Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan

for

State/Territory: _____

FFY 2016-2018

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be administered by the State/Territory for the period 10/1/2015 – 9/30/2018. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including amending the options selected or described.

For purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein of applicable laws are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text. The Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of these modifications.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents **2**

Introduction **4**

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems **5**
1.1 CCDF Leadership 6
1.2 CCDF Policy Decision Authority 7
1.3 Consultation in the Development of the State Plan 9
1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care 11
1.5 Optional Use of Combined Funds 13
1.6 Public-Private Partnerships 13
1.7 Coordination with Local or Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Systems 14
1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan 15

2 Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education **16**
2.1 Information about Child Care Financial Assistance Program Availability and Application Process 17
2.2 Consumer Education Website 17
2.3 Consumer and Provider Education Information 18

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families **22**
3.1 Eligible Children and Families 23
3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families 27
3.3 Protection for Working Parents 28
3.4 Family Contribution to Payment 31

4 Ensure Equal Access to High Quality Child Care for Low-Income Children **33**
4.1 Parental Choice In Relation to Certificates, Grants or Contracts 34
4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs 36
4.3 Setting Payment Rates 38
4.4 Summary of Facts Used to Determine that Payments Rates Are Sufficient to Ensure Equal Access 39
4.5 Payment Practices and Timeliness of Payments 40
4.6 Supply Building Strategies to Meet the Needs of Certain Populations 41

5 Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings **42**
5.1 Standards and Licensing Requirements 43
5.2 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices 46
5.3 Criminal Background Checks 49

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce **52**
6.1 Training and Professional Development Requirements 52

6.2 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce with CCDF Quality Funds 54
6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines 55

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement 58
7.1 Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services 58
7.2 Quality Rating and Improvement System 59
7.3 Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers 60
7.4 Child Care Resource & Referral 61
7.5 Facilitating Compliance with State Standards 62
7.6 Quality Assessment 62
7.7 Accreditation Support 62
7.8 Program Standards 62
7.9 Other Quality Improvement Activities 63

8 Ensure Grantee Accountability 63
8.1 Program Integrity 63

Introduction

Access to stable, high quality child care and early learning experiences improves the odds of success for two generations – parents and children - that rely on child care across the country. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides resources to State, Territory, and Tribal grantees to enable low-income parents to work or pursue education and training so that they may better support their families while at the same time promoting the learning and development of their children. The CCDF also provides funding to be used to enhance the quality of child care for all children.

On November 19, 2014, President Obama signed the bipartisan-supported Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 into law (Pub.L. 113-186) (https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/child_care_and_development_block_grant_markup.pdf). The law reauthorizes and significantly revises the purposes of the CCDF program and requirements for State and Territory grantees. The law establishes minimum child care assistance eligibility periods, health and safety standards and training requirements for providers, monitoring, consumer information and other components that when fully implemented will strengthen child care in this country and support child and family success.

ACF re-designed the CCDF Plan to assist State and Territory grantees to plan for full implementation of the law. We recognize that the CCDBG Act of 2014 includes a significant number of changes, some of which are straightforward to implement, while others are complex and will be phased-in over several years. The level of effort needed for implementation will vary across the country depending on the number of changes a State needs to make. Some States and Territories will need time to enact changes through their State legislatures or rulemaking processes. In addition, some requirements will take time to fully operationalize. ACF plans to work with States and Territories to ensure that adoption and implementation of these important changes is done in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner.

The Plan process continues to be the primary mechanism by which ACF will determine compliance with requirements in the new law. The CCDBG Act of 2014 changed the Plan cycle from a biennial to a triennial Plan period; thus, this Plan will cover a 3-year period.(658E(b)) States and Territories are required to submit their FY 2016-2018 CCDF Plans by July 1, 2015, and approved Plans will become effective October 1, 2015. This Pre-Print will provide a tool for States and Territories to describe to ACF their implementation plans to:

1. Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems
2. Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education
3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families
4. Ensure Equal Access to High Quality Child Care for Children in Low-Income Families
5. Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings
6. Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce
7. Support Continuous Quality Improvement
8. Ensure Grantee Accountability

The intention is that grantees and the federal government will be able to use this information to track and assess progress, determine need for technical assistance and plan amendments, and ultimately determine compliance with specific requirement deadlines.

