



New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services

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David A. Paterson
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

March 31, 2009

Mr. John P. O'Neil, Commissioner
Essex County Department Social Services
7551 Court Street
P.O. Box 217
Elizabethtown, NY 12932-0217

Dear Commissioner O'Neil:

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 31, 2009. The child care section became effective on March 31, 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, appearing to read "Janice Molnar".

Janice M. Molnar
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services



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

County: Essex

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": **Total of one hour travel time from home to daycare employment.**

Describe any steps/consultations made to arrive at your definition: **Essex County is very rural and large geographically, these were the major contributing factors in defining reasonable distance.**

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 **150%** 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 **20%**.

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.

Those cases with a lower percentage of state income standards from 100% to 150% of State income standards will be opened first and then will open families who have children with special needs that require day care services. The lowest priority will be families whose income falls between 150% and 200% of the state income standard.

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.

Essex County requires financial verification **quarterly prior to paying providers day care. Any case appearing to have questionable or erroneous information is referred to the fraud department. Specifically, working off the books, self employed without adequate business records, client unsure of own address, identity verification is suspect, documentation is inconsistent with the application, or with prior case, children under 6 six no birth certificate or provider lives in the same household as the parent.**

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. **Continued need for child care is verified in every case at 6 months. Recertification is done on a 6 month cycle. 87 of 87 cases are sampled every 6 months. Every Case is reviewed monthly for income prior to payment being made.**

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.

Essex County Department of Social Services workers collaborate with Adirondack Community Action Programs (ACAP) which is the agency in our county to administer CACFP Nutrition Program Funding. Attendance records are submitted monthly to ACAP for the purpose of cross referencing attendance records with CACFP provider claims. Therefore 34 of 34 non day care center providers are reviewed annually.

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.