). This may include, but is not limited to, any systems used to ensure that providers complete health and safety trainings, any documentation required to be maintained by child care providers or any other monitoring procedures to ensure compliance. Note: Inspection requirements are described starting in 5.3.2.

To certify, describe the procedures to ensure that CCDF providers comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements

All licensed centers and CCAP providers receive an annual inspection to ensure providers comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements. Some licensed centers and CCAP providers may receive an additional visit, compliance, to ensure compliance with the requirements.

5.3.2 Inspections for licensed CCDF providers.

Lead agencies must require licensing inspectors to perform inspections-with no fewer than one pre-licensure inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards-of each child care provider and facility in the state/territory. Licensing inspectors are required to perform no fewer than one annual, unannounced inspection of each licensed CCDF provider for compliance with all child care licensing standards; it shall include an inspection for compliance with health and

safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards; inspectors may inspect for compliance with all three standards - health, safety, and fire - at the same time (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(II); 98.16 (n); 98.42(b)(2)(i)). Certify by responding to the questions below to describe your state/territory's monitoring and enforcement procedures to ensure that licensed child care providers comply with licensing standards, including compliance with health and safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41) and fire standards.

a) Licensed CCDF center-based child care

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed child care center providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

Prior to a center being licensed, an application, fee, and required documentation must be received in the office. The provider should schedule inspections to be completed by the Office of State Fire Marshal and Department of Health. Once received, a provider may be contacted by a Licensing Specialist to schedule a date for an initial full compliance inspection of their center. The provider must be in complete compliance with meeting all of Bulletin 137- Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations requirements, prior to the issuance of a license. If a provider receives a deficiency during the initial inspection, a Licensing Specialist will schedule another date for a follow-up inspection to ensure the provider is in compliance with the minimum standards.

2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF child care center providers

Each licensed center is required to have annual inspection completed. The annual inspection month is the month the license is first issued. The Licensing Specialist may complete the annual inspection three months in advance but no later than the last day of the month in which the license expires.

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

☐ Once a year

☑ More than once a year

Describe:

Once a center is licensed, all inspections there after are unannounced. A licensed center may receive at least one unannounced additional inspection, compliance

visit, each year. A licensed center may have additional unannounced visits due to the frequency of complaints and critical incidents received.

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that child care center providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

When a Licensing Specialist monitors a licensed center, depending on the type of inspection being conducted that Specialist will observe certain regulations but is still looking overall for compliance with health and safety regulations in Bulletin 137-Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations to ensure centers are in compliance. When completing a complaint inspection the following specific regulations must be observed: 1507: Children's daily attendance log; 18: CCCBC, 1711-Child to staff ratio, 1723-CPR, 1713-Supervision, 2107-Visual check of vehicle, 1723- PFA, and 1903-Hazards. When completing an incident inspection the following specific regulations must be observed: 1103- Critical incident and required notification, 1503-General liability insurance policy, 1507: Children's daily attendance log; 18: CCCBC, 1711-Child to staff ratio, 1723-CPR, 1713- Supervision, 2107-Visual check of vehicle, 1723- PFA, and 1903-Hazards. When completing a compliance inspection the following specific regulations must be observed: 1103- Critical incident and required notification 1507-Children's daily attendance log, 1509- Behavior management policy, 1711-Child to staff ratio, 1723-CPR, 1723- PFA, 1713-Supervision, 18-CCCBC, 1901-Items that Can Be Harmful to Children, 1901- End of Day Check, 1901- Equipment, 1901- Staff Belongings, 1919-Food Service and Nutrition-Menu, 1903-Hazards, 2107-Visual check of vehicle, and 1723- PFA.

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF center providers

BESE Bulletin 137, Section 315.A-D

b) Licensed CCDF family child care home

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed family child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

Louisiana does not License Family child care home providers

2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF family child care providers

Not Applicable

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ More than once a year

Describe:

Not Applicable

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that CCDF family child care providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

Not Applicable

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed CCDF family child care providers

Not Applicable

c) Licensed in-home CCDF child care

☑ N/A. In-home CCDF child care (care in the child's own home) is not licensed in the State/Territory. Skip to 5.3.2 (d).

1. Describe your state/territory's requirements for *pre-licensure inspections* of licensed in-home child care providers for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards

2. Describe your state/territory's requirements for annual, unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF in-home child providers

3. Identify the frequency of unannounced inspections:

- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ More than once a year

Describe:

4. Describe the monitoring procedures (including differential monitoring, if applicable) and how the inspections ensure that in-home CCDF child care providers comply with the applicable licensing standards, including health, safety, and fire standards.

5. List the citation(s) for your state/territory's policies regarding inspections for licensed in-home CCDF providers

d) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting pre-licensure inspections and unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers

Prior to a center being licensed, an application, fee, and required documentation must be received in the office. Pre-licensure inspections that are required are FireMarshall and Louisiana Department of Public Health Sanitation inspections. Once received, a provider may be contacted by a Licensing Specialist from the LDOE Division of Licensing to schedule a date for an initial inspection of their center. The provider must be in compliance with meeting ALL of Bulletin 137- Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations requirements, prior to being issued a license. A licensed center may receive at least one unannounced additional inspection, compliance visit, each year from the LDOE Division of Licensing. A licensed center may have additional unannounced visits due to the frequency of complaints and critical incidents received.

5.3.3 Inspections for license-exempt CCDF providers

Lead Agencies must have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) to perform an annual monitoring visit of each license-exempt CCDF provider for compliance with health, safety (including, but not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41), and fire standards (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(IV); 98.42(b)(2)(ii)). Lead Agencies have the option to exempt relative providers (as described in section (658P(6)(B)) from this requirement. To certify, respond to the questions below to describe the policies and practices for the annual monitoring of:

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

There are no license-exempt centers in Louisiana.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

Not Applicable

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

License-exempt FCC are monitored twice annually, one announced and one unannounced. BESE Bulletin 139 and the provider agreement include all requirements including health and safety and fire requirements. Family child care providers receiving CCAP payments or certified to receive CCAP payments and are inspected no less than annually by licensing staff or other authorized inspection personnel. Additional follow-up visits may be conducted as needed.

The policy and practice for annual monitoring includes health/safety and fire requirements in accordance with BESE Bulletin 139, Sections 309.A.15-18:

15. Hazardous Materials. Keep items that can be harmful to children, such as medications, poisons, cleaning supplies and chemicals, and equipment, tools, knives and other potentially dangerous utensils in a secure place that is inaccessible to children.

16. Building and Physical Premises. Identify and protect children from safety hazards in the residence and on the premises, such as uncovered electrical outlets, strings and cords, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic.

17. Emergency Preparedness Disaster Plan. Develop, practice and train on, and follow, a written emergency preparedness disaster plan that includes at a minimum:

a. procedures for evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, lock-down, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions;

b. procedures for all adults living in, or working in the residence where care is provided, or working on the property where care is provided; and

c. appropriate emergency phone numbers, such as fire and police, hospitals and Louisiana Poison Control, and the physical address and phone number for the residence in which care is provided posted in a prominent, easily visible location.

18. First Aid Supplies. Maintain first aid supplies in the residence.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

BESE Bulletin 139, Sections 309.A.19, 309.B

c) License-exempt in-home CCDF providers, including if monitoring is announced or unannounced, occurs more frequently than once per year, if relative care is exempt from monitoring, and if differential monitoring is used

In-home child care providers receiving CCAP payments or certified to receive CCAP payments are inspected no less than annually by LDOE staff or other authorized inspection personnel. Providers will receive one announced and may receive one unannounced inspection visit per year. Additional follow-up visits may be conducted as needed.

Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

BESE Bulletin 139, Sections 311.A.18, 311.B

d) Lead Agencies have the option to develop alternate monitoring requirements for care provided in the child's home (98.42(b)(2)(iv)(B)). Does your state use alternate monitoring procedures for monitoring in-home care?

- [x] No
- [ ] Yes. If yes,

decsibe:

e) List the entity(ies) in your state/territory that are responsible for conducting inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers

Louisiana Division of Licensing is responsible for conducting inspections for license-exempt providers.

5.3.4 Licensing inspectors.

Lead Agencies will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) are qualified to

inspect child care providers and facilities and have received health and safety training appropriate to the provider setting and age of the children served. Training shall include, but is not limited to, those requirements described in 98.41(a)(1) and all aspects of the State's licensure requirements (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(I); 98.42(b)(1-2)).

a) To certify, describe how the Lead Agency ensures that licensing inspectors (or qualified monitors designated by the Lead Agency) are qualified to inspect child care facilities and providers and that those inspectors have received training on health and safety requirements that are appropriate to the age of the children in care and the type of provider setting (98.42(b)(1-2)).

The minimum requirement for a licensing inspector is a baccalaureate degree plus two years of professional level experience in hospital, nursing, home, or day care center administration; public health; social services; family life education; early childhood development regulatory experience; administrative services; or teaching at the elementary or secondary level. Licensing specialists are trained on BESE Bulletins 137 and 139 and then followed a seasoned program specialist for approximately 3 months. The Program Manager and Supervisor assesses the new Licensing Specialist weekly. After approximately 3 months, the new Licensing Specialist is given their own caseload.

b) Provide the citation(s) for this policy or procedure

See Civil Service requirements here.

5.3.5 The states and territories shall have policies and practices that require the ratio of licensing inspectors to child care providers and facilities in the state/territory to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the state/territory to conduct effective inspections of child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with federal, state, and local laws (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(III); 98.42(b)(3)).

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.

There are1,724 providers and 34 Licensing Specialists positions; therefore, the ratio of providers: licensing specialist is 51:1. Caseloads and monitoring visits are are monitored by the Program Manager for completeness and timeliness. This ratio allows for high

priority monitoring visits as well as annual inspections; therefore, it is felt to be sufficient.

b) Provide the policy citation and state/territory ratio of licensing inspectors

Licensing Internal policy; ratio of provider to licensing specialist is 60:1.

5.3.6 States and territories have the option to exempt relatives (defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles (98.42(c)) from inspection requirements. Note: This exception only applies if the individual cares only for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from the inspection requirements listed in 5.3.3?

☐ Yes, relatives are exempt from all inspection requirements.

If the state/territory exempts relatives from all inspection requirements, describe how the state ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

☐ Yes, relatives are exempt from some inspection requirements.

If the state/territory exempts relatives from the inspection requirements, describe which inspection requirements do not apply to relative providers (including which relatives may be exempt) and how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care.

☑ No, relatives are not exempt from inspection requirements.

5.4 Criminal Background Checks

The CCDBG Act requires states and territories to have in effect requirements, policies and procedures to conduct criminal background checks for all child care staff members (including prospective staff members) of all child care programs that are 1) licensed, regulated, or registered under state/territory law; or, 2) all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers) (98.43(a)(1)(i)). Background check requirements apply to any staff member who is employed by a child care provider for compensation, including contract employees and self-employed individuals; whose activities involve the care or supervision of children; or who has unsupervised access to children (98.43(2)). For FCC homes, this requirement includes the caregiver and any other adults residing in the family child care home who are age 18 or older (98.43(2)(ii)(C)). This requirement does not apply to individuals who are related to all children for whom child care services are provided

(98.43(2)(B)(ii)).

A criminal background check must include 8 specific components (98.43(2)(b)), which encompass 3 in-state checks, 2 national checks, and 3 inter-state checks

Components	In-State	National	Inter-State
1. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency	x		
2. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency	x		
3. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency	x		
4. FBI fingerprint check		x	
5. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)		x	
6. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional			x
7. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years			x
8. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years			x

In recognition of the significant challenges to implementing the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) background check require+J514ments, all States applied for and received extensions through September 30, 2018. The Office of Child Care (OCC)/Administration for Children and Families (ACF)/U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is committed to granting additional waivers of up to 2 years, in one year increments (i.e., potentially through September 30, 2020) if significant milestones for background check requirements are met.

In order to receive these time-limited waivers, states and territories will demonstrate that the milestones are met by responding to questions 5.4.1 through 5.4.4 and then apply for the time-limited waiver by completing the questions in Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form. By September 30, 2018, states and territories must have requirements, policies and procedures for four specific background check components, and must be conducting those checks for all new (prospective) child care staff, in accordance with 98.43 and 98.16(o):

--The national FBI fingerprint check; and,	
--The three in-state background check provisions for the current state of residency:	
	--state criminal registry or repository using fingerprints;
	--state sex offender registry or repository check;
	--state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database.

All four components are required in order for the milestone to be considered met.

Components	New (Prospective) Staff	Existing Staff
1. Criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
2. Sex offender registry or repository check in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
3. Child abuse and neglect registry and database check in the current state of residency	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
4. FBI fingerprint check	Milestone/Prerequisite for Waiver	Possible Time Limited Waiver for current (existing) staff
5. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	
6. Criminal registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years, with the use of fingerprints being optional	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	
7. Sex offender registry or repository in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	
8. Child abuse and neglect registry and database in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years	Possible Time Limited Waiver for: --Establishing requirements and procedures and/or --Conducting checks on all new (prospective) staff and/or --Conducting checks on current (existing) staff	

Use the questions below to describe the status of the requirements, policies and procedures for background check requirements. These descriptions must provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the milestone prerequisites are being met and the status of the other components that are not part of the milestone. Lead Agencies have the opportunity to submit a waiver request in Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form, for components not included in the milestones. Approval of these waiver requests will be subject to verification that the milestone components have been met as part of the CCDF Plan review and approval process.

In-state Background Check Requirements

5.4.1 In-State Criminal Registry or Repository Checks with Fingerprints Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(i)).

Note: A search of a general public facing judicial website does not satisfy this requirement. This check is required in addition to the national FBI criminal history check (5.4.4 below) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources.

a) Milestone #1 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints required in the state where the staff member resides.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

All licensed centers and CCAP in-home, family home and school providers must have a fingerprint-based Louisiana criminal history check. The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310 requires all new hires, as of March 1, 2018, to meet this requirement and all existing hires to meet this requirement prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the State's online system and are fingerprinted at designated fingerprint locations. The State previously required licensed centers and CCAP family home, in-home and school providers to have a fingerprint-based search of the Louisiana criminal repository only.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. All CCAP in-home, family home must have a fingerprint-based Louisiana criminal history check. The state law and BESE Bulletin 139 §310 requires all new hires to meet this requirement after March 1, 2018 and all existing hires to meet this requirement prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S.

407.71).

b) Has the search of the in-state criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints, been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The Lead Agency has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which instructs providers to send their staff to an approved fingerprint location. As of August 2018, over 20,000 individuals have submitted fingerprints for check against the state criminal registry. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff applying for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state criminal registry or repository, using fingerprints for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.2 In-State Sex Offender Registry Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(B)(ii)).

Note: This check must be completed in addition to the national NCIC sex offender registry

check (5.4.5 below) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources. Use of fingerprints is optional to conduct this check.

a) Milestone #2 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state sex offender registry.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, as of March 1, 2018, of licensed centers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and B 139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of the Louisiana Sex Offender and Child Predator Registry. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online system and the Lead Agency automatically searches the registry when the application is submitted.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESE Bulletin 139 §310 requires all new hires of CCAP in-homes, family homes, and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of the Louisiana Sex Offender and Child Predator Registry. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online system and the Lead Agency automatically searches the registry when the application is submitted.

b) Has the search of the in-state sex offender registry been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures. The Lead Agency has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which includes a check of the Louisiana Sex Offender and Child Predator Registry. As of August 2018, over 20,000 staff have been searched against the state sex offender registry. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff applying for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state criminal registry or repository, using fingerprints for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.3 In-State Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Requirements (98.43(b)(3)(B)(iii)).

Note: This is a name-based search.

a) Milestone #3 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff: Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the in-state child abuse and neglect registry.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, as of March 1, 2018, of licensed centers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and Bulletin 139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a request to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to search of the Louisiana Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online system and the Lead Agency automatically sends a request to DCFS to search the registry when the application is submitted. DCFS began conducting searches for child care purposes on July 1, 2018. These searches include those that applied for a CCCBC prior to July 1, 2018.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESE Bulletin 139 §310 requires all new hires of licensed centers and CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a request to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to search of the Louisiana Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.71).

b) Has the search of the in-state child abuse and neglect registry been conducted for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures. The State has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which includes a request to DCFS to search the Louisiana Child Abuse & Neglect Registry. DCFS began conducting searches for child care purposes on July 1, 2018. These searches include those that applied for a CCCBC prior to July 1, 2018. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 .