In some cases, the CCDBG Act of 2014 specifies a particular date when a provision is effective. Where the law does not specify a date, the new requirements were effective upon the date of enactment. ACF has determined that when a State or Territory cannot certify compliance with a specific requirement at the time of CCDF plan submission, the grantee must provide justification for why it cannot yet certify compliance in this FY 2016-2018 CCDF Plan and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with such provision(s). The implementation plan must provide sufficient information to support approval of the Plan for funding.

Specifically, as part of its implementation plan, States will be asked to describe the current status for any requirements not fully implemented, report on the goals/objectives you plan to accomplish, the specific steps (activities) you will take to achieve your goal (objective), the timeline for implementation including projected start date and end date for each activity, the overall targeted completion date, and the lead agency (entity, person) responsible for completion of the goal/objective. A comprehensive summary of the topical implementation plans across sections will be generated electronically to facilitate monitoring of progress towards completion.

ACF will work with States to monitor progress towards achievement on these requirements and will conduct reviews of implementation plans at least every six months. As part of the ongoing reviews, updates to the implementation plan will be possible through the e-submission site. Upon completion of the implementation plan, the State will amend its plan to certify upon fulfillment of the requirement(s). These updates and amendments can be submitted at any time prior to the effective date for the requirement. For example, States may, and are encouraged, to submit amendments to certify compliance with requirements upon completion, but no later than the effective date of the requirements (refer to the Program Instruction on Effective Dates for these deadlines https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/pi-2015-02 and corresponding timeline of effective dates https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/pi-2015-02-attachment-timeline-of-effective-dates-for-States-and-Territories-ccdbg-act-of-2014).

All information and materials developed to support CCDF implementation are subject to review by ACF as part of ongoing monitoring efforts of CCDBG compliance. In cases where the CCDBG Act of 2014 did not change CCDF regulatory requirements (e.g., Public Hearing requirements), the CCDF regulations are still in effect and relevant questions are included in this Plan. ACF will issue more guidance, including final rules for the CCDBG Act of 2014, and expect grantees to update and amend their Plan as needed.

1 Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems

Implementation of the requirements of the CCDBG Act of 2014 will require leadership and coordination between the child care program and other child- and family-serving agencies, services, and supports at the state and local levels. ACF recognizes that each grantee must identify the most

appropriate entities and individuals to lead and participate in implementation based on the context within that State or Territory. This will include those that manage various components of CCDF-funded activities and requirements (fiscal, subsidy, health and safety monitoring, and continuous quality improvement) as well as other public and private partners.

This section collects information to help ACF understand the stakeholders convened and consulted to develop the Plan, where authority lies to make policy decisions and program changes, and who is responsible for implementing the blueprint for action it describes. For example, the law requires that, at the option of the Tribes, State Lead Agencies must collaborate and coordinate with Indian tribes or tribal organizations in the State in a timely manner in the development of the State Plan. ACF expects that new requirements in the law will necessitate grantees to build partnerships with other agencies and organizations to better link the children and families receiving financial assistance to information on other programs for which they may be eligible, developmental screenings for children, and other resources (also in section 2). In addition, States must describe how public-private partnerships are being used to increase the supply and quality of child care services.

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, or 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))

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

Identify the Lead Agency or joint inter-agency office designated by the State/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))

Name of Lead Agency: _____

Address of Lead Agency: _____

Name and Title of the Lead Agency Official: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): _____

1.1.2 Who is the CCDF administrator?

Identify the CCDF administrator designated by the Lead Agency, the day-to-day contact, with responsibility for administering the State/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 entity with administrative responsibilities and include contact information.

a) Contact Information for CCDF Administrator:

Name of CCDF Administrator: _____

Title of CCDF Administrator: _____

Address of CCDF Administrator: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Phone Number for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any): _____

Web Address for CCDF program (for the public) (if any): _____

Web address for CCDF program policy manual: (if any): _____

Web address for CCDF program administrative rules: (if any): _____

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

Name of CCDF Co-Administrator: _____

Title of CCDF Co-Administrator: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Description of the role of the Co-Administrator: _____

1.1.3 Identify the agency/department/entity that is responsible for each of the major parts of CCDF Administration and the lead contact responsible for managing this portion of the Plan.

- Outreach and Consumer Education (section 2) _____
- Subsidy/Financial Assistance (section 3 and section 4) _____
- Licensing/Monitoring (section 5) _____
- Child Care Workforce (section 6) _____
- Quality Improvement (section 7) _____
- Grantee Accountability/Program Integrity (section 8) _____

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 other public or private local agencies as long as it retains overall responsibility for the administration of the program. (658D(b))

1.2.1 Which of the following CCDF program rules and policies are set or established at the State/Territory versus the local level? In other words, identify whether CCDF program rules and policies are established by the State or Territory (even if administered or operated locally) or whether the CCDF policies or rules are established locally with local entities setting those policies locally.

- ☐ Eligibility rules and policies (e.g., income limits) are set by the:
  - ☐ State/Territory
  - ☐ County
  - ☐ Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, describe the type of policies the local entity(ies) can set_____
  - ☐ Other. Describe: _____
- ☐ Sliding fee scale is set by the:
  - ☐ State/Territory
  - ☐ County
  - ☐ Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, describe the type of policies the local entity(ies) can set_____
  - ☐ Other. Describe: _____
- ☐ Payment rates are set by the:
  - ☐ State/Territory
  - ☐ County
  - ☐ Other local entity (e.g., workforce boards, early learning coalitions). If checked, describe the type of policies the local entity(ies) can set_____
  - ☐ Other. Describe: _____

1.2.2 How is the CCDF program operated in your State/Territory? In other words, which agency(ies) implement or perform these CCDF services and activities. Note, while Lead Agencies may use other governmental or nongovernmental agencies to administer CCDF, written agreements must be in place with such agencies outlining roles and responsibilities for meeting CCDF requirements. These written agreements are subject to review by ACF as part of ongoing monitoring efforts to CCDBG compliance.

a) Who determines eligibility?

- ☐ CCDF Lead Agency
- ☐ TANF agency
- ☐ Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____

- ☐ 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)?

- ☐ CCDF Lead Agency
- ☐ TANF agency
- ☐ Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____
- ☐ Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments
- ☐ Child care resource and referral agencies
- ☐ Community-based organizations
- ☐ Other. Describe. _____

c) Who issues payments?

- ☐ CCDF Lead Agency
- ☐ TANF agency
- ☐ Other State/Territory agency. Describe. _____
- ☐ Local government agencies such as county welfare or social services departments
- ☐ Child care resource and referral agencies
- ☐ Community-based organizations
- ☐ Other. Describe. _____

e) Other. List and describe:

1.3 Consultation in the Development of the State Plan

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing the State plan which serves as the application for a three-year implementation period. In the development of the State plan, the Lead Agency shall consult with appropriate representatives of units of general purpose local government - (658D(b)(10(C)).

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States consult with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(I)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act). 658E(c)(2)(R). In addition, States shall, at the option of an Indian tribe or tribal organization in the State, collaborate and coordinate with such Indian tribe or tribal organization in the development of the State plan in a timely manner. (658D (b)(1)(E))

1.3.1 Check who and describe how the Lead Agency consulted with these entities in the development of the CCDF Plan (check all that apply). For example, did the entity participate in a drafting committee, review drafts, sign off on the final version, or develop a memorandum of understanding with the Lead Agency to meet requirements to share information or services for CCDF subsidy families, or other manner of participation? This list includes required entities along with a list of potential CCDF Plan consultation partners.

- ☐ [REQUIRED] Representatives of general purpose local government. Describe _____
- ☐ [REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (pursuant to 642B(b)(I)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act). Describe _____
  - If checked, does the Lead Agency have official representation and a decision-making role in the State Advisory Council?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
- ☐ [REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] Indian tribe(s) and/or tribal organization(s). Describe (Note – If Tribes or tribal organizations exist and consultation did not take place prior to submission of the Plan, describe how the State plans to consult with the Tribes or tribal organizations during this Plan period). _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for public education. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency/agencies 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 Section 619 for preschool). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State institutions for higher education, including community colleges. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Childhood Home Visitation programs grant. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State/local agencies with Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships grants. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Agency responsible for Medicaid/Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for public health. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for child welfare. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State liaison for military child care programs. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for employment services/workforce development. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State/community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families. Describe _____

- ☐ [Optional] Private agencies, including national initiatives that the State is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks, Ready by 21. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Provider groups, associations, or labor organizations. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Parent groups or organizations. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Other. Describe _____

1.3.2 Describe the Statewide/Territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan (658D(b)(1)(C)). At a minimum, this description must include:

a) Date(s) of notice of public hearing: _____ **Reminder** - Must be at least 20 calendar days prior to the date of the public hearing. How was the public notified about the public hearing? _____

b) Date(s) of public hearing(s): _____ **Reminder** - Must be no earlier than January 1, 2015 (9 months before effective date of Plan-October 1, 2015).

c) Hearing site(s) or method(s) if no physical site is used: _____

d) Describe how the content of the Plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s): _____

e) How will the information provided by the public be taken into consideration in the provision of child care services under this Plan? _____

1.3.3 Describe strategies used by the Lead Agency to make the State Plan and Plan Amendments available to the public, such as public hearings, advisory committees, providing translation in other languages, making available on the Lead Agency website, providing notification to stakeholders._____

1.4 Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the Plan describe how the State will efficiently, and to the extent practicable, coordinate child care services supported by CCDF with programs operating at the Federal, State, and local levels for children in the programs listed below.

1.4.1 Check who and describe how your State coordinates or plans to coordinate child care services with the following programs to expand accessibility and continuity of care, and assist children enrolled in early childhood programs to receive full-day services (658E(c)(2)(O)) (check all that apply). Please describe the goals of this coordination, such as extending the day or year of services for families; smoothing transitions for children, enhancing and aligning quality of services, linking comprehensive services to children in child care settings or developing supply of quality care for vulnerable populations. This list includes required entities along with a list of potential CCDF service coordination partners.

- ☐ [REQUIRED] Children in pre-school programs. Describe _____

- ☐ [REQUIRED IF APPLICABLE] Tribal early childhood programs. Describe _____
- ☐ [REQUIRED] Programs serving homeless children. Describe _____
- ☐ [REQUIRED] Programs serving children in foster care. Describe _____
- ☐ [REQUIRED] Other Federal, State, local early childhood programs, including agencies responsible for programs serving infants, toddlers and preschoolers with special needs. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for public education. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency/agencies 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 Section 619 for preschool). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State institutions for higher education, including community colleges. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for implementing the Maternal and Childhood Home Visitation programs grant. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State/local agencies with Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships grants. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Agency responsible for Medicaid/Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for public health. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for child welfare. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State liaison for military child care programs. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for employment services/workforce development. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State agency responsible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] State/community agencies serving refugee or immigrant families. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Private agencies, including national initiatives that the State is participating in such as BUILD, Strengthening Families, Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks, Ready by 21. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Provider groups, associations, or labor organizations. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Parent groups or organizations. Describe _____
- ☐ [Optional] Other. Describe _____

Technical Assistance Resources to Support CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems

- Office of Child Care Policy Resources for Expanding ECE Services for Homeless Families http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/news/policies-resources-for-expanding-ece-services-for-homeless-children

- Office of Child Care Information Memorandum "Child Welfare and Child Care Partnerships: Partnering with Families Involved in Child Care Subsidy Programs" http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/im-child-welfare
- Office of Child Care Information Memorandum "Refugee Resettlement and Child Care Partnerships: Partnering to Increase Refugee Families' Access to High-Quality Child Care" http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/im-refugee-resettlement
- Office of Child Care Information Memorandum "Helping Victims of Domestic Violence and Their Children " http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/im-2010-02
- "Collaborative Partnerships Between Early Care & Education and Child Welfare: Supporting Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families Through Risk to Resilience" - This brief provides practical partnership and collaboration strategies for early care and education and child welfare systems to meet the needs of and best serve families with infants and toddlers who are in or at risk of entering the child welfare system. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/state-community-policy/nitcci/collaborative-partnerships-between-ece.pdf
- "Systems Resource Guide: Collaborative Governance Module". This Module serves as a framework and tool for CCDF Administrators and their partners to use as they explore and establish strategic steps to implement and sustain shared goals related to systems building. https://ecesystemsbuilding.icfwebservices.com/collaborative-governance/overview
- "Systems Resource Guide: Strategic Planning Module". This Module helps the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Administrators (SAs) and their partners to prepare for, lead, and sustain strategic planning efforts. This module provides an overview of key concepts, delineating what strategic planning is, why it is important to systems building, and key principles associated with it. https://ecesystemsbuilding.icfwebservices.com/strategic-planning/overview

1.5 Optional Use of Combined Funds

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that States have the option to combine funding for CCDF child care services with funding for any of the required programs listed in 1.4.1. (658E(c)(2)(O))(ii))

1.5.1 Do you expect to combine CCDF funds with the funds for any program that you coordinate with (described above)?

☐ Yes. If yes, describe at a minimum which funds you combine, how you will combine multiple sets of funding and use the combined funding. Also, include information about how the funds are tracked and your method of oversight. Include information about expected outcomes such as extending the day or year of services available, 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..

_____

☐ No

1.6 Public-Private Partnerships

The CCDBG Act of 2014 adds a new provision that requires States to describe in the Plan how the State encourages partnerships among the entities listed below to leverage existing service delivery systems for child care and development services and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children who are less than 13 years of age, such as by implementing

voluntary shared services alliance models. (658E(c)(2)(P)) ACF expects these types of partnerships to increase quality and efficiency of services to benefit the development of children and the success of families.

1.6.1 Describe, and include examples of, activities that have resulted from partnerships with other State and public agencies, tribal organizations, private entities, faith based organizations and community-based organizations that are expected to increase the supply and quality of child care services. _____

Technical Assistance Resource to Support Public-Private Partnerships

- **What is a Public-Private Partnership and Why Do They Matter?** https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/what-public-private-partnership-and-why-do-they-matter

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

States may use funds to support or establish Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) systems (also see section 7.4). If they do, there are specific requirements for CCR&Rs. (658E(c)(3)(B)(iii))

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

☐ Yes. If yes, the local or regional referral agency is required to do all of the following activities. See also related follow-up questions in Section 7.1 and 7.4. Does the CCR&R system provide all services identified below:

- Provide families with information on a full range of child care options (including faith-based, community-based, nontraditional hours and emergency child care centers) in their local area or region
- To the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive child care assistance to offer the families support and assistance in making an informed decision about child care options in an effort to ensure families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting to suit their needs and that is of high quality as determined by the state
- 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 child care services in local areas or regions of the State and submit such 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

- As appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the Lead Agency and/or local agencies that administer CCDF.

  ☐ Yes. Describe how the State's written agreement with the CCR&R addresses the required services. _____

  ☐ No. Describe any State plans to establish or support a CCR&R system that includes required services. _____

☐ No. The State does not fund a CCR&R system that includes the required services and has no plans to establish. _____

1.8 Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States must include a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan for coordination of activities with the State human services agency, emergency management agency, licensing agency, State/local resource and referral agencies, and the State Advisory Council. (658E(c)(2)(U)) The Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan must include:

- 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.
- Guidelines for continuing CCDF assistance and child care services after a disaster, which may include provision on temporary child care, and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster.
- Procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.

In addition to having a Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan, States must also address the needs of children receiving child care assistance, including the need for safe child care, for the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as such terms are defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1)).

1.8.1 Describe the status of State's Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan.

☐ Yes. The State certifies that the Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan is fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. _____

☐ No. If no, the State must provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activates, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016).

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____

- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start date _____and project end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

1.8.2 Describe how the State addresses the needs of children in child care services, including the need for safe child care, for the period before, during and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency _____

Technical Assistance Resources to Support Developing Statewide Child Care Disaster Plan

- **Developing a Comprehensