



New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services

www.ocfs.state.ny.us

David A. Paterson
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

March 6, 2009

Ms. Kristen Monroe, Commissioner
Cortland County Department Social Services
County Office Building
60 Central Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045-5590

Dear Commissioner Monroe:

This letter is to inform you that the child care section found in the administrative component of your Annual Plan Update 2008-2009 was approved on March 5, 2009. The child care section became effective on March 5, 2009.

This approval is being issued separate from the approval of other sections of your plan in order to accommodate your county's need to implement the child care services provisions. A letter approving the remaining sections of your plan will be sent upon their approval.

If you have any questions about this approval or the child care section found in your Annual Plan Update 2008-2009 please contact Ms. Amy Ryan, (518) 474-9620 or by e-mail at Amy.Ryan@ocfs.state.ny.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice M. Molnar".

Janice M. Molnar
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services



APPENDIX G-1

**CHILD CARE SECTION
DATED 2007-2009**

County: Cortland

I. Administration (Required Section)

Describe how your district is organized to administer the child care program, including any functions that are subcontracted to an outside agency.

1. Identify the unit that has primary responsibility for the administration of child care for:

Public Assistance Families: **Day Care Unit, under the supervision of the Employment Manager**

Transitioning Families: **Day Care Unit, under the supervision of the Employment Manager**

Income Eligible Families: **Day Care Unit, under the supervision of the Employment Manager**

Title XX: **Family and Children's Services Eligibility Unit**

Indicate the use of New York State Child Care Block Grant (NYSCCBG) Funds.

FFY 06-07 Rollover Funds (<i>this amount is available from the NYSCCBG ceiling report in the claiming system</i>)	\$43,428
Estimate of FFY 07-08 Rollover Funds	\$755,980
Estimate of Flexible Funds for Families (FFFS) for child care subsidies	\$0
NYSCCBG Allocation for SFY 08-09	\$1,113,411
Estimate of Local Share	\$53,422

Total Estimated NYSCCBG Amount: \$1,966,242

A. Subsidy	\$1,829,292
B. Other program costs (excluding subsidy)	\$0
C. Administrative costs	\$136,950

3. Does your district have a contract or formal agreement with another organization to perform any of the following functions?

Function:

Organization:

Amount of Contract:

- Eligibility screening
Function
- Assistance in locating care
- Child Care Information
Systems
- Determining if legally-
exempt providers meet
State approved additional
local standards (if
applicable)
- Other

APPENDIX G-3

III. Reasonable Distance, Very Low Income, Family Share, Case Closings and Openings, and Fraud and Abuse Control Activities (Required Section)

Reasonable Distance

Your district is required to define reasonable distance based on community standards for determining accessible child care.

The following defines "reasonable distance": **Reasonable distance is defined as one hour of travel time from home to the child care location to the employment location.**

Describe any steps/consultations made to arrive at your definition: **This definition was derived in consideration of the geography and transportation system in Cortland County. Providing timely transportation is available to individuals in need of daycare services. There are no locations within the county from which a round trip to the City of Cortland, where almost all of the registered and center daycare providers are located, would take more than an hour. The concept of using time for this definition rather than miles allows us to account for the amount of time it may take an individual accessing daycare services through the use of the public bus system. It was felt that the use of mileage in the definition would not allow us to achieve a reasonable and consistent definition for all individuals needing to use daycare in Cortland County.**

Very Low Income

Very Low Income is defined by each district and is used in determining priorities for child care benefits.

Very Low Income is defined as **200%** of the State Income Standard.

Family Share

Family share is the weekly amount paid towards the costs of the child care services by the child's parent or caretaker. In establishing family share, your district must select a percentage from 10% to 35% to use in calculating the family share. The family share of child care is calculated by applying the family share percentage against the amount of the family's annual gross income that is in excess of the State Income Standard divided by 52.

Family Share Percentage selected by our district **35%**.

Case Closings (select one or two)

1. The district must describe below how priority is given to federally mandated priorities and describe local priorities. If all NYSCCBG funds are committed, the district will discontinue funding to those families that have lower priorities in order to serve families with higher priorities. Described below is how the district will select cases to be closed in the event that there are insufficient or no funds available.

2. The district has not established priorities beyond the federally-mandated priorities. If all NYSCCBG funds are committed, case closings for families which are not eligible under a child care guarantee and are not a federally-mandated priority must be based on the length of time in receipt of services. The length of time used to close cases may be based either on the shortest or longest time receiving child care services but must be consistent for all families. The district has chosen to close cases based on:

- shortest time receiving child care services
- longest time receiving child care services

Case Openings

The district must describe below how priority is given to federally mandated priorities and how the district will select cases to be opened in the event that there are insufficient funds available.