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the search of the state child abuse and neglect registry for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

National Background Check Requirements

5.4.4 National FBI Criminal Fingerprint Search Requirements (98.43(b)(1)).

Note: The in-state (5.4.1 above) and the inter-state (5.4.6 below) criminal history check must be completed in addition to the FBI fingerprint check because there could be state crimes that do not appear in the national repository. Also note, that an FBI fingerprint check satisfies the requirement to perform an interstate check of another State's criminal history records repository if the responding state (where the child care staff member has resided within the past five years) participates in the National Fingerprint File program (CCDF-ACF-PIQ-2017-01).

a) Milestone #4 Prerequisite for New (Prospective) Child Care Staff. Describe the requirements, policies and procedures for the search of the National FBI fingerprint check.

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, licensed centers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and Bulletin 139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a fingerprint-based search of the FBI's criminal repository using Next Generation Identification. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online system and the Lead Agency automatically sends the demographic information to the fingerprint vendor. The applicants are fingerprinted at designated fingerprint locations. The fingerprint is used to check both the state and FBI criminal repository.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESE Bulletin 139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a fingerprint-based search of the FBI's criminal repository using Next Generation Identification. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.71).

b) For all current (existing) child care staff, has the FBI criminal fingerprint check been conducted?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The Lead Agency has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which includes a check of the FBI criminal repository. As of August 2018, over 20,000 individuals have submitted fingerprints for an FBI check using Next General Identification. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff applying for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the FBI fingerprint check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

National Background Check Requirements

5.4.5 National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) Search Requirements (98.43(b)(2)).

Note: This is a name-based search. Searching general public facing sex offender registries does not satisfy this requirement. This national check must be required in addition to the in-state (5.4.2 above) or inter-state (5.4.7 below) sex offender registry check requirements. This check must be performed by law enforcement.

a) Has the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff

☑ Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The State has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which includes a check of the NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry. As of August 2018, over 20,000 staff have been searched against NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff applying for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018. The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers andlicensed-exempt CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of the NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply

through the Lead Agency's online system and the Lead Agency, through the Louisiana Bureau, automatically sends the demographic information to the NCIC for a search of the National Sex Offender Registry. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers and CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of the NCIC's National Sex Offender Registry.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) for new (prospective) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The Lead Agency is on track to fulfill this requirement by September 30, 2018.Existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, must apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online

system and the Lead Agency, through the Louisiana Bureau, automatically sends the demographic information to the NCIC for a search of the National Sex Offender Registry. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

Inter-state Background Check Requirements

Checking a potential employee's history in any state other than that in which the provider's services are provided qualifies as an inter-state check, per the definition of required criminal background checks in 98.43(b)(3). For example, an inter-state check would include situations when child care staff members work in one state and live in another state. The statute and regulations require background checks in the state where the staff member resides and each state where the staff member resided during the previous 5 years. Background checks in the state where the staff member is employed may be advisable, but are not strictly required.

5.4.6 Interstate Criminal Registry or Repository Check Requirement (including in any other state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years). (98.43 (b)(3)(i)).

Note: It is optional to use a fingerprint to conduct this check. Searching a general public facing judicial website does not satisfy this requirement. This check must be completed in addition to the national FBI history check (5.4.4 above) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the

two sources (unless the responding state participates in the National Fingerprint File program).

a) Has the interstate criminal registry or repository check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

☑ Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers, in-homes, and family homes to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and Bulletin 139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). When a person resided in another state within the previous 5 years, the Lead Agency requests a search of the other State's criminal repository.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESE Bulletin139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers and CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of the criminal reposity where a person resided in the previous 5 years.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the the interstate criminal registry or repository check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other

programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate criminal registry or repository check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 per BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310 (See also La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The CCCBC includes a search of another state's criminal registry or repository if the applicant has lived in that state within the last 5 years. The Lead Agency has begun checking new and existing hires as of March 1, 2018 and will continue to do so in accordance with the background requirements. The key challenge to conduct the criminal registry or repository check in a timely manner is that it is a manual process to check each state's registry. The Lead Agency was able to automate its state criminal repository.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate criminal registry or repository check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.7 Interstate Sex Offender Registry or Repository Check Requirements (including in any state where the individual has resided in the past 5 years). (98.43 (b)(3)(ii)).

Note: It is optional to use a fingerprint to conduct this check. This check must be completed in addition to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) (5.4.5 above) to mitigate any gaps that may exist between the two sources.

a) Has the interstate sex offender registry or repository check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

☑ Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers and CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and Bulletin 139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). The CCCBC includes a search of another state's sex offender registry if the applicant has lived in that state within the last 5 years.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESEBulletin 139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of CCAP in-home, family home and school providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC).

The CCCBC includes a search of another state's sex offender registry if the applicant has lived in that state within the last 5 years.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate sex offender registry or repository check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate sex offender registry or repository check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The CCCBC includes a search of another state's sex offender registry if the applicant has lived in that state within the last 5 years.All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 per BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310; La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71. The Lead Agency has begun checking new and existing hires as of March 1, 2018 and will continue to do so in accordance with the background requirements. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate sex offender registry or repository check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible

providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

5.4.8 Interstate Child Abuse and Neglect Check Registry Requirements (98.43 (b)(3)(iii)).

Note: This is a name-based search.

a) Has the interstate child abuse and neglect check been put in place for all new (prospective) child care staff?

☑ Yes. If yes,

i. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all licensed, regulated, or registered child care providers, in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

The state law and BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers, in-homes, and family homes to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). There are no other licensed programs besides centers. There are programs that are regulated by the Lead Agency and these are the license-exempt CCDF eligible in-homes and family homes. The state law and BESE Bulletin139 §310 requires all license-exempt CCDF eligible providers, which consist of CCAP in-home and family home providers to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). When a person resided in another state within the previous 5 years, the Lead Agency requests a search of the other State's Child Abuse & Neglect Registry.

ii. Describe how these requirements, policies and procedures apply to all other providers eligible to deliver CCDF services (e.g., license-exempt CCDF eligible providers), in accordance with 98.43(a)(1)(i) and 98.16(o). Describe and provide citations

License-exempt CCDF eligible providers are CCAP in-homes and family homes. These providers are regulated by the Lead Agency. The state law and BESE

Bulletin139 §310 requires all new hires, after March 1, 2018, of licensed centers, in-homes, and family homes to apply for a Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). When a person resided in another state within the previous 5 years, the Lead Agency requests a search of the other State's Child Abuse & Neglect Registry.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate child abuse and neglect check for new (prospective) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

b) Has the interstate child abuse and neglect check been put in place for all current (existing) child care staff?

☑ Yes

Describe, if applicable, any differences in the process for existing staff than what was described for new staff and provide citations.

The Lead Agency has fulfilled this requirement prior to September 30, 2018. The Lead Agency has made the necessary changes in state law and policy. The child care providers have started applying for the CCCBC, which includes a request to check of the other state Child Abuse & Neglect Registry if a person has lived in that state within the previous 5 years. The Lead Agency will continuously reach out to providers through email, newsletters, and website updates in order to have all new and existing staff applying for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018. (See BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and B 139 §310; La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71).While this requirement is largely dependent on the progress and cooperation of other states, some states do not timely respond and do not have a turnaround time within the 45 day timeframe. Still, the Lead Agency reaches out to the States and is continuously working on a streamlined framework to accomplish these out-of-state checks. All existing hires, as of March 1, 2018, need to apply for a CCCBC prior to September 30, 2018 (*See also*

La. R.S. 17:407.42 and 407.71). The providers apply through the Lead Agency's online system and the system automatically adds the additional state to the necessary checks. Any provider that is not in compliance by September 30, 2018 risks a deficiency or other Lead Agency corrective measures.

☐ No. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Describe the status of conducting the interstate child abuse and neglect check for current (existing) child care staff including:

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in licensed, regulated or registered programs

-- Efforts to date to complete the requirement for all existing child care staff in other programs eligible to receive CCDF services (e.g. license-exempt CCDF eligible providers)

-- Key challenges to fully implementing this requirements

-- Strategies used to address these challenges

Describe:

Provisional Employment

The CCDF final rule states a child care provider must submit a request to the appropriate state/territory agency for a criminal background check for each child care staff member, including prospective staff members, prior to the date an individual becomes a child care staff member and at least once every 5 years thereafter (98.43(d)(1) and (2). A prospective child care staff member may not begin work until one of the following results have been returned as satisfactory: either the FBI fingerprint check or the search of the state/territory criminal registry or repository using fingerprints in the state/territory where the staff member resides. The child care staff member must be supervised at all times pending completion of all the background check components (98.43(d)(4)).

Note: In recognition of the concerns and feedback OCC received related to the provisional hire provision of the CCDF final rule, OCC will allow states and territories to request time-limited waiver extensions for the provisional hire provision. State/territories may submit a waiver request to allow additional time to meet the requirements related to provisional hires (see Appendix A). A state/territory may receive a waiver from this requirement only when:

1. the state requires the provider to submit the background check requests before the staff person begins working; and
2. the staff member, pending the results of the elements of the background check, is

supervised at all times by an individual who has completed the background check.

5.4.9 Describe the state/territory requirements related to prospective child care staff members using the checkboxes below. (Waiver request allowed. See Appendix A). Check all that apply.

☑ The state/territory allows prospective staff members to begin work on a provisional basis (if supervised at all times) after completing and receiving satisfactory results on either the FBI fingerprint check or a fingerprint check of the state/territory criminal registry or repository in the state where the child care staff member resides.

Describe and include a citation:

If the Lead Agency receives a clear result from a fingerprint-based FBI or state criminal repository check then it may grant a person provisional status. Provisional status is only an option for licensed centers, not in-homes or family homes. BESE Bulletin 137 Chapter 18 and La. R.S. 17:407.42.

☐ The state/territory allows prospective staff members to begin work on a provisional basis (if supervised at all times) after the request has been submitted, but before receiving satisfactory results on either the FBI fingerprint check or a fingerprint check of the state/territory criminal registry or repository in the state where the child care staff member resides. Note: A waiver request is allowed for this provision (see Appendix A).

Describe and include a citation:

☐ Other.

Describe:

5.4.10 The state/territory must conduct the background checks as quickly as possible and shall not exceed 45 days after the child care provider submitted the request. The state/territory shall provide the results of the background check in a statement that indicates whether the staff member is eligible or ineligible, without revealing specific disqualifying information. If the staff member is ineligible, the state/territory will provide information about each disqualifying crime to the staff member.

Describe the requirements, policies, and procedures in place to respond as expeditiously as possible to other states', territories', and tribes' requests for background check results to accommodate the 45-day timeframe, including any agencies/entities responsible for responding to requests from other states (98.43(a)(1)(iii)).

In order to expedite the process for interstate checks, the Lead Agency is allowing other Lead Agencies to work directly with the Louisiana agencies that process each check. The Lead Agency has provided instructions to other states on the Lead Agencies website and provided the contact information to the Office of Child Care for their contact list. The Lead Agency has worked with the other state agencies and out of state applicants to communicate the necessity and importance of the 45 day turnaround time.

The Louisiana State Police (LSP) fingerprint checks depend on how quickly the person completes his/her fingerprint. Per LSP they are typically processed within 30 days from receipt. The Louisiana State Police uses a customized request form for CCDF requests. These forms are available on the Lead Agency's website.

The Louisiana Sex Offender Registry is a public website and results can be given instantly.

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) maintains Louisiana State Central Registry of Child Abuse & Neglect. The searches can be done through DCFS's online website service (CANS). DCFS states that they strive to return results within 10 days; which is well-under the 45 day timeframe. More about DCFS's process is available on their website .

5.4.11 Child care staff members cannot be employed by a child care provider receiving CCDF subsidy funds if they refuse a background check, make materially false statements in connection with the background check, or are registered or required to be registered on the state or National Sex Offender Registry. Potential staff members also cannot be employed by a provider receiving CCDF funds if they have been convicted of: a felony consisting of murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crimes involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, or - subject to an individual review (at the state/territory's option)- a drug-related

offense committed during the preceding 5 years; a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes - child abuse, child endangerment, or sexual assault; or a misdemeanor involving child pornography (98.43(c)(1)).

Note: The Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. It may release aggregated data by crime as long as the data do not include personally identifiable information (98.43(e)(2)(iii)).

Does the state/territory disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for other crimes not specifically listed in 98.43(c)(i)?

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes.

Describe other disqualifying crimes and provide citation:

There are certiain crimes of fraud and forgery that would prohibit a person from being an owner, director, or director designee of a child care center. (See BESE Bulletin 137 §1805(D).

5.4.12 The state/territory has a process for a child care staff member to appeal the the results of his or her background check to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the criminal background report, as detailed in 98.43(e)(3).

Describe how the Lead Agency ensures the privacy of background checks and provides opportunities for applicants to appeal the results of background checks. In addition, describe whether the state/territory has a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment (98.43(e)(2-4)).

The Lead Agency has a process for appealing based on accuracy or completeness of the CCCBC results. The disqualifying offenses are listed in the ineligibility notice that is mailed directly to the individual along with information on how to appeal. The appeal policy is described in BESE Bulletin 137 §1821. There currently is not a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense.

5.4.13 The state/territory may not charge fees that exceed the actual costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check (98.43(f)).

Describe how the state/territory ensures that fees charged for completing the background checks do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration, regardless of whether they are conducted by the state/territory or a third-party vendor or contractor. Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable (98.43(f)).

The Lead Agency conducted a cost analysis of the administrative cost to create and administer the CCCBCs. The actual cost to the Lead Agency is above the fee being charged to the providers. The third-party vendor being used for fingerprinting is charging a fee that is comparable to what partner agencies charge for a similar service.

5.4.14 Federal requirements do not address background check requirements for relative providers who receive CCDF; therefore, states have the flexibility to decide which background check requirements relative providers must meet, as defined by CCDF in 98.2 under eligible child care provider.

Note: This exception only applies if the individual cares only for relative children. Does the state/territory exempt relatives from background checks?

- [x] No, relatives are not exempt from background check requirements.
- [ ] Yes, relatives are exempt from all background check requirements.
- [ ] Yes, relatives are exempt from some background check requirements. If the state/territory exempts relatives from some background check requirements, describe which background check requirements do not apply to relative providers.

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

This section covers the state or territory framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education (98.44(a)); provides a description of strategies used to strengthen the business practices of child care providers (98.16(z)); and addresses early learning and developmental guidelines.

States and territories are required to describe their framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education for caregivers, teachers, and directors, including those working in school-age care (98.44(a)). This framework is part of a broader systematic approach building on health and safety training (as described in section 5) within a state/territory. States and territories must incorporate their knowledge and application of health and safety standards, early learning guidelines, responses to challenging behavior, and the engagement of families. States and territories are required to establish a progression of professional development opportunities to improve the knowledge and skills of CCDF providers (658E(c)(2)(G)). To the extent practicable, professional development should be appropriate to work with a population of children of different ages, English-language learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans (98.44(b)(2)(iv)). Training and professional development is one of the options that states and territories have for investing their CCDF quality funds (658G(b)(1)).

6.1 Professional Development Framework

6.1.1 Each state or territory must describe their professional development framework for training, professional development, and post-secondary education for caregivers, teachers and directors, which is developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care or similar coordinating body. The framework should include these components: (1) professional standards and competencies, (2) career pathways, (3) advisory structures, (4) articulation, (5) workforce information, and (6) financing (98.44(a)(3)). Flexibility is provided on the strategies, breadth, and depth with which states and territories will develop and implement their framework.

a) Describe how the state/territory's framework for training and professional development

addresses the following required elements:

-- State/territory professional standards and competencies. Describe:

Louisiana has developed a set of teacher competencies which span grades birth-12, and include a specific set of competencies for early childhood teachers (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teaching/teacher-preparation-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=4). These competencies are part of teacher preparation policy, and are used to drive the design of teacher preparation programs and early childhood preparation programs. As a minimum standard, beginning in July 2018, child care teachers that are earning their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate through the completion of a CDA or technical diploma will be required to attend a state board approved teacher preparation program. These state-approved teacher preparation programs, called Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs. These Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate programs are carefully reviewed by the state board to ensure alignment between teacher competencies, the Early Learning and Development Standards, and the key skills and strategies required to lead successful adult-child interactions to support child learning. Additionally, the LDOE has set a Professional Development Vendor Guide (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/pd-vendor-guide.pdf?sfvrsn=42). This guide features vendors of professional development birth-grade 12 (including a focus on early childhood) that have been carefully review to support the key focus areas for the Louisiana Department of Education. Early Childhood programs are encouraged to select professional development from the Professional Development Vendor Guide.