Applications will be logged in the order they are received, although families with children with special needs will be prioritized first. Families who are eligible for guaranteed child care will be opened within required timeframes and all other families will be placed on the waiting list upon submission of an application. For families in categories two and three, denial notices indicating funds are not available will be issued notifying them they are on the waiting list. The waiting list

and funding status is reviewed monthly to determine how many applications can be sent to families on the waiting list. Applications are sent to families based on the date the family was placed on the waiting list, with those on for the longest time receiving an application first. When applications are sent to families on the waiting list, they are given a minimum of ten days to return a completed application for an eligibility determination to be made. The family's application is then removed from the waiting list.

Fraud and Abuse Control Activities

The district must identify below the criteria it will use to determine which child care subsidy applications suggest a higher than acceptable risk for fraudulent or erroneous child care subsidy payment and procedures for referring such applications to the district's front end detection system.

The criteria used to determine which applications will be referred to our front end detection system are:

- **The client is self employed without adequate business records to support financial assertions;**
- **A prior history of denial, case closing, or overpayments resulting from an investigation;**
- **If the application is inconsistent with the prior case;**
- **If the county of residence is questionable;**
- **If they have been separated from marriage within the past month.**

The district must describe below its sampling methodology used to determine which cases it will seek verification of an applicant or recipient's continued need for child care including, as applicable, verification of participation in employment, education or other required activities.

All cases are recertified every 6 months, where the complete eligibility of that case is redetermined. This includes verification of the family's continued need for day care, and requiring them to provide verification of employment, and education or attendance in any approved activity. The recipient is required to provide pay stubs, as well as a statement from their employer or the instructor of any education program they may be attending. Verification is also required of the provider schedule and the rate charged.

Any inconsistencies will be reviewed for any overpayment, and referred to our investigation fraud unit as appropriate.

The district must describe below its sampling methodology used to determine which child care providers of subsidized child care services they will review for the purpose of comparing the child care providers attendance forms for children receiving subsidized child care services and any child and adult care food program inspection forms to verify that child care was actually provided on the days listed on the attendance forms.

On a quarterly basis, the Cortland Area Child Care Council will send the local district a list of providers that they have completed an on-site meal service review for during that quarter. Cortland County currently has an annual unduplicated count of 37 providers that participate in CACFP. The local district will identify from those providers ones that cared for children receiving subsidized child care services, with a minimum of 6 cases examined each quarter. The local district will cross reference the CAPF claim with the day care attendance on the billing form, for the month of the on-site meal service review

Any inconsistencies will be reviewed for an overpayment and referred back to the Cortland Area Child Care Council to follow up with their procedure for provider eligibility with the CAFPP.

APPENDIX G-4

IV. District Options (Required Section)

Districts have certain flexibility to administer the child care subsidy program to meet local needs. Check which options that your district wishes to include in your county plan. Complete attachments for any area(s) checked.

1. Our district has identified local priorities in addition to the federal priorities (complete Appendix G-5).
2. Our district has chosen to establish funding set-asides for NYSCCBG (complete Appendix G-6).
3. Our district is using Title XX funds for the provision of child care services (complete Appendix G-7).
4. Our district has chosen to establish additional local standards for child care providers (complete Appendix G-8).
5. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers for absences (complete Appendix G-9).
6. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers for program closures (complete Appendix G-10).
7. Our district has chosen to pay for transportation to and from a child care provider (complete Appendix G-11).
8. Our district has chosen to pay up to a 15% higher than the applicable market rates for regulated child care services that have been accredited by a nationally recognized child care organization (complete Appendix G-11).
9. Our district has chosen to pay up to 15% higher than the applicable market

rates for non-traditional hours (complete Appendix G-11).

10. Our district has chosen to pay for child care services while a caretaker who works the second or third shift sleeps (complete Appendix G-11).
11. Our district has chosen to make payments to child care providers who provide child care services, which exceed 24 consecutive hours (complete Appendix G-12).
12. Our district has chosen to include 18, 19 or 20 year olds in the Child Care Services Unit (complete Appendix G-12).
13. Our district is seeking a waiver from one or more regulatory provisions. Such waivers are limited to those regulatory standards that are not specifically included in law (complete Appendix G- 12).
14. Our district has chosen to pay for breaks in activity for low income families (non public assistance families, complete Appendix G-12).
15. Our district has chosen to use local equivalent forms such as, but not limited to, child care application, client notification and/or legally exempt enrollment forms (attach copies of the local equivalent forms your district uses).

Any previous approvals for local equivalent forms will not be carried forward into this county plan. Therefore, any local equivalent forms a district wishes to establish or renew must be included in this plan and will be subject to review and approval by OCFS.