-- Career pathways. Describe:

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers working in Type III child care centers will be required to have the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate. The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is the teaching credential required for all lead teachers in publicly funded centers by July 2019, and can be earned by successfully completing the foundational coursework for the statewide curriculum. Courses offered for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be offered by approved higher education institutions or by private providers. As of July 2018, approximately 4,800 individuals have earned the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/early-childhood-ancillary-teaching-certificate-faq.pdf?sfvrsn=2). The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is the first credential earned Louisiana's Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway (

http://www.regents.la.gov/page/birth-to-kindergarten-pathway) that begins with an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate and ends with a Birth to Kindergarten teaching license. State workgroups are working together to develop a statewide curriculum that identifies a clear path for early childhood professionals to expand their knowledge, skills, and credentials as they work with young children in early childhood centers. Through a series of stackable degrees and coursework, early childhood teachers that attend participating teacher preparation programs that offer the statewide curriculum will have the opportunity to build their credentials over time. The statewide curriculum includes nine Birth to Kindergarten content knowledge courses (30 credit hours).

The first three courses for the statewide curriculum prepares teacher candidates to earn their Child Development Associate (CDA), as awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition. Candidates are then able to complete additional coursework and earn a technical diploma, an associate degree, or a bachelor's degree within the voluntary statewide curriculum. Each of the degrees within the voluntary statewide curriculum is aligned to meet the requirement for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate

Beginning in July 2018, child care teachers that are earning their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate through the completion of a CDA or technical diploma will be required to attend a state board approved teacher preparation program. These state-approved teacher preparation programs, called Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs (http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/early-childhood-ancillary-certificate-programs-(bese-approved).pdf?sfvrsn=2) , have been rigorously reviewed to ensure teachers are receiving a preparation experience that embeds high-quality practice, coaching, and performance-based assessments are included within the required 120 hours of coursework. As of January 2018, there were 14 Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs statewide.

In 2018, the Louisiana Department of Education will select a contractor to develop a Statewide Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. This contractor will be charged with the challenge of creating high quality online coursework that is reinforced by on-the-ground experiences, including coaching, mentoring, and performance-based assessments, within every parish of the state by 2020. This will ensure that teachers within the most remote parishes have access to high-quality, transferable training. Additionally, Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs are required to align their coursework to the CLASS observation tool, and prepare teachers to use high-quality Tier I curriculum, providing teachers the skills they need to succeed immediately within their classroom.

The credentials within the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway align with the levels that qualify teachers to enroll in Louisiana Pathways Career Development System. The Louisiana Pathways Career Development System enrolls both child care and family child care teachers and documents their professional educational background and experience based on the degrees and professional credentials they have earned.

Louisiana Pathways Career ladders are designed for administrators, child care center classroom teachers, and family child care providers who provide care in their own home. The career ladder for childcare teachers is aligned with that of the degrees awarded in the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway. Enrolled participants may be eligible for School Readiness Tax Credits based on their level in the career ladder.

Beginning in 2018, teachers that qualify for School Readiness Tax Credits will be able to earn an increased tax credit amount based on earning the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate. Additionally, teachers will be able to earn increased tax credit levels by demonstrating that they have been in the child care field for multiple years, rewarding those teachers who have demonstrated a multi-year commitment to the field.

Louisiana is in the process of developing an Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will launch in 2019. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will be a 12 month program for directors of Type III centers. This Fellowship has been developed based on research across the state of Louisiana, including extensive interviews of current directors, professional development providers, and lead agencies of early childhood community networks.

This executive-level academy will provide directors with the content, applied practice, and collaboration opportunities to support their work as instructional leaders in their programs and communities. Selected child care directors will participate in monthly learning sessions, job-embedded coaching, and a community of practice with peers. Individualized support for an area of overall program quality will support the prioritization of instructional leadership. The Department will seek an external vendor through a competitive RFP process beginning in the summer of 2018. A pilot cohort will launch in the spring of 2019, with a gradual scaling to a statewide program by spring of 2021. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will provide additional career training opportunities for directors in the state of Louisiana.

-- Advisory structure. Describe:

There are two advisory structures that have provided input into the development, revisions and implementation of Louisiana's professional development system.

The Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups are voluntary cross-agency committees, which has been led by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups have collectively created and supported the development of all coursework and degree structures for the Birth to Kindergarten statewide curriculum that will be voluntarily implemented by interested institutions. The voluntary statewide curriculum includes a collection of postsecondary coursework which builds on a series of professional degrees, earned over time as candidate's progress in the statewide coursework. Initial coursework will be offered by higher education institutions as well as private providers. Candidates will need to meet specific requirements for college credit to be awarded for coursework offered by private providers.

The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council reviews all early childhood policy proposals prior to review by Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council reviewed the policy proposal, which established the Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate and the Birth to Kindergarten Teaching Certificate (Bulletin 746), and receives quarterly and annual updates on the workforce and the development of state-board approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, and updates on the number of teachers that have earned their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate.

-- Articulation. Describe:

As two and four year postsecondary institutions continue to prepare to seek approval for the new Birth to Kindergarten associate and bachelor degree, Louisiana will continue to increase articulation opportunities. Programs that offer these may choose to use the voluntary statewide curriculum which will include a collection of postsecondary coursework which builds on a series of professional degrees, earned over time as candidates progress in the statewide pathway. The initial coursework, which will be will lead to candidates earning their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, followed by an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree. Teachers that complete coursework that is offered by an approved teacher preparation program will be able to transfer courses between participating two and four year postsecondary institutions in order to build their professional education over time.

-- Workforce information. Describe:

The Louisiana Pathways Career Development System collects information about childcare and family child care teachers, as well as administrators and directors. Enrolled participants submit information documenting their professional and educational background, work experience, and demographics.

-- Financing. Describe:

Child care teachers who work in publicly-funded centers are eligible to receive Louisiana Pathways Scholarships when they meet the criteria determined by LA Pathways and are employed for at least 16 hour per week, working an average of 30/hours a week. Pathways Scholarships are used to cover the costs of college tuition or for other career certifications.Pathways Scholarships can also be used to pay for the CDA exam and certification fee. Louisiana Pathways scholarships can also be used to pay for administrative training.

Louisiana Pathways also offers an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Scholarship. This scholarship pays the full cost for qualified candidates to attend one of the state-approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs.

Finally, the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is processed and awarded at no cost to the applying teacher or employer, unlike other teacher certifications. This is an effort to reduce any possible cost or burden on the child care population.

b) The following are optional elements, or elements that should be implemented to the extent practicable, in the training and professional development framework.

☑ Continuing education unit trainings and credit-bearing professional development to the extent practicable

Describe:

Child care teachers who have completed professional development that contributes to their earning a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential may receive up to two classes of higher education course credit towards the Care and Development of Young Children Associates Degree at many of Louisiana's Community and Technical Colleges. Child care teachers who attend a state-approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate program to complete their CDA are able to use these professional training hours to meet

their continuing education hour requirements for licensing.

☑ Engagement of training and professional development providers, including higher education, in aligning training and educational opportunities with the state/territory's framework

Describe:

The Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups are voluntary cross-agency committees, which has been led by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The Birth to Kindergarten Workgroups have collectively created and supported the development of all coursework and degree structures for the Birth to Kindergarten statewide curriculum that will be voluntarily implemented by interested institutions. The voluntary statewide curriculum includes a collection of postsecondary coursework which builds on a series of professional degrees, earned over time as candidate's progress in the statewide coursework. Initial coursework will be offered by higher education institutions as well as private providers. Candidates will need to meet specific requirements for college credit to be awarded for coursework offered by private providers.

☑ Other

Describe:

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly funded centers will be required to have the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate as a minimum educational credential. This credential requires at a minimum that the teacher has earned a CDA (Child Development Associate) and a high school diploma or equivalent.

Beginning in July 2018, all teachers will be required to complete coursework for their Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate at a higher education or private provider teacher preparation program that has been approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). BESE will review coursework to ensure that the content is aligned with the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway, and will be able to contribute to stackable credentials.

To encourage the development of a diverse pool of high-quality early childhood teacher preparation programs, the department has launched a grant opportunity entitled Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood. Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood is a competitive grant that provides startup funding and intensive technical assistance to support preparation programs that are building high-quality coursework for child care teachers.

In 2018, the Louisiana Department of Education will select a contractor to develop a

Statewide Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. This contractor will be charged with the challenge of creating high quality online coursework that is reinforced by on-the-ground experiences, including coaching, mentoring, and performance-based assessments, within every parish of the state by 2020. This will ensure that teachers within the most remote parishes have access to high-quality, transferable training.

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 Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council is the designated statewide early childhood council. The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council is tasked with reviewing all policy related to early learning centers. They have reviewed and endorsed the requirements for ongoing continuing education, structure for Louisiana Pathways Career Development System, and the creation of the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate and Birth to Kindergarten Pathway.

6.1.3 Describe how the framework improves the quality, diversity, stability, and retention of caregivers, teachers, and directors (98.44(a)(7)).

Financial assistance to attain credentials and post-secondary degrees: All teachers that are enrolled in the Louisiana Pathways Career Development System and work in a publicly funded center for a minimum of 16 hours a week for an average of 30 hours a week qualify for the Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program. This enables the teachers who are serving at-risk children to increase their training and knowledge of child development. Teachers using scholarship funds are able to take coursework that is applicable to the families and children in which they serve (e.g.children that are English language learners or that have disabilities).

The Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program covers some of the cost of tuition for child care teachers that seek to advance their professional career by attending colleges and universities. Louisiana also offers Louisiana Pathways Scholarships to individuals that are

completing training for their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate by attending a state board approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. Louisiana Pathways will cover the full cost of tuition for qualifying candidates to complete the coursework associated with this certification.

Financial incentives linked to educational attainment and retention: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC) and Pathways Career Development Ladder- Child Care teachers who are working at a Type III child care center are eligible to earn fully refundable tax credits through the SRTC.

Depending on the level of professional education a teacher has received, they are eligible for increased levels of a refunded tax credit. Beginning in 2018, Louisiana child care teachers will be able to earn increased tax credits for obtaining their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate. The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate will allow teachers to immediately qualify for the second level of tax credit. Teachers will then be able to qualify for increased levels of tax credit if they remain working in the child care field, eventually reaching level four (the highest level at approximately $3,300) by demonstrating that they have their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate and that they have earned the SRTC two times prior.

Financial incentives and compensation improvements: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC) and Pathways Career Development Ladder- Child Care teachers who are working at a Type III child care center are eligible to earn fully refundable tax credits through the SRTC. Teachers and directors are able to use the SRTC to compensate their earned wages and support retention in the field.

Outreach to high school (including career and technical) students: Early Childhood Jumpstart Pathway- The Jumpstart Child Care Pathway provides an opportunity for high school students to complete the coursework for the Child Development Associate(CDA) and meet the criteria for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate prior to graduating high school.

The coursework is offered as high school course hours and students are assisted in obtaining necessary practicum hours.High schools are required to receive state board approval for the coursework that is offered as a part of the Early Childhood Jump Start Pathway. Through the Early Childhood Jump Start Pathway, high school students will be able to enter the child care workforce already meeting the credential requirements for the field. https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/js-graduation-pathways/2017-2018-early-childhood-education-pathway-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=3.

Support for providers' mental health, such as training in reflective practices and stress-reduction techniques and health and mental health consultation services: The LDOE currently contracts with Tulane University to provide a service called Mental Health

Consultations. Mental Health Consultants are available to licensed child care centers who request services and support. Mental Health Consultants provide a six-month consultation, visiting centers on a biweekly basis. They provide direct support in identifying strategies to better manage the child care classrooms

6.2 Training and Professional Development Requirements

The Lead Agency must describe how its established health and safety requirements for pre-service or orientation training and ongoing professional development requirements--as described in Section 5 for caregivers, teachers, and directors in CCDF programs--align, to the extent practicable, with the state/territory professional development framework. These requirements must be designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce. Such requirements shall be applicable to child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF funds across the entire age span, from birth through age 12 (658E(c)(2)(G)). Ongoing training and professional development should be accessible and appropriate to the setting and age of the children served (98.44(b)(2)).

6.2.1 Describe how the state/territory incorporates the knowledge and application of its early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable); its health and safety standards (as described in section 5); and social-emotional/behavioral and early childhood mental health intervention models, which can include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in section 2) in the training and professional development framework (98.44(b)).

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. In order to earn the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, teachers will have to complete introductory coursework at a state approved provider of the foundational coursework for the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway, beginning in July 2018..Through the required foundational coursework for the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway, all childcare teachers will be trained on Louisiana's Early Learning Developmental Standards(ELDS), learn about strategies to promote health, safety, and child

development, and develop their understanding of social-emotional and behavior interventions. The foundational training in the career pathway will ensure all lead teachers have an operational knowledge of these subject areas. In addition, there are several ongoing training opportunities available to child care teachers that provide easily accessible support in the required areas.

Knowledge and application of Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines: Training on the Louisiana's Early Learning Developmental Standards (ELDS) is required as an introductory training for all child care centers that are a part of the Early Childhood Community Networks. The Resource and Referral Agencies are required to include training on how to use and apply the ELDS as part of their foundational training requirements. Continuing education and professional development related to the application of the ELDS are permitted to be counted in the continuing education hours that are required for child care centers, family child care, and in-home providers.

The Louisiana Department of Education has created an online course that is free and easily accessible with a focus on training related to Louisiana's Birth to Kindergarten Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS). The "Louisiana's Birth to Five ELDS" provides a detailed description of how to read and apply the Birth to Kindergarten Early Learning and Development Standards to the setting of a child care classroom.

Louisiana has placed a strong emphasis on supporting child care centers to obtain and use high-quality curriculum resources which are aligned to the ELDS. Louisiana completes an extensive review process of all submitted curriculum to ensure their alignment with Louisiana’s Early Learning and Development Standards. These materials have been extensively reviewed to ensure their alignment with Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. All child care centers have access to an online review of instructional materials and curricula which can be found at: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews.

Curriculum are evaluated based on alignment to the ELDS, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, options for family engagement, ease of use by staff, quality and complexity of learning activities, embedded assessment, potential for individualizing instruction and developmental appropriateness. Curriculum are rated for infants, toddlers, and pre-K.

In Louisiana, early learning centers are able to choose instructional materials that are best for their children and families. Through the Child Care Curriculum Initiative, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) supports programs in choosing curricula appropriate for children age birth to five that are grounded in helping teachers provide quality interactions

and instruction. (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/child-care-curriculum-initiative-packet.pdf?sfvrsn=6). Through this initiative, centers receive financial support and are required to obtain training on how to implement their curriculum, including the development of a training plan that is reviewed by their resource and referral center. The curriculum quality a center selects is reflected as an informational metric on their performance profile.

Health and Safety Standards : The Louisiana Sanitary Code requires 3 hours of health and safety training annually provided by LDH's LA Child Care Health Consultant program (LAC51:XXI.301.A.9). Additionally, all staff within early learning centers must receive an orientation training that includes health and safety practices within 30 days of hire (Bulletin 137 1719.B.4). Family Child Care and In-Home providers are required to complete training on the health and safety standards.

Social-emotional behavior intervention models: The LDOE contracts with Tulane University to provide a service called Mental Health Consultations. Mental Health Consultants are available to licensed child care centers who request services and support. Mental Health Consultants provide a six-month consultation, visiting centers on a biweekly basis. Their purpose is to support child care teachers in implementing social-emotional behavior intervention models. Child Care Resource and Referral Centers also provide regional training and coaching on social-emotional behavior intervention strategies, specifically as they are aligned to supporting positive adult-child interactions and learning.

Child development and guidance training is included as part of the allowable topics for the 12 hours of annual ongoing continuing education for licensed child care centers, family home, and in-home providers.

Louisiana is in the process of developing an Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will launch in 2019. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will be a 12 month program for directors of Type III centers. This Fellowship has been developed based on research across the state of Louisiana, including extensive interviews of current directors, professional development providers, and lead agencies of early childhood community networks.

This executive-level academy will provide directors with the content, applied practice, and collaboration opportunities to support their work as instructional leaders in their programs and communities. Selected child care directors will participate in monthly learning sessions, job-embedded coaching, and a community of practice with peers. Individualized support for an area of overall program quality will support the prioritization of instructional leadership. The Department will seek an external vendor through a competitive RFP process beginning in the summer of 2018. A pilot cohort will launch in the spring of 2019, with a gradual scaling

to a statewide program by spring of 2021. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will prepare directors to support their teachers in leading content instruction that is aligned to health and safety standards, ELDS, and social emotional growth.

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)).

All providers that receive CCDF have access and opportunities for professional development, technical assistance, and support. Indian tribes receiving CCDF in Louisiana have joined the local community networks in their area, and are able to access and participate all training available all centers receiving public funding. This includes training provided by Resource and Referral Agencies, Mental Health Consultations, access to Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate programs, and scholarships to support continuing education efforts.

All centers that are serving families that qualify for CCDF receive free technical assistance and training opportunities from Resource and Referral Agencies. The training and onsite technical assistance provided by Resource and Referral Agencies is designed to meet the needs of the local community. Child care centers seeking additional support in supporting English language learners have the opportunity to seek onsite assistance from their regional Resource and Referral Agency on this topic. Centers with Native American populations are also able to access the training and coaching services provided by their Resource and Referral Agency.

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:

a) with limited English proficiency

For purposes of translation and recruitment, the LDOE uses Language Link which can provide translation to over 240 languages/dialects. This contract can be used to recruit providers should the need arise and provide information such as applications, etc in other languages and can be applied to any document or resources needed. Additionally, the LDOE website has been verified for accessibility for individuals with disabilities or additional interpretation needs. The LDOE is prepared to support additional requests from individuals with disabilities.

b) who have disabilities

All centers that are serving families that qualify for CCDF receive free technical assistance and training opportunities from Resource and Referral Agencies. The training and onsite technical assistance provided by Resource and Referral Agencies is designed to meet the needs of the local community. Child care centers with additional or specialized needs would be strongly encouraged to work with their local Resource and Referral Center.

6.2.4 Describe how the state/territory's training and professional development requirements are appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers who care for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups (such as specialized credentials for providers who care for infants and/or school-age children); English-language learners; children with developmental delays and disabilities; and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians (98.44(b)(2)(iii--iv)).

All training, professional development, technical assistance and resources are prioritized for all public child care providers that receive CCDF funds. All publicly-funded child care centers have equal access to the training, professional development, and technical assistance opportunities that meet their local family needs.

All centers that are serving families that qualify for CCDF receive free technical assistance and training opportunities from Resource and Referral Agencies. The training and onsite technical assistance provided by Resource and Referral Agencies is designed to meet the needs of the local community. Child care centers seeking additional support in supporting

English language learners have the opportunity to seek onsite assistance from their regional Resource and Referral Agency on this topic. Centers with Native American populations are also able to access the training and coaching services provided by their Resource and Referral Agency.

Additionally, all teachers that are enrolled in the Louisiana Pathways Career Development System and work in a publicly funded center for a minimum of 16 hours a week qualify for the Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program. The Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program will cover the cost of tuition for child care teachers that seek to advance their professional education. This enables the teachers who are serving at-risk children to increase their training and knowledge of child development. Teachers using scholarship funds are able to take coursework that is applicable to the families and children in which they serve (e.g. children that are English language learners or that have disabilities).

To further support the development of high quality teacher preparation opportunities, the department has supported a grant opportunity entitled Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood. Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood is a competitive grant that provides up startup funding to teacher preparation programs that present high-quality proposals for designing and implementing teacher preparation coursework that is aligned with the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway.

Through Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Louisiana has approved 14 state approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs. These state approved programs prepare teachers to work with students with disabilities, as well as identify and support individual child needs that may be associated with an English language learners.

In 2018, the Louisiana Department of Education will select a contractor to develop a Statewide Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. This contractor will be charged with the challenge of creating high quality online coursework that is reinforced by on-the-ground experiences, including coaching, mentoring, and performance-based assessments, within every parish of the state by 2020. This will ensure that teachers within the most remote parishes have access to high-quality, transferable training. This option will be accessible by all regions and teachers within the state.

To assist with training on behavior intervention models, the LDOE contracts with Tulane University to provide a service called Mental Health Consultations. Mental Health Consultants are available to licensed child care centers who request services and support. Mental Health Consultants provide a six-month consultation, visiting centers on a biweekly basis. Their purpose is to support child care teachers in implementing social-emotional behavior intervention models. In addition, Early Steps providers are available to support child

care caregivers in meeting the IFSP outcomes for children with disabilities in these settings. Through support provided in the setting, caregivers have the benefit of transferring these skills to meeting needs of other children in their setting with special needs.

Louisiana is in the process of developing an Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will launch in 2019. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will be a 12 month program for directors of Type III centers. This Fellowship has been developed based on research across the state of Louisiana, including extensive interviews of current directors, professional development providers, and lead agencies of early childhood community networks.

This executive-level academy will provide directors with the content, applied practice, and collaboration opportunities to support their work as instructional leaders in their programs and communities. Selected child care directors will participate in monthly learning sessions, job-embedded coaching, and a community of practice with peers. Individualized support for an area of overall program quality will support the prioritization of instructional leadership.

The Department will seek an external vendor through a competitive RFP process beginning in the summer of 2018. A pilot cohort will launch in the spring of 2019, with a gradual scaling to a statewide program by spring of 2021. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will prepare directors to work with families with exceptional needs, insuring their operations are improved and services are appropriately managed for children in need of additional language support or development services.

6.2.5 The Lead Agency must provide training and technical assistance to providers and appropriate Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff on identifying and serving children and families experiencing homelessness (658E(c)(3)(B)(i)).

a) Describe the state/territory's training and TA efforts for providers in identifying and serving homeless children and their families (relates to question 3.2.2).

The CCDF Lead Agency informs providers during orientation training and provides a helpful flyer that educates them on how to identify homeless children, what impacts homelessness has on children and what additional resources are available for them. Local homeless liaisons also conduct in depth training to show providers how they can help and what resources are available for homeless families.

b) Describe the state/territory's training and TA efforts for Lead Agency (or designated entity) staff in identifying and serving children and their families experiencing homelessness (connects to question 3.2.2).

The CCDF Lead Agencyworks with the homeless coordinator and homeless liaisons within local education agencies to coordinate these services. Homeless liaisons have received in depth training on how to identify homeless children and their families and community resources available for them. Child Care Assistance Staff are also trained annually to understand additional services that are available to homeless families and they maintain the homeless liaison contact information to share with families who are identified as homeless. In addition, through coordinated enrollment, Community Networks are reaching out to families experiencing homelessness and assisting them in accessing community resources.

6.2.6 States and territories are required to describe effective internal controls that are in place to ensure program integrity and accountability (98.68(a)). Describe how the state/territory ensures that all providers for children receiving CCDF funds are informed and trained regarding CCDF requirements and integrity (98.68(a)(3)). Check all that apply

- [x] Issue policy change notices
- [ ] Issue new policy manual
- [ ] Staff training
- [x] Orientations
- [ ] Onsite training
- [x] Online training
- [ ] Regular check-ins to monitor the implementation of CCDF policies

Describe the type of check-ins, including the frequency.

- [x] Other

Describe:

Providers are trained through provider certification and receive information on policies and procedures through a formal orientation and the review of their provider agreements. A provider help desk is also in place to provide continued assistance on policies and changes. The provider help desk consists of regional specialist who build relationships with stakeholders and ensure a supportive environment for providers as they are

assisted and trained regarding CCDF requirements and integrity.

6.2.7 Lead Agencies must develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply and to improve the quality of child care services (98.16 (z)). Describe the state/territory's strategies to strengthen provider's business practices, which can include training and/or TA efforts.

a) Describe the strategies that the state/territory is developing and implementing for training and TA.

The State has several innovative strategies to support and strengthen provider's business practices:

Classification of trainers and technical assistants through the Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry: Louisiana Pathways Career Development System provides a statewide trainer approval process. Trainers that are interested in offering required continuing education hours to licensed child care centers must obtain trainer approval status from Louisiana Pathways. Trainers must demonstrate their credentials and qualifications, participate adult learner training, and submit an application for review.Individuals seeking approval as a Pathways Approved Trainer must declare the areas in which they have training experience and expertise. To provide assistance in business practices, these categories include classification as an expert in strategies to manage an effective program operation, maintaining a commitment to professionalism, and administrative training. Individuals who receive Pathways approval and have expertise in these categories of professional education are able to provide training and assistance in business practice topics.

Accepting training in business practices and management to count towards continuing education requirements for licensing: All child care centers must complete annual continuing education hours as a requirement for licensing. These hours may be within a variety of categories, one of which is management/administrative training. Annual training hours in management and administrative strategies meets the continuing education requirement for any staff member of the center.

Providing Scholarships for Administrative Training: The Louisiana Pathways Scholarship Program is available to contribute to the higher education cost of qualifying child care teachers and staff who work in publicly-funded centers. Individuals are to receive

Louisiana Pathways Scholarships when they meet the criteria determined by LA Pathways and are employed for at least 16 hour per week. Louisiana Pathways scholarships can also be used to pay for administrative training.Louisiana Pathways provides financial assistance for child care professionals to pursue specialized instruction that directors, assistant directors and aspiring directors need. Individuals must be actively participating in the Louisiana Pathways Early Learning Center Career Development System to qualify for the Administrative Training Scholarship, and must be able to explain how the administrative training will support their goals for providing quality care for young children.

b) Check the topics addressed in the state/territory's strategies. Check all that apply.

- [ ] Fiscal management
- [ ] Budgeting
- [ ] Recordkeeping
- [x] Hiring, developing, and retaining qualified staff
- [ ] Risk management
- [ ] Community relationships
- [x] Marketing and public relations
- [x] Parent-provider communications, including who delivers the training, education, and/or technical assistance
- [ ] Other

Describe:

6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

6.3.1 States and territories are required to develop, maintain, or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children in a forward progression from birth to kindergarten entry (i.e., birth-to-three, three-to-five, birth-to-five), describing what children should know and be able to do and covering the essential domains of early childhood development. These early learning and developmental guidelines are to be used statewide and territory-wide by child care providers and in the development and implementation of training and professional development (658E(c)(2)(T)). The required

essential domains for these guidelines are cognition, including language arts and mathematics; social, emotional, and physical development; and approaches toward learning (98.15(a)(9)). At the option of the state/territory, early learning and developmental guidelines for out-of-school time may be developed. Note: States and territories may use the quality set-aside, discussed in section 7, to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines.

a) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are research-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and aligned with kindergarten entry

Louisiana's ELDS apply to all children in Louisiana who are not yet age-eligible to enter kindergarten. This includes children with and without disabilities, children who are learning English, and children who are participating in any type of early care and education program.

The ELDS were developed based on extensive research, which included consulting experts and working with other states' standards and policy statements from state and national organizations. To ensure consistency with the current K-12 Standards, the ELDS were also developed in consultation with the Louisiana Grade Level Expectations for Kindergarten. Finally, a review of all appropriate research literature was completed to make sure the expectations were inclusive of children from a variety of circumstances and with differing levels of ability.

The Early Learning and Development Standards are designed to be used for all children. Educators and families working with children with disabilities are able to use the ELDS to support growth across all levels of development. Children with disabilities may demonstrate even greater variation in their abilities to progress and reach developmental milestones. Because children develop at different rates, there is overlap at the youngest age levels (birth to 11 months/infants; 9 to 18 months/young toddlers; and 16 to 36 months/older toddlers). The overlap reflects the fact that it is normal for children this age to vary a lot in when they demonstrate the skills and behaviors described in the Indicators written for infants and toddlers. To provide additional support for developmental appropriateness, an appendix with specific strategies is included. The ELDS address areas where educators should be conscious of cultural differences and expectations, as well as areas to focus on an appreciation of cultural diversity and creativity.

b) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are appropriate for all children from birth to kindergarten entry.

The Early Learning and Development Standards area framework for high-quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood programs and are designed to be used by early childhood educators throughout Louisiana. The term early childhood educator is intended to encompass all those (e.g., teachers, caregivers, administrators, parents, etc.) who are responsible for the care and education of children from birth to age 5. The ELDS establish a common vision for what the state of Louisiana wants children to learn before they enter kindergarten. As such, they provide age-appropriate goals for children's learning and development that can guide teachers, caregivers and others on what types of experiences and activities children should have during their earliest years.

These Standards and Indicators are intended to be a guide for teaching young children. They are neither a curriculum nor a checklist for assessing children's development and learning. Individual areas of the Standards are considered to be equally important and should be integrated into all experiences and activities.

The Continuum of the Early Childhood and Development Standards included in the ELDS is divided into five age levels: infants (birth to 11 months), young toddlers (9 to 18 months), older toddlers (16 to 36 months), three-year-olds (36 to 48 months), and four-year-olds (48 to 60 months). These age levels were selected because they represent developmentally significant periods in a young child's life.

However, it is important for educators to remember that young children's development is often uneven and progresses at different rates. Children may change dramatically in one area, while development progresses more slowly in another area. Children with disabilities may demonstrate even greater variation in their abilities to progress and reach developmental milestones. Because children develop at different rates, there is overlap at the youngest age levels (birth to 11 months/infants; 9 to 18 months/young toddlers; and 16 to 36 months/older toddlers). The overlap reflects the fact that it is normal for children this age to vary a lot in when they demonstrate the skills and behaviors described in the Indicators written for infants and toddlers.

c) Verify by checking the domains included in the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines. Responses for "other" is optional

- [x] Cognition, including language arts and mathematics

- [x] Social development
- [x] Emotional development
- [x] Physical development
- [x] Approaches toward learning
- [ ] Other

Describe:

d) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are implemented in consultation with the educational agency and the State Advisory Council or similar coordinating body.

To develop Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), the Louisiana State Department of Education and the Department of Children & Family Services established a leadership team that was responsible for overseeing the revision of the Standards. Members of the leadership team examined research, looked at other states' Standards, and considered policy statements from state and national organizations. To ensure consistency with the current K-12 Standards, they also examined the Louisiana Grade Level Expectations for Kindergarten. Finally, they reviewed all appropriate research literature to make sure the expectations were inclusive of children from a variety of circumstances and with differing levels of ability.

The leadership team developed an initial draft of the Standards and Indicators, and then worked with a variety of experts to review and improve the document. First, it was reviewed by a broader stakeholder group of early childhood educators and parents from across the state. This stakeholder group included representatives of higher education institutions, private childcare, Head Start, early intervention, as well as teachers and administrators of early education programs. Stakeholders provided comments and feedback on the content of the Standards, as well as the overall structure and format of the continuum twice. In addition to the stakeholder group, expert reviewers from outside of Louisiana were asked to provide feedback on the Standards. Finally, the leadership team sought feedback and comment from the public on a draft of the Standards and Indicators via an online survey. More than 240 early childhood educators and administrators from across Louisiana responded with comment and suggestions. All of the comments and suggestions that were received were invaluable toward shaping and strengthening the final version of the Standards.

The ELDS were developed prior to the institution of our current Early Childhood Advisory Council. However, any future revisions will include detailed consultation through the

State Advisory Council.

e) Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are updated and include the date first issued and/or the frequency of updates

The ELDS were established in 2013 and are still current.

f) If applicable, discuss the state process for the adoption, implementation and continued improvement of state out-of-school time standards

Not Applicable

g) Provide the Web link to the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines.

https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/early-childhood---birth-to-five-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=6

6.3.2 CCDF funds cannot be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that:

-- Will be the primary or sole basis to determine a child care provider ineligible to participate in the CCDF,

-- Will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider,

-- Will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness,

-- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF (658E(c)(2)(T)(ii)(I); 98.15(a)(2)).

Describe how the state/territory's early learning and developmental guidelines are used.

The Louisiana Department of Education has created an online learning opportunity which is free and easily accessible with a focus on training related to Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. There is also an additional online course entitled "Louisiana's Birth to Five ELDS" that provides a detailed description of how to read and apply the Birth to Kindergarten Early Learning and Development Standards to the setting of a child care

classroom. The online course is able to be counted towards the continuing education requirements for licensed child care centers.

Resource and Referral Agencies are required to provide foundational training for all publicly-funded child care centers. These training opportunities are required to provide foundational learning opportunities to build knowledge and skills related to Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards.

Louisiana has placed a strong emphasis on supporting child care centers to obtain and use high-quality curriculum resources which are aligned to the ELDS. Louisiana completes an extensive review process of all submitted curriculum to ensure their alignment with Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. These materials have been extensively reviewed to ensure their alignment with Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. All child care centers have access to an online review of instructional materials and curriculums which can be found at: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews.

Curriculum are evaluated based on alignment to the ELDS, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, options for family engagement, ease of use by staff, quality and complexity of learning activities, embedded assessment, potential for individualizing instruction and developmental appropriateness. Curriculum are rated for infants, toddlers, and pre-K.

In Louisiana, early learning centers are able to choose instructional materials that are best for their children and families. Through the Child Care Curriculum Initiative, The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) supports programs in choosing curricula appropriate for children age birth to five that are grounded in helping teachers provide quality interactions and instruction. (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/child-care-curriculum-initiative-packet.pdf?sfvrsn=6). Through this initiative, centers receive financial support and are required to obtain training on how to implement their curriculum, including the development of a training plan that is reviewed by their resource and referral center. The curriculum quality a center selects is reflected as an informational metric on their performance profile.

The ELDS have also been measured for alignment with the child assessment that is used for all publicly-funded children in Louisiana. In Louisiana, all children in child care that participate in the Child Care Assistance Program receive access to Teaching Strategies GOLD. This observation based assessment has been measured for alignment to the ELDS.

Additionally, the ELDS are aligned with the Kindergarten Entry Assessments used in Louisiana. Currently Louisiana has multiple choices for Kindergarten Entry Assessments,

which districts are allowed to select based on their preference. The ELDS have been measured for alignment to ensure accurate preparation for Kindergarten.
Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly-funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. Through the introductory Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway coursework, all child care teachers will receive training in developing and implementing curriculum and learning activities that are directly supportive of Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. Teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers can use Louisiana Pathways Scholarship funds to attend Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs offered by approved higher education institutions or private providers.

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to reserve and use a portion of their Child Care and Development Fund program expenditures for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and to increase parental options for and access to high-quality child care (98.53). The quality activities should be aligned with a statewide or territory-wide assessment of the state's or territory's need to carry out such services and care. States and territories are required to report on these quality improvement investments through CCDF in three ways:

1. In the Plan, states and territories will describe the types of activities supported by quality investments over the 3-year period (658G(b); 98.16(j)).

2. ACF will collect annual data on how much CCDF funding is spent on quality activities using the expenditure report (ACF-696). This report will be used to determine compliance with the required quality and infant and toddler spending requirements (658G(d)(1); 98.53(f)).

3. For each year of the Plan period, states and territories will submit a separate annual Quality Progress Report that will include a description of activities to be funded by quality expenditures and the measures used by the state/territory to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory (658G(d); 98.53(f)).

States and territories must fund efforts in at least one of the following 10 activities:

-- Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce

-- Improving on the development or implementation of early learning and developmental guidelines

-- Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services

-- Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers

-- Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services

-- Supporting compliance with state/territory requirements for licensing, inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety (as described in section 5)

-- Evaluating the quality of child care programs in the state/territory, including evaluating how programs positively impact children

-- Supporting providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation

-- Supporting the development or adoption of high-quality program standards related to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development

-- Performing other activities to improve the quality of child care services, as long as outcome measures relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry are possible.

Throughout this Plan, states and territories will describe the types of quality improvement activities where CCDF investments are being made, including but not limited to, quality set-aside funds and will describe the measurable indicators of progress used to evaluate state/territory progress in improving the quality of child care services for each expenditure (98.53(f)) These activities can benefit infants and toddlers through school age populations.

This section covers the quality activities needs assessment and quality improvement activities and indicators of progress for each of the activities undertaken in the state or territory.

7.1 Quality Activities Needs Assessment for Child Care Services

7.1.1 Lead Agencies must invest in quality activities based on an assessment of the state/territory's needs to carry out those activities. Lead Agencies have the flexibility to design an assessment of their quality activities that best meet their needs, including how often they do the assessment. Describe your state/territory assessment process, including the frequency of assessment (658G(a)(1); 98.53(a)).

In fall 2017, Louisiana released the first ever performance profiles, the result of the state's new unified quality rating and improvement system for all Head Starts, public and non-public pre-K, and child care centers accepting CCAP. These profiles include two key components: a rating based on scores from the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and information on classroom best practices. These performance profiles are released annually, at the same time as K-12 report cards. To assess quality, every classroom in publicly-funded sites is evaluated at least twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, with at least 50% of classrooms also evaluated by the state's independent observers. Teachers are receiving in-depth feedbackfrom a high-quality tool on instructional practices multiple times a year, and communities are supported to align their professional development and quality improvement to the results of these observations. The previous Quality Start system has been phased out, and the stars used to determine School Readiness Tax Credits and Child Care Assistance Bonuses have now been aligned to the unified quality rating and improvement system. In order to calculate a performance rating and score for each site, two CLASS observations are conducted each year in each classroom in a publicly-funded site, one in the fall and one in the spring. These observations are averaged together to create an overall rating for the site.

7.1.2 Describe the findings of the assessment and if any overarching goals for quality improvement were identified.

- Through the CLASS tool, every PreK and Toddler classroom in every publicly-funded site was assessed twice by local observers, and at least 50% of classrooms were assessed by the state's third party contractor. This tool provides information on the quality of teacher-child interactions through four 20-minute cycles of observing 8-10

dimensions of quality.

- Nearly 15,000 observations of toddler and pre-K classrooms in the state were completed – representing more than 1 million minutes of insight into what our young learners experience.
- The Department released 1,571 Performance Profiles for 2016-2017.
- Overall there was improvement in multiple areas from the 2015-2016 practice year:

1. Statewide average scores went up in each of the areas we measure – classroom climate, organization and instruction at both pre-K and toddler level;
2. More sites were excellent or proficient;
3. Average scores for each program type improved with the most improvement in child care;
4. Louisiana significantly improved the number of sites that are using a high-quality curriculum; 77% of sites up from 48% in 2015-2016.
5. More child care teachers are certified to teach than ever before; more than 3,000 child care teachers have earned the new Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate.
6. Louisiana has exemplars from schools, Head Start and child care. - 40 sites overall earned Excellent up from 31 last year - More than a third of Community Networks have at least 1 Excellent site.
7. Results indicate that Louisiana programs, on average, positively impact children, by providing warm, caring and organized classrooms.
8. 68.4% of sites scored Excellent or Proficient, meaning that nearly 80% of Louisiana's at-risk children served receive proficient care.
9. In particular, child care centers made on average .17 points of growth between the practice year and this year, scoring on average a 4.55 overall. Four child care centers scored Excellent, 340 scored Proficient, 339 scored Approaching Proficient, and nine scored Unsatisfactory. 55 child care centers improved by more than 1 point between the practice year and 2017.
10. Yet too many children are not receiving the instruction needed to fully prepare them for kindergarten.

7.2 Use of Quality Funds

7.2.1 Check the quality improvement activities in which the state/territory is investing

☑ Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce If checked, respond to section 7.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

- [x] CCDF funds
- [ ] Other funds

Describe:

- [x] Developing, maintaining, or implementing early learning and developmental guidelines. If checked, respond to section 6.3 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [ ] Other funds

  Describe:

- [x] Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating and improvement system. If checked, respond to 7.4 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [x] Other funds

  Describe:

  State general funds

- [x] Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. If checked, respond to 7.5 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [x] Other funds

  Describe:

  State general funds

- [x] Establishing or expanding a statewide system of CCR&R services, as discussed in 1.7. If checked, respond to 7.6 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [ ] Other funds

  Describe:

- [x] Facilitating compliance with state/territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety standards (as described in section 5). If

checked, respond to 7.7 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.

- [x] CCDF funds
- [ ] Other funds

Describe:

- [x] Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the state/territory. If checked, respond to 7.8 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [x] Other funds

  Describe:

  State general funds

- [ ] Supporting accreditation. If checked, respond to 7.9 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [ ] CCDF funds
  - [ ] Other funds

  Describe:

- [x] Supporting state/territory or local efforts to develop high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. If checked, respond to 7.10 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply.
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [ ] Other funds

  Describe:

- [x] Other activities determined by the state/territory to improve the quality of child care services and which measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry is possible. If checked, respond to 7.11 and indicate which funds will be used for this activity. Check all that apply
  - [x] CCDF funds
  - [x] Other funds

Describe:

State general funds

7.3 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce With CCDF Quality Funds

Lead Agencies can invest in the training, professional development, and post-secondary education of the child care workforce as part of a progression of professional development activities, such as those included at 98.44 in addition to the following (98.53(a)(1)).

7.3.1 Describe how the state/territory funds the training and professional development of the child care workforce

a) Check and describe which content is included in training and professional development activities and describe who or how an entity is funded to address this topic. Check all that apply.

- [x] Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those efforts related to nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically based, developmentally appropriate, and age-appropriate strategies

Describe:

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. In order to earn the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, teachers will have to complete introductory coursework at a state approved provider of the foundational coursework for the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway, beginning in July 2018.Through the required foundational coursework for the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway, all childcare teachers will be trained on Louisiana's Early Learning Developmental Standards(ELDS), learn about strategies to promote health, safety, and child development, including physical development, and develop their understanding of social-emotional and behavior interventions. The foundational training in the career pathway will ensure all lead teachers have an operational knowledge of these subject areas. The state has dedicated funds to developing these state approved teacher preparation providers

through a grant opportunity entitled Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood: Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood is a competitive grant that provides up startup funding to teacher preparation programs that present high-quality proposals for designing and implementing teacher preparation coursework that is aligned with the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway. By summer 2018, all new lead teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers will be expected to attend a high-quality state approved teacher preparation program, which will support teachers in providing developmentally appropriate strategies for children. Teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers can use Louisiana Pathways Scholarship funds to attend Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs offered by approved higher education institutions or private providers. The percent of lead teachers at every center who have achieved traditional or ancillary certification is reported annually through the performance profiles.

In addition, there are several ongoing training opportunities available to child care teachers that provide easily accessible support in the required areas. Training on the Louisiana's Early Learning Developmental Standards (ELDS) is required as an introductory training for all child care centers that are a part of the Early Childhood Community Networks. The Resource and Referral Agencies are required to include training on how to use and apply the ELDS as part of their foundational training requirements.

All centers that are serving families that qualify for CCDF receive free technical assistance and training opportunities from Resource and Referral Agencies. The training and onsite technical assistance provided by Resource and Referral Agencies is designed to provide onsite assistance on supporting developmentally appropriate strategies for positive adult-child interactions that foster learning and growth in Louisiana's youngest learners.

Louisiana is in the process of developing an Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will launch in 2019. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will be a 12 month program for directors of Type III centers. This Fellowship has been developed based on research across the state of Louisiana, including extensive interviews of current directors, professional development providers, and lead agencies of early childhood community networks.

This executive-level academy will provide directors with the content, applied practice, and collaboration opportunities to support their work as instructional leaders in their programs and communities. Selected child care directors will participate in monthly learning sessions, job-embedded coaching, and a community of practice with peers. Individualized support for an area of overall program quality will support the prioritization of instructional leadership. The Department will seek an external vendor through a competitive RFP process beginning in the summer of 2018. A pilot cohort will launch in the spring of 2019, with a gradual scaling to a statewide program by spring of 2021. The Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship will provide directors with additional opportunities to learn about strategies to select professional development and coaching that promotes 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.

☑ Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models that promote positive social-emotional development and early childhood mental health and that reduce challenging behaviors, including a reduction in expulsions of preschool-age children from birth to age five for such behaviors. (See also section 2.5.)

Describe:

The LDOE contracts with Tulane University to provide a service called Mental Health Consultations. Mental Health Consultants are available to licensed child care centers who request services and support. Mental Health Consultants provide a six-month consultation, visiting centers on a biweekly basis. Their purpose is to support child care teachers in implementing social-emotional behavior intervention models.

Resource and Referral Agencies provide foundational training for all publicly-funded child care centers. These training opportunities are required to provide foundational learning opportunities to build knowledge and skills related to implementing early learning standards, performing child observations assessments, and supporting positive teacher-child interactions.

☑ Engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children's positive development

Describe:

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly-funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. Through the introductory Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway coursework, all child care teachers will receive focused training and practical experience with strategies to engage parents in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. These teacher preparation and continuing education opportunities will be at a professional level and will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The teacher professional standards and competencies included in this coursework include a specific focus on parent engagement. Teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers can use Louisiana Pathways scholarship funds to attend Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs.

☑ Implementing developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction, and evidence-based curricula and designing learning environments that are aligned with state/territory early learning and developmental standards.

Describe:

Louisiana has placed a strong emphasis on supporting child care centers to obtain and use high-quality curriculum resources which are aligned to the ELDS. Louisiana completes an extensive review process of all submitted curriculum to ensure their alignment with Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. These materials have been extensively reviewed to ensure their alignment with Louisiana's Early Learning and Development Standards. All child care centers have access to an online review of instructional materials and curriculums which can be found at: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews.

Curriculum are evaluated based on alignment to the ELDS, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, options for family engagement, ease of use by staff, quality and complexity of learning activities, embedded assessment, potential for individualizing instruction and developmental appropriateness. Curriculum are rated for infants, toddlers, and pre-K.

In Louisiana, early learning centers are able to choose instructional materials that are best for their children and families. Through the Child Care Curriculum Initiative, The

Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) supports programs in choosing curricula appropriate for children age birth to five that are grounded in helping teachers provide quality interactions and instruction. (https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/child-care-curriculum-initiative-packet.pdf?sfvrsn=6). Through this initiative, centers receive financial support and are required to obtain training on how to implement their curriculum, including the development of a training plan that is reviewed by their resource and referral center. The curriculum quality a center selects is reflected as an informational metric on their performance profile.

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly-funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. Through the introductory Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway coursework, all child care teachers will receive focused training and practical experience with strategies to engage parents in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. These teacher preparation and continuing education opportunities will be at a professional level and will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. These teacher training programs will have a specific focus on using high-quality curriculum (that have been rated Tier I in Louisiana) and on using high-quality child assessment strategies and tools. Teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers can use Louisiana Pathways scholarship funds to attend Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs

☐ 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:

☑ Using data to guide program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement

Describe:

Through Louisiana's unified rating and improvement system, all programs receive and analyze detailed information about their programs. The rating child care centers receive includes two components: a rating based on scores from the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and information on classroom best practices (e.g. use of curriculum and assessment, ratios, teacher credentials).

Following the 2015-2016 practice year, in 2017, every publicly-funded program in the

state participated and received a real performance profile and rating through the Louisiana School and Center Finder. These performance profiles for each site measure classroom success of supporting positive interactions between teachers and students through two *CLASS* observations a year (one in the spring and in the fall). These observation scores for all classrooms are averaged together to determine the rating for the center. This information provides child care centers detailed information as to what their sites strengths and weaknesses are, and where there are areas to improve and continue to strengthen the experiences the children in their care are receiving. Additionally, all of Louisiana's supports for development are deeply familiar with CLASS, and are therefore able to provide guidance and strategies based on the program evaluation data.

The performance profiles also report of several additional informational metrics based on classroom best practices. This includes information on the quality of curriculum and assessment, ratios and teacher credentials. This data is also useful for programs who complete a review of their current needs.

☐ Caring for children of families in geographic areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment

Describe:

☐ Caring for and supporting the development of children with disabilities and developmental delays

Describe:

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly-funded centers will be required to have obtained the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which is the introductory certificate to the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway. Through the introductory Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway coursework, all child care teachers will receive focused training and practical experience with strategies to engage parents in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. These teacher preparation and continuing education opportunities will be at a professional level and will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. These teacher training programs will have a specific focus preparing teachers to care for the development of children operating at all ability levels, and to understand and recognize indicators of potential disabilities and developmental delays. Teachers working in publicly-funded child care centers can use Louisiana Pathways scholarship

funds to attend Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs.

☐ Supporting the positive development of school-age children

Describe:

☐ Other

Describe:

b) Check how the state/territory connects child care providers with available federal and state/territory financial aid or other resources to pursue post-secondary education relevant for the early childhood and school-age workforce. Check all that apply

☐ Coaches, mentors, consultants, or other specialists available to support access to post-secondary training, including financial aid and academic counseling

☑ Statewide or territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e., an online calendar, a listing of opportunities) of relevant post-secondary education opportunities

☑ Financial awards, such as scholarships, grants, loans, or reimbursement for expenses, from the state/territory to complete post-secondary education

☑ Other

Describe:

To support the development of high quality teacher preparation programs, the LDOE has launched a grant opportunity entitled Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood is a competitive grant that provides startup funding to teacher preparation programs that present high-quality proposals for designing and implementing teacher preparation coursework that is aligned with the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway.

Beginning in July 2019, all lead teachers in publicly funded centers will be required to have the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate as a minimum educational credential. This credential requires at a minimum that the teacher has earned a CDA (Child Development Associate) and a high school diploma or equivalent.

Beginning in July 2018, all teachers will be required to complete coursework for their Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate at a higher education or private provider teacher preparation program that has been approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). BESE will review coursework to ensure that the content is aligned with the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway, and will be able to contribute

to stackable credentials.
In 2018, the Louisiana Department of Education will select a contractor to develop a Statewide Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. This contractor will be charged with the challenge of creating high quality online coursework that is reinforced by on-the-ground experiences, including coaching, mentoring, and performance-based assessments, within every parish of the state by 2020. This will ensure that teachers within the most remote parishes have access to high-quality, transferable training.

To ensure the quality of the state board approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, Louisiana will work to develop an accountability system that will evaluate the success of the approved teacher preparation programs, and support them to achieve continual improvement by summer 2019 Through this teacher preparation program accountability work, Louisiana will ensure the teacher preparation experiences being supported through federal funds are of the highest quality, and can be truly transferable across institutions of higher education in Louisiana.

Child care teachers who work in publicly-funded centers are eligible to receive Louisiana Pathways Scholarships when they meet the criteria determined by LA Pathways and are employed for at least 16 hour per week. Pathway scholarships are used to cover the costs of college tuition or for other career certifications.Pathways Scholarships can also be used to pay for the CDA exam and certification fee.Louisiana Pathways scholarships can also be used to pay for administrative training and to attend one of the state board approved teacher preparation programs that prepares teachers to earn their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate. The Louisiana Pathways Scholarship Program also provides guidance and informal counseling to child care teachers seeking assistance in advancing their career.

7.3.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

Progress is measured at the child care center level through the performance profile accountability system. The performance profiles will measure each child care center success

in supporting positive classroom interactions and instruction through the use of the CLASS tool. The targeted professional development of the child care workforce will make an effort to address the specific skills and teacher competencies that are evaluated with the CLASS tool. In addition, the performance profile will report the educational credentials of all teachers for informational purposes.

The LDOE measures the progress of the Resource and Referral Agencies through monthly measures of success, which report the extent of the impact that is being made in their designated region. Additionally, the LDOE is able to evaluate the relatively success of the child care community in each region based on the CLASS scores and results known from the performance profile reports. This informs the LDOE from the state perspective where additional supports and help may be needed, and how that may be related to the available services.

The Mental Health Consultation program provides a follow up survey and evaluation measuring the success of their model for social-emotional behavior intervention models. The evaluation of the Mental Health Consultations has reported on improved CLASS scores in classrooms that have received training on the provided intervention model.

Teacher preparation programs that receive BESE-approval to offer the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (the first credential in the Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway) will be able to access funding for their enrolled candidates through access to Pathways Scholarships. These programs will be routinely required to demonstrate their success through direct measures of candidate outcomes (measured by classroom assessment, CLASS observation, retention, and workplace success).

To ensure the quality of the state board approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, Louisiana will work to develop an accountability system that will evaluate the success of the approved teacher preparation programs, and support them to achieve continual improvement by summer 2019 Through this teacher preparation program accountability work, Louisiana will ensure the teacher preparation experiences being supported through federal funds are of the highest quality, and can be truly transferable across institutions of higher education in Louisiana.

The Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program measures success through monthly reports of their scholarships issued, and their applications received. Louisiana Pathways Scholarship program also monitors any instances of scholarship recipients not completing their coursework, and manages the follow up processes.

The Child Care Curriculum Initiative is tracked to determine which centers have received a curriculum. The LDOE is able to compare the receipt of curriculum to the CLASS scores of

particular sites. Additionally, the LDOE can audit the self reported used of curriculum with the reported reimbursement of curriculum purchased to verify implementation at the site. The LDOE is currently developing a process to audit the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. The Curriculum Implementation Scale will be piloted in 2018-2019 in a small percent of classrooms, including childcare, and will be used to inform the LDOE of the current effectiveness of curriculum use. The information gained from this small scale audit will begin to inform the LDOE's ongoing commitment to support curriculum implementation in all age level classrooms

7.4 Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

Lead Agencies may respond in this section based on other systems of quality improvement, even if not called a QRIS, as long as the other quality improvement system contains the elements of a QRIS. QRIS refers to a systematic framework for evaluating, improving and communicating the level of quality in early childhood programs and contains five key elements:

1. Program standards
2. Supports to programs to improve quality
3. Financial incentives and supports
4. Quality assurance and monitoring
5. Outreach and consumer education

7.4.1 Does your state/territory have a quality rating and improvement system or other system of quality improvement?

- [ ] No, but the state/territory is in the QRIS development phase. If no, skip to 7.5.1.
- [ ] No, the state/territory has no plans for QRIS development. If no, skip to 7.5.1.
- [x] Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS operating statewide or territory-wide

Describe how the QRIS is administered (e.g., statewide or locally or through CCR&R entities) and any partners and provide a link, if available.

The state's unified quality rating and improvement system is administered statewide

for all publicly-funded programs, including Head Starts, school-based pre-K, and child care centers accepting CCAP. Results from the Louisiana QRIS are posted on Louisiana's School and Center Finder (www.louisianaschools.com) as well as on the Department's website: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/data-management/2016-2017-ece-site-and-network-performance-profiles.xlsx?sfvrsn=8. Through the state's unified quality rating and improvement system, each site receives multiple CLASS ™ observations throughout the course of the school year, with every classroom receiving an observation in the fall and in the spring. These observations are averaged together to generate the ratings for these sites. Additional informational metrics are collected on use of best practices, including curriculum, assessment, and educational attainment and certification of teachers. For more technical information about how the rating is calculated, please consult the FAQs posted on the Louisiana Believes website, along with several other resources to help the general public, providers, and families understand the unified quality rating and improvement system. Through the state's QRIS, teachers in child care centers are receiving an unprecedented amount of feedback, both from community and local observers as well as from independent state observers. This feedback through CLASS™ provides pathways for teachers to improve, and checkpoints to understand how much they have improved. The Department has aligned investments in professional development and improvement to the rating , so that this is a true improvement system as well as a rating system. This local-state process of observing classrooms ensures that there has been great capacity added in local communities to understand what quality in early childhood classrooms looks like and how to promote it in individual sites and classrooms, as well as within communities as a whole.

☐ Yes, the state/territory has a QRIS initiative operating as a pilot-test in a few localities or only a few levels but does not have a fully operating initiative on a statewide or territory-wide basis.

Provide a link, if available.

☐ Yes, the state/territory has another system of quality improvement

If the response is yes to any of the above, describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these

measures.

The state will measure improvement in CLASS ratings across programs and networks, improvement in implementation of classroom best practices, and ultimately, improvement in kindergarten readiness outcomes. The state will also measure the impact of preparing more teachers, specifically those who receive the new Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates, on CLASS scores and child outcomes. The state showed improvement in CLASS scores between the practice year and 2017, increasing from a 4.73 to a 4.87. The goal for the state is that all programs score Proficient of above, reaching 4.50 overall, and in the first real year of the unified system, the percent of programs scoring below Proficient decreased from 38% to 31.6%, showing progress toward this goal. The state is additionally focused on improving Instructional Support and Engaged Support for Learning domain level scores, and from the practice year to 2017 these scores improved by more than 1 tenth across 14,000 observations, showing improvement in experiences for children

7.4.2 QRIS participation

a) Are providers required to participate in the QRIS?

- ☐ Participation is voluntary
- ☑ Participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving a subsidy. If checked, describe the relationship between QRIS participation and subsidy (e.g., minimum rating required, reimbursed at higher rates for achieving higher ratings, participation at any level).

Participation is mandatory for providers serving children receiving a subsidy with the exception of CCAP in-home, family home and school providers **.** QRIS ratings and scores are now aligned to the school readiness tax credits available to teachers, directors, providers, and families. This means that teachers in participating child care centers, which includes all centers serving children receiving a subsidy, are able to earn up to ~$3,300 in fully refundable tax credits depending on experience and qualifications. For directors, in addition to the pathway articulated by experience and qualifications, they can also earn tax credits by earning QRIS ratings of Proficient or higher, with higher ratings earning more in credits. For providers, tax credits are determined both by the level of quality of the center and the number of children served

through subsidy. Providers additionally earn a quarterly bonus through CCAP that is a percent of the payments they received that quarter, based on their QRIS rating. Finally, families are able to earn a tax credit based on their child care expenses and the quality rating of the center they send their child to. By aligning this package of financial incentives to the rating system, the Department is rewarding efforts to improve the quality of child care centers and creating a single focus for providers, directors, and teachers based on what matters most to achieve kindergarten readiness.

☐ Participation is required for all providers.

b) Which types of settings or distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care participate in the state/territory's QRIS? Check all that apply

- ☑ Licensed child care centers
- ☐ Licensed family child care homes
- ☐ License-exempt providers
- ☑ Early Head Start programs
- ☑ Head Start programs
- ☑ State prekindergarten or preschool programs
- ☐ Local district-supported prekindergarten programs
- ☑ Programs serving infants and toddlers
- ☐ Programs serving school-age children
- ☑ Faith-based settings
- ☑ Tribally operated programs
- ☐ Other

Describe:

7.4.3 Support and assess the quality of child care providers.

The Lead Agency may invest in the development, implementation, or enhancement of a tiered quality rating and improvement system for child care providers and services. Note: If a Lead Agency decides to invest CCDF quality dollars in a QRIS, that agency can use the funding to assist in meeting consumer education requirements (98.33). If the Lead Agency has a QRIS, respond to questions 7.4.3 through 7.4.6.

Do the state/territory's quality improvement standards align with or have reciprocity with any of the following standards?

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes. If yes, check the type of alignment, if any, between the state/territory's quality standards and other standards. Check all that apply.
  - [x] 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) .
  - [x] Programs that meet federal Head Start Program Performance Standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, there is a reciprocal agreement between Head Start programs and the quality improvement system).
  - [ ] Programs that meet national accreditation standards are able to meet all or part of the quality improvement standards (e.g., content of the standards is the same, an alternative pathway exists to meeting the standards).
  - [ ] Programs that meet all or part of state/territory school-age quality standards.
  - [ ] Other.

  Describe:

7.4.4 Do the state/territory's quality standards build on its licensing requirements and other regulatory requirements?

- [x] No
- [ ] Yes. If yes, check any links between the state/territory's quality standards and licensing requirements
  - [ ] Requires that a provider meet basic licensing requirements to qualify for the base level of the QRIS.
  - [ ] Embeds licensing into the QRIS
  - [ ] State/territory license is a "rated" license
  - [ ] Other.

Describe:

7.4.5 Does the state/territory provide financial incentives and other supports designed to expand the full diversity of child care options and help child care providers improve the quality of services that are provided through the QRIS

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes. If yes, check all that apply
  - [ ] One time grants, awards, or bonuses.
  - [x] Ongoing or periodic quality stipends
  - [ ] Higher subsidy payments
  - [x] Training or technical assistance related to QRIS.
  - [x] Coaching/mentoring.
  - [x] Scholarships, bonuses, or increased compensation for degrees/certificates
  - [ ] Materials and supplies
  - [x] Priority access for other grants or programs
  - [x] Tax credits (providers or parents)
  - [ ] Payment of fees (e.g., licensing, accreditation)
  - [ ] Other

Describe:

7.4.6 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The state will measure improvement in CLASS ratings across programs and networks, improvement in implementation of classroom best practices, and ultimately, improvement in kindergarten readiness outcomes. The state will also measure the impact of preparing more teachers, specifically those who receive the new Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates, on CLASS scores and child outcomes. The state showed improvement in CLASS scores between the practice year and 2017, increasing from a 4.73 to a 4.87. The goal for the state

is that all programs score Proficient of above, reaching 4.50 overall, and in the first real year of the unified system, the percent of programs scoring below Proficient decreased from 38% to 31.6%, showing progress toward this goal. The state is additionally focused on improving Instructional Support and Engaged Support for Learning domain level scores, and from the practice year to 2017 these scores improved by more than 1 tenth across 14,000 observations, showing improvement in experiences for children.

7.5 Improving the Supply and Quality of Child Care Programs and Services for Infants and Toddlers

Lead Agencies are encouraged to use the needs assessment to systematically review and improve the overall quality of care that infants and toddlers receive, the systems in place or needed to support and enhance the quality of infant and toddler providers, the capacity of the infant and toddler workforce to meet the unique needs of very young children, and the methods in place to increase the proportion of infants and toddlers in higher quality care, including any partnerships or coordination with Early Head Start and IDEA Part C programs. Lead Agencies are required to spend 3 percent of their total CCDF expenditures on activities to improve the supply and quality of their infant and toddler care. This is in addition to the general quality set-aside requirement.

7.5.1 What activities are being implemented by the state/territory to improve the supply (see also section 4) and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers? Check all that apply and describe

- [x] 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:

In 2014, the Louisiana legislature passed Act 717 to help improve family access to high quality child care programs. This Act called upon communities to develop and implement a coordinated enrollment system through which the public school system, the early learning centers who take publicly funded slots, the nonpublic schools that provide

publicly-funded early childhood services, and the Head Start grantees:

- Inform families about the availability of publicly funded early childhood care and education programs serving children four years of age or younger;
- Coordinate enrollment, eligibility criteria, and waiting lists to ensure that families are referred to other available publicly-funded early childhood programs should they be ineligible for or unable to access their primary choice;Collect family preferences regarding enrollment choices; Enroll at-risk children, using available public funds, based upon stated family preferences Additionally, Act 3 (2012) called for a unified quality rating system for all child care, Head Start, and PreK programs. Through this rating system, communities are focusing efforts to improve child care centers across the state through high-quality teacher-child interactions. This includes professional development aligned to the quality rating system, center-level supports through a state contract with Tulane to improve interactions with a mental health focus, and job-embedded coaching through teacher preparation programs that is aligned to the quality rating system.

☐ Establishing or expanding the operation of community- or neighborhood-based family child care networks.

Describe:

☑ Providing training and professional development to enhance child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers

Describe:

Child care teachers who participate in and receive scholarships for the Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate programs will receive training and professional development on providing developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers. Child Care Resource and Referral Centers also provide specific training on working with infants and toddlers, including strategies for promoting effective interactions and engaged learning environment.

☑ 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:

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies provide specific training for teachers of infant and toddlers. This is typically aligned to or in support of the state's unified quality rating system.

☑ 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 CCDF Lead Agency is partnering with the IDEA part C and B providers to increase awareness of these programs and ensure children suspected of having special needs are referred to service providers. EarlySteps providers are available to support child care caregivers in meeting the IFSP outcomes for children with disabilities in these settings. Through support provided in the setting, caregivers have the benefit of transferring these skills to meeting needs of other children in their setting with special needs.

☑ Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's QRIS, including classroom inventories and assessments

Describe:

The CCDF Lead Agency is using the toddler version of CLASS in the unified rating and improvement system. In addition, the classroom best practices (e.g. use of curriculum and assessment, teacher credentials, ratios) are reported for infant and toddler classrooms. The state is also adding the Infant CLASS observation tool to the state's accountability system. The tool was first piloted during the 2017-2018 school year, and will continue to be phased in across the state over the next two years. Through the inclusion of the Infant CLASS tool, infant teachers will receive in-depth feedback aligned to a high-quality tool multiple times a year.

☑ Developing infant and toddler components within the state/territory's child care licensing regulations

Describe:

The Child Care Licensing Regulations specify specific criteria for the health and safety of infants and toddlers in measures such as ratios, group sizes, etc.

☑ Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and developmental guidelines

Describe:

Infants and toddlers are included in Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards . The continuum of the Early Childhood and Development

Standards included in the ELDS is divided into five age levels: infants (birth to 11 months), young toddlers (9 to 18 months), older toddlers (16 to 36 months), three-year-olds (36 to 48 months), and four-year-olds (48 to 60 months). These age levels were selected because they represent developmentally significant periods in a young child's life and allow specification about the unique needs for infants in toddlers in supporting their growth and development.

☑ 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:

All information about individual programs provided by the LDOE is included in the Louisiana School and Center Finder. This information includes ratings on Emotional Support (PreK) and Emotional and Behavioral Support (Toddler). These ratings are derived by using the CLASS ™ tool, which measures the quality of classroom interactions that includes supports for social emotional and language development. In addition to the rating and score, a video is provided to explain to families how these ratings are derived, and a metric description is provided for each metric in family-friendly language so they can understand what the rating is measuring. This includes specific information about how the quality of interactions that support toddler development is measured and what it would look like and information on the infant/toddler curriculum used to support infant and toddler language, social-emotional, and both early literacy and numeracy cognitive development.

☑ 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:

The CCDF Lead Agency has a contract for mental health consultation services, with some of that focused exclusively on infant and toddlers. Mental Health Consultants are available to licensed child care centers who request services and support. Mental Health Consultants provide a six-month consultation, visiting centers on a biweekly basis. Their purpose is to support child care teachers in implementing social-emotional behavior intervention models which can be specifically targeted to infants and toddlers.

☐ Coordinating with child care health consultants.

Describe:

☐ Coordinating with mental health consultants.

Describe:

☐ Other

Describe:

7.5.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The state will measure improvement in Toddler CLASS ratings across programs and networks, improvement in implementation of classroom best practices, and ultimately, improvement in kindergarten readiness outcomes. The state will also measure the impact of preparing more teachers, specifically those who receive the new Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates, on CLASS scores and child outcomes. The state showed improvement in CLASS scores between the practice year and 2017, increasing from a 4.73 to a 4.87. The goal for the state is that all programs score Proficient of above, reaching 4.50 overall, and in the first real year of the unified system, thepercent of programs scoring below Proficient decreased from 38% to 31.6%, showing progress toward this goal. The state is additionally focused on improving Instructional Support and Engaged Support for Learning domain level scores, and from the practice year to 2017 these scores improved by more than 1 tenth across 14,000 observations, showing improvement in experiences for children.

The state is also adding the Infant CLASS observation tool to the state's accountability system. The tool was first piloted during the 2017-2018 school year, and will continue to be phased in across the state over the next two years. Through the inclusion of the Infant CLASS tool, infant teachers will receive in-depth feedback aligned to a high-quality tool multiple times a year. Additionally, the state's curriculum initiative which provided significant support to child care centers to purchase high-quality curriculum is increasing the quality of

services for infants and toddlers. The state measures the adoption of a high-quality curriculum for infants and toddlers on the performance profile for each site via the informational metrics.

7.6 Child Care Resource and Referral

A Lead Agency may expend funds to establish or expand a statewide system of child care resource and referral services (98.53(a)(5)). It can be coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the Lead Agency, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based, or regionally based lead child care resource and referral organization (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii)). This effort may include activities done by local or regional child care and resource referral agencies, as discussed in section 1.7.

7.6.1 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The LDOE will continue to set and manage both CCR&R's and local Community Networks to performance milestones. For CCR&Rs the state conducts a competitive process to identify the best option for each region and/or locality. The LDOE then establishes a performance-based contract with each CCR&R for completing referrals, training and coaching/technical assistance. For CCR&R's the state collects monthly reports on the number of trainings and technical assistance visits completed, as well as referrals. The LDOE monitors the progress of child care centers within each CCR&R region, as measured by CLASS through Louisiana's Performance Profile. The LDOE shares this data with local CCR&R's and encourages these contracted agencies to identify trends and to evolve training focuses to reflect the needs identified by the data. The LDOE evaluates CCR&Rs based on their completion of training and visits that meet the needs of the community. The LDOE also completes a teacher and family satisfaction survey each year, which reveals critical information about the effectiveness of training and communication received by either families or teachers within the CCR&R regions.

For local Community Networks, the state conducts a competitive process to identify a local

Lead Agency that represents the best option for each region and/or locality. The state then establishes performance milestones based on completion and accuracy of observations for the new unified quality rating and improvement system and completion of a collaborative plan for and implementation of local coordinated enrollment, including counting all at-risk children, providing information on public options, coordinating eligibility and application processes and matching families to their preferred options.

Beyond performance-based measurement, the state will also measure outcomes. The state will continue to measure how programs that participate in CCDF-funded support programs perform on the unified quality rating and improvement system. The state conducts an annual enrollment survey to measure the statewide implementation of coordinated enrollment. Lastly, the state will report on family satisfaction with referral, information and enrollment via informational metric on the performance profiles that are part of the new unified rating and improvement system.

7.7 Facilitating Compliance With State Standards

7.7.1 What strategies does your state/territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers' compliance with state/territory requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety and with state/territory licensing standards? Describe:

If funding permits, the Lead Agency would pay for the first year (for staff who have submitted fingerprints from March 1, 2018 – September 30, 2018) of costs associated with obtaining the new Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC) including travel to Baton Rouge for new hires when fingerprint locations were not available. The costs would also include LDOE's administration fee, fingerprint fee, fee for a search of the Child Abuse and Neglect Registry and fee for out of state checks.

7.7.2 Does the state/territory provide financial assistance to support child care providers in complying with minimum health and safety requirements?

- [ ] No
- [x] Yes. If yes, which types of providers can access this financial assistance?
  - [x] Licensed CCDF providers
  - [x] Licensed non-CCDF providers
  - [x] License-exempt CCDF providers
  - [ ] Other

  Describe:

7.7.3 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The Lead Agency will track and monitor the numbers of applicants submitted through the LDOE system and submitted fingerprints. The Lead Agency will only reimburse for CCCBCs for those who have applied to LDOE and submitted fingerprints by September 30, 2018.

7.8 Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Programs and Services

7.8.1 Describe how the state/territory measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services in both child care centers and family child care homes currently being offered, including any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the state/territory evaluates how those

tools positively impact children

The new unified rating and improvement system includes two components: a rating based on scores from the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and information on classroom best practices (e.g. use of curriculum and assessment, ratios, teacher credentials). Following the 2015-2016 practice year, in 2017, every publicly-funded program in the state participated and received a real performance profile and rating through the Louisiana School and Center Finder. These performance profiles for each site measure classroom success of supporting positive interactions between teachers and students through two CLASS observations a year (one in the spring and in the fall). These observation scores for all classrooms are averaged together to determine the rating for the center. The performance profiles also report of several additional informational metrics based on classroom best practices (e.g. use of curriculum and assessment, ratios, teacher credentials, etc). While the results of these information metrics are made publicly available, they are not considered in the performance profile score.

7.8.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the State/Territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in child care centers and family child care homes within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

The state will measure improvement in CLASS ratings across programs and networks, improvement in implementation of classroom best practices, and ultimately, improvement in kindergarten readiness outcomes. The state will also measure the impact of preparing more teachers, specifically those who receive the new Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates, on CLASS scores and child outcomes. The state showed improvement in CLASS scores between the practice year and 2017, increasing from a 4.73 to a 4.87. The goal for the state is that all programs score Proficient of above, reaching 4.50 overall, and in the first real year, the percent of programs scoring below Proficient decreased from 38% to 31.6%, showing progress toward this goal. The state is additionally focused on improving Instructional Support and Engaged Support for Learning domain level scores, and from the practice year to 2017 these scores improved by more than 1 tenth across 14,000 observations, showing

improvement in experiences for children.

7.9 Accreditation Support

7.9.1 Does the state/territory support child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality?

☐ Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for both child care centers and family child care homes

Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to child care centers and family child care homes to achieve accreditation

☐ Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for child care centers only. Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to child care centers.

Describe:

☐ Yes, the state/territory has supports operating statewide or territory-wide for family child care homes only. Describe the support efforts for all types of accreditation that the state/territory provides to family child care

Describe:

☐ Yes, the state/territory has supports operating as a pilot-test or in a few localities but not statewide or territory-wide

☐ Focused on child care centers

Describe:

☐ Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

☐ No, but the state/territory is in the accreditation development phase

☐ Focused on child care centers

Describe:

☐ Focused on family child care homes

Describe:

☑ No, the state/territory has no plans for accreditation development

7.9.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

Not Applicable

7.10 Program Standards

7.10.1 Describe how the state/territory supports state/territory or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards, including standards for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and/or school-age children

An initiative resulting from the 2010 Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment is the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAPSACC) program in child care centers. NAPSACC enhances policies, practices, and environments to promote nutritional food quality, physical activity in terms of amount and quality, and staff-child interactions. NAPSACC is an initiative of Bureau of Family Health, Southeast Area Health Education Center (AHEC), and DHH Health Promotion. In addition, the BFH is working with the Louisiana Breastfeeding Coalition (LBC) and a physician at Our Lady of the Lake to implement a breastfeeding support program (providing time and space to express, promoting safe storage and handling,and offering support for breastfeeding families) in Louisiana child care centers.

LAUNCH: Linking Action to Unmet Needs in Children's Health (LAUNCH) is federally funded

by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). LAUNCH aims to ensure that all children, ages 0 to 8, reach social, emotional, behavioral, physical,and cognitive milestones. This grant is a collaborative effort between DHH's Office of Public Health and the Office of Behavioral Health. LAUNCH focuses on improving coordination and collaboration across systems that serve young children and their families, providing greater access to high-quality care and evidence-based programs for young children and their families, and raising awareness and increasing knowledge about young child wellness through public education and workforce development activities. Improvement in each of these areas will help establish a foundation for children to thrive in school and beyond. The communities of focus are Lafayette, Acadia, and Vermilion parishes.

Well-Ahead Louisiana : Well-Ahead Louisiana is a campaign started by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals aimed at improving the health and wellness of Louisiana Citizens. Well-Ahead Louisiana promotes and recognizes smart choices in early childhood education settings that make it easier for children, parents, and staff to all live healthier lives.Child care settings that participate in Well-Ahead Louisiana can be designated as WellSpotsby DHH by going tobacco free, becoming a Breastfeeding Champion, promoting healthy messaging, supporting employee wellness, and participating in NAP SACC or Let's MoveChild Care. Let's Move Child Care (LMCC) is part of First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Initiative to prevent childhood obesity. LMCC encourages and supports child care and early education providers to make positive changes in their programs in order to work toward a healthier future for children.

7.10.2 Describe the measureable indicators of progress relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services within the state/territory and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures

These programs are not supported by CCDF funds. They are provided by our sister agency, Louisiana Department of Health.

7.11 Early Learning and Development Guidelines and Other Quality Improvement Activities

7.11.1 If quality funds are used to develop, maintain, or implement early learning and development guidelines, describe the measureable indicators that will be used to evaluate the state/territory's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services and the data on the extent to which the state/territory has met these measures (98.53(f)(3)).

As part of its multi-year effort to unify early childhood, Louisiana has created one statewide rating and improvement system for all publicly-funded early childhood programs. This system will help ensure every child has access to a classroom with high quality interactions and instructions, by using the research-based CLASS system as the primary measure and informing families of quality via individualized program profiles. For the first time, families and programs across the state can measure and discuss quality for every provider in a consistent, developmentally appropriate and rigorous manner. The state reports on quality, including both the CLASS measure and classroom best practices (e.g., use of aligned curriculum and assessment, ratios, teacher preparation) through performance profiles for each site and community network.

As part of this effort, the state continues to seek to align and coordinate all quality improvement funding mentioned in the earlier sections to support improvement in interactions, instruction and the implementation of classroom best practices in a coherent and outcomes-focused manner.

For example, the state’s new consumer education website represents the unified system of early childhood by providing relevant quality information about all early childhood programs. To explain to families how programs are measured, a short animated family-friendly video is included next to the rating that can explain to families what quality in early childhood settings looks like, and how it is measured.

7.11.2 List and describe any other activities that the state/territory provides to improve the quality of child care services for infants and toddlers, preschool-aged, and school-aged children, which may include consumer and provider education activities, and also describe the measureable indicators of progress for each activity relevant to this use of funds that the state/territory will use to evaluate its progress in improving provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or kindergarten entry and the data on the extent to which the state or territory has met these measures. Describe:

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 Check and describe how the Lead Agency ensures that all its staff members and any staff members in other agencies who administer the CCDF program through MOUs, grants and contracts are informed and trained regarding program requirements and integrity. Check all that apply:

☑ Train on policy manual

Describe:

Staff receive annual trainings on all program policies and procedures. In addition, staff receive additional ongoing individual and/or team training based on trending occurrences.

☑ Train on policy change notices

Describe:

Staff receivetraining on policy changes prior to the changes going into affect as well as additional ongoing individual and/or team training based on trending occurrences.

☑ Ongoing monitoring and assessment of policy implementation

Describe:

The State has regular internal meetings among its staff to review the program, discuss any modifications, and continuously make improvements.

☐ Other

Describe:

8.1.2 Lead Agencies must ensure the integrity of the use of funds through sound fiscal management and must ensure that financial practices are in place (98.68 (a)(1)). Describe the processes in place for the Lead Agency to ensure sound fiscal management practices for all expenditures of CCDF funds. Check all that apply:

☑ Verifying and processing billing records to ensure timely payments to providers

Describe:

Our state utilizes a statewide automated time and attendance process called Tracking of Time Services (TOTS). TOTS uses two technology based systems: 1.) Biometric technology, specifically finger imaging, and 2.) Interactive Voice Response (IVR) to document attendance. This automated process submits attendance electronically to the Department for each eligible child. The attendance records are matched with the families service record tocalculate the weekly payments that are made to the provider two weeks after services have been provided.

☐ Fiscal oversight of grants and contracts

Describe:

☑ Tracking systems to ensure reasonable and allowable costs

Describe:

TOTS reduces manual processes, saves time for staff and providers and improves the frequency and accuracy of payments to providers. Providers and CCAP participants are required to participate in TOTS to receive CCAP payments and benefits for child care services.

☐ Other

Describe:

8.1.3 Check and describe the processes that the Lead Agency will use to identify risk in their CCDF program. Check all that apply:

☑ Conduct a risk assessment of policies and procedures

Describe:

Internal control self-assessment provided by ACF is conducted annually and maintain by Fraud and Recovery Management Unit. Data analytics on trending areas for improvement are completed quarterly and reviewed with management.

☑ Establish checks and balances to ensure program integrity

Describe:

There is a separation of duties between program staff who determine eligbility and finance who issues payments.

☑ Use supervisory reviews to ensure accuracy in eligibility determination

Describe:

Case readings are completed by supervisory staff and program specialists. Social service analyst supervisors must conduct 10 formal case readings per month per analyst per supervisor and program specialist must conduct 30 formal case readings per quarter.

☐ Other

Describe:

8.1.4 Lead Agencies conduct a wide variety of activities to fight fraud and ensure program integrity. Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud and other program violations to ensure program integrity. Program violations can include both intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations, as defined by the Lead Agency. These violations and errors, identified through the error-rate review process may result in payment or nonpayment (administrative) errors and may or may not be the result of fraud, based on the Lead Agency definition. Check and describe any activities that the Lead Agency conducts to ensure program integrity.

a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent fraud or intentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of fraud and intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

☑ Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS)).

Describe

The Lead Agency currently compares data provided in theWork Number and Louisiana Immunization Network for Kids Statewide (LINKS) during the eligibility process and case review process. In addition, compliance data is provided by the Louisiana Division of Nutrition Support to the CCAP Fraud Management Unit. CCAP Fraud Management Unit works directly with DCFS on Low Income and Strategies To Empower People (STEP) cases on fraud and intentional program violations.

☑ Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

The Lead Agency utilizes a web based reportingapplication that interfaces with eligibility payment processing systems to generate reports of possible discrepancies in payments and eligibility determination. Types of reports include: CCAP cases associated with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cases closed for sufficient income, household designees who are on multiple cases, previous check-in /previous check out, underutilized authorizations and care provided outside of hours.

☑ Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Through provider monitoring and red flag reports the Lead Agency may request a provider's manual attendance records then review theminternally compared to their manual/electronic billing request and/or billing records of a provider.

☑ Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Case readings are completed by Supervisory Staff and Program Specialists. Social Service Analyst Supervisors must conductten formal case readings per month per analyst and Program Specialist must conduct 30 formal case readings per quarter. Additional administrative reviews occur on cases that receive a complaint, and as a part of the 403 monitoring process. Random samples are extracted to analyze payment and administrative errors and to ensure integrity during the enrollment and eligibility process.

☑ Audit provider records.

Describe:

Retrospective and prospective audits are completed on provider billing records through internal and external referrals. Based on the information provided during the complaint and the preliminary investigation, providers are prioritized based on the seriousness of the allegation and recovery amounts. Louisiana follows an approved written audit procedure which guides the audit of provider records, monitoring, and training in each allegation.

☑ Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Staff receive annual trainings on all program policies and procedures. In addition, staff receive additional ongoing individual and/or team training based on trending occurrences. Louisiana follows an approved system of tracking individual staff errors and incoming complaints. This helps administration to tailor training to individual staff needs and to plan both large and small group trainings on all topics and areas of need.

☐ Other

Describe:

b) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity.

☐ Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Describe:

☑ Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

Our state utilizes a Web Based Application system that interfaces with eligibility payment processing systems to generate reports of possible discrepancies in

payments and eligibility determination. Types of reports include: Social Security number change, Child Care Assistance Program System (CAPS), case id mismatch comparison, time and attendance exception listing, application out of conformity report, application pending 30 days, referral records over 30 days, time and attendance failed authorizations, auditor listing semi-automated invoices, CAPS early head start child care partnership status over 30 days, expired service authorizations and time and attendance exception (this includes provider bank information discrepancy). Additionally, the Sampling Decisions Assurance Field Plan(SDAFP), and 403 records review worksheet are a part of an internal continuous monitoring process and help to identify areas of potential payment concerns.

☑ Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

Through provider monitoring and red flag reports the Lead Agency may request a provider's manual attendance records then review theminternally compared to their manual/electronic billing request and/or billing records of a provider.

☑ Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

Case readings are completed by Supervisory Staff and Program Specialists. Social Service Analyst Supervisors must conductten formal case readings per month per analyst and Program Specialist must conduct 30 formal case readings per quarter. Additional administrative reviews occur on cases that receive a complaint, and as a part of the 403 monitoring process. Random samples are extracted to analyze payment and administrative errors and to ensure integrity during the enrollment and eligibility process.

☑ Audit provider records.

Describe:

Retrospective and prospective audits are completed on provider billing records through internal and external referrals. Based on the information provided during the complaint and the preliminary investigation, providers are prioritized based on the seriousness of the allegation and recovery amounts. Louisiana follows an approved written audit procedure which guides the audit of provider records, monitoring, and

training in each allegation.

☑ Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

Staff receive annual trainings on all program policies and procedures. In addition, staff receive additional ongoing individual and/or team training based on trending occurrences. Louisiana follows an approved system of tracking individual staff errors and incoming complaints. This helps administration to tailor training to individual staff needs and to plan both large and small group trainings on all topics and areas of need.

☐ Other

Describe:

c) Check and describe all activities the Lead Agency conducts to identify and prevent agency errors. Include in the description how each activity assists in the identification and prevention of agency errors.

☑ Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF program, CACFP, FNS, Medicaid) or other databases (e.g., State Directory of New Hires, Social Security Administration, PARIS).

Describe:

The Lead Agency currently compares data provided in theWork Number and Louisiana Immunization Network for Kids Statewide (LINKS) during the eligibility process and case review process.

☐ Run system reports that flag errors (include types).

Describe:

☐ Review enrollment documents and attendance or billing records

Describe:

☐ Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews.

Describe:

☐ Audit provider records.

Describe:

☐ Train staff on policy and/or audits.

Describe:

☐ Other

Describe:

8.1.5 The Lead Agency is required to identify and recover misspent funds as a result of fraud, and it has the option to recover any misspent funds as a result of errors.

a) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency uses to investigate and recover improper payments due to fraud. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payment due to fraud or intentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

☑ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

There is no minimum recovery threshold and action will be taken to recover all payments made on behalf of: 1. ineligible households that are currently participating in the program; 2. any ineligible household resulting from the household's act of fraud, such as the submission of false or altered documents or information, intentionally making a false or misleading statement, or misrepresenting, concealing, or withholding relevant fact; 3. any ineligible household resulting from errors that are discovered in a quality control review; and 4. any ineligible service that results in an improper overpayment.

☑ Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

The Lead Agency cooperates with the Office of Debt Recovery and its joint partners

which are the Louisiana Department of Revenue and the Louisiana Attorney General's Office. Set out to collect any debt owed to the state as a results of fraud. When a debt is 60 days past due notification is sent to the debtor advising them of the obligation of repayment of funds. A second 30 day final demand letter is sent to debtor if the Lead Agency has not received payment after the 60 day letter. When payment is not receive within 30 days of the final notification of demand for payment. The Lead Agency transferred the account to the Office of Debt Recovery who adds an additional fee of 25% to be paid by the debtor and starts additional collection methods on behalf of the Lead Agency.

☑ Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

The Fraud management Unit (FMU) is responsible for notifying the household(s) and/or provider(s) of the overpayment and identifies the responsible party for the overpayment. A Repayment Agreement is sent out to the responsible party for repayment and is due back within 10 calendar days from the date on the agreement. All monthly payments begin on the 1st of the month following the month in which the repayment agreement is signed by the debtor.

☑ Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

Providers are allowed to have money recouped from future CCAP Payments by selecting the option on their repayment agreement. When this option is selected the Lead Agency will set up automatic payments to be withheld from the provider future payment on specific dates. When payments are successfully withheld the provider debt to the Lead Agency is reduced by the confirmed payment amount.

☑ Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

When the debtor fails to make payment the Office of Debt Recovery (ODR)they intercept, seize, or garnish any state tax refund in the name of the debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing the delinquent final debt.

☑ Recover through other means.

Describe:

Financial Institution Data Match Program. When the debtor fails to make payment the Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) they intercept, seize or garnish any monies identified in an account that is in the name of any debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing a delinquent final debt. Office of Debt Recovery will give the Lead Agency notice thirty days prior to the utilization of any collection tool not specified by La. R.S. 47:1676.

☑ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

The Lead Agency has a separate unit within the LDOE that investigates internal and external referrals, perform audits on provider billing records and recovers improper payments according to establish policies and procedures.

☐ Other

Describe:

b) Check any activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to unintentional program violations. Include a description of the results of such activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to, the following:

☐ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

☑ Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

The Lead Agency cooperates with the Office of Debt Recovery and its joint partners which are the Louisiana Department of Revenue and the Louisiana Attorney General's Office. When a debt is 60 days past due notification is sent to the debtor advising them of the obligation of repayment of funds. A second 30 day final demand letter is

sent to debtor if the Lead Agency has not received payment after the 60 day letter. When payment is not received within 30 days of the final of notification of final demand for payment. The Lead Agency transfers the account to the Office of Debt Recovery who adds an additional fee of 25% to be paid by the debtor and starts additional collection methods on behalf of the Lead Agency.

☑ Recover through repayment plans.

Describe:

The Fraud management Unit (FMU) is responsible for notifying the household(s) and/or provider(s) of the overpayment and identifies the responsible party for the overpayment. A Repayment Agreement is sent out to the responsible party for repayment and is due back within 10 calendar days from the date on the agreement. All monthly payments begin on the 1st of the month following the month in which the repayment agreement is signed by the debtor.

☑ Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

Providers are allowed to have money recouped from future CCAP Payments by select the option on their repayment agreement. When this option is selected the Lead Agency with set up payments automatic payments to be withheld from the provider future payment on specific dates. When payments are successfully withheld the provider debt to the Lead Agency is reduce by the confirmed payment amount.

☑ Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

When the debtor fails to make payment to the Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) to clear debt with the Lead Agency. The Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) will intercept, seize or garnish any state tax refund in the name of any debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing a delinquent final debt.

☑ Recover through other means.

Describe:

Financial Institution Data Match Program. When the debtor fails to make payment tothe Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) to clear debt with the Lead Agency.The Office of

Debt Recovery (ODR) will intercept, seize or garnish any monies identified in an account that is in the name of any debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing a delinquent final debt. Office of Debt Recovery will give the Lead Agency notice thirty days prior to the utilization of any collection tool not specified by La. R.S. 47:1676.

☐ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

☑ Other

Describe:

If the participant and/or provider has been determined to have committed fraud or intentional program violation, the participant and/or provider will be required to repay all improperly paid benefits and unable to receive CCAP during the disqualification period:

- For 12 months for the first violation
- For 24 months for the second violation
- Permanently for the third violation

c) Check and describe all activities that the Lead Agency will use to investigate and recover improper payments due to agency errors. Include in the description how each activity assists in the investigation and recovery of improper payments due to administrative errors. Include a description of the results of such activity.

☑ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount of an improper payment and identify the minimum dollar amount

Describe:

Inadvertent household errors require a minimum of $126 recovery threshold to be met and the household must still be an participant of the program. Action will be taken to recover all other inadvertent household errors that result in improper payments made on behalf of ineligible households and any ineligible service that results in an improper overpayment.

☑ Coordinate with and refer to the other state/territory agencies (e.g., state/territory collection agency, law enforcement agency).

Describe:

The Lead Agency cooperates with the Office of Debt Recovery and its joint partners which are the Louisiana Department of Revenue and the Louisiana Attorney General's Office. When a debt is 60 days past due notification is sent to the debtor advising them of the obligation of repayment of funds. A second 30 day final demand letter is sent to debtor if the Lead Agency has not received payment after the 60 day letter. When payment is not received within 30 days of the final of notification of final demand for payment. The Lead Agency transfers the account to the Office of Debt Recovery who adds an additional fee of 25% to be paid by the debtor and starts additional collection methods on behalf of the Lead Agency.

☑ Recover through repayment plans.

Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments.

The Fraud management Unit (FMU) is responsible for notifying the household(s) and/or provider(s) of the overpayment and identifies the responsible party for the overpayment. A Repayment Agreement is sent out to the responsible party for repayment and is due back within 10 calendar days from the date on the agreement. All monthly payments begin on the 1st of the month following the month in which the repayment agreement is signed by the debtor.

☑ Reduce payments in subsequent months.

Describe:

Providers are allowed to have money recouped from future CCAP Payments by select the option on their repayment agreement. When this option is selected the Lead Agency with set up payments automatic payments to be withheld from the provider future payment on specific dates. When payments are successfully withheld the provider debt to the Lead Agency is reduce by the confirmed payment amount.

☑ Recover through state/territory tax intercepts.

Describe:

When the debtor fails to make payment to the Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) to clear debt with the Lead Agency. The Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) will intercept, seize or garnish any state tax refund in the name of any debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing a delinquent final debt.

☑ Recover through other means.

Describe:

Financial Institution Data Match Program. When the debtor fails to make payment The Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) to clear debt with the Lead Agency.The Office of Debt Recovery (ODR) will intercept, seize or garnish any monies identified in an account that is in the name of any debtor who is listed in ODR's electronic debt registry as owing a delinquent final debt. Office of Debt Recovery will give the Lead Agency notice thirty days prior to the utilization of any collection tool not specified by La. R.S. 47:1676.

☑ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments and describe the composition of the unit below.

Describe:

The Lead Agency has a separate unit within the LDOE that investigates internal and external referrals, perform audits on provider billing records and recovers improper payments according to establish policies and procedures.

☐ Other

Describe:

8.1.6 What type of sanction will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations? Check and describe all that apply:

☑ Disqualify the client. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified.

Describe:

When an applicant/co-applicant does not agree with the action that has been taken by the Fraud Management Unit (FMU) staff, the FMU Supervisor will address the issue informally. If the discrepancy cannot be resolved informally, the following dispute process must be followed:

1. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the decision notice, the applicant or co-applicant

must send written request of dispute to the CCAP Eligibility Program Manager. Please note that it may take ten calendar days for review of the request and a written response sent.

2. Notice-written notice is considered given:

a. when it is sent by email or fax to the last email address or fax number furnished to the department;

b. when it is hand-delivered; or

c. on the fifth calendar day after it was mailed to the last mailing address furnished to the department.

3. If the applicant or co-applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the CCAP Eligibility Program Manager, the applicant or co-applicant must send a written request for a final dispute to the Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent within 15 calendar days of receipt of the decision notice sent from the CCAP Eligibility Program Manager. The Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent has 15 calendar days to review the request and respond in writing.

a. The decision of the Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent is final.

b. All requests for disputes and responses must be in writing.

c. If the applicant or co-applicant misses the timeline, the right to dispute is forfeited.

d. All disputes sent by applicant or co-applicant will be counted as sent on the date as postmarked.

☑ Disqualify the provider. If checked, describe this process, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified.

Describe:

1. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the decision notice, the provider must send a written request of dispute to the Louisiana Department of Education CCAP Provider Certification Program Manager. Please note that it may take 10 calendar days for review of the request and a written notice sent.

2. Notice-written notice is considered given:

a. when it is sent by email or fax to the last email address or fax number furnished to the department;

b. when it is hand-delivered; or

c. on the fifth calendar day after it was mailed to the last mailing address furnished to the department.

3. If the provider is not satisfied with the decision of the CCAP Provider Certification

Program Manager, the provider must send a written request for a final dispute to the Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent within 15 calendar days of receipt of the decision notice from the CCAP Provider Certification Program Manager. The FMU Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent has 15 calendar days to review the request and respond in writing.

a. The decision of the FMU Early Childhood Assistant Superintendent is final.

b. All requests for disputes and responses must be in writing.

c. If the provider misses the timeline, the right to dispute is forfeited.

d. All disputes sent by a provider will be counted as sent on the date as postmarked.

4. Any provider that has their license or registration revoked is automatically disqualified from the CCAP program.

☐ Prosecute criminally.

Describe:

☐ Other.

Describe:

Appendix A: Background Check Waiver Request Form

Lead Agencies may apply for a temporary waiver for certain background check requirements if milestone prerequisites have been fully implemented. These waivers will be considered "transitional and legislative waivers" to provide transitional relief from conflicting or duplicative requirements preventing implementation, or an extended period of time in order for the state/territory legislature to enact legislation to implement the provisions (98.19(b)(1)) These waivers are limited to a one-year period and may be extended for at most one additional year from the date of initial approval.

Approval of these waiver requests is subject to and contingent on OCC review and approval of responses in section 5 questions 5.4.1 -- 5.4.4 to confirm that the milestones are met. If milestone prerequisites are not met, the waiver request will not be approved. Approved waivers would begin October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. If approved, States and Territories will have the option to renew these waivers for one additional year as long as progress is demonstrated during the initial waiver period. Separate guidance will be issued later on the timeline and criteria for requesting the waiver renewal.

Overview of Background Check Implementation deadlines

Original deadline for implementation (658H(j)(1) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2017

Initial one-year extension deadline (658H(j)(2) of CCDBG Act): September 30, 2018

One-year waiver deadline (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(i)): September 30, 2019

Waiver deadline one-year renewal (45 CFR 98.19(b)(1)(ii)): September 30, 2020

Waiver approval for new (prospective) staff, existing staff or staff hired provisionally until background checks are completed, are subject to and contingent upon the OCC review and approval of responses to 5.4.9 that demonstrate that the state/territory requires: (1) the provider to submit the background check request before the staff person begins working; and (2) pending the results of the background check, the staff person must be supervised at all times by an individual who has completed the background check.

To submit a background check waiver request, complete the form below.

Check and describe each background check provision for which the Lead Agency is requesting a time-limited waiver extension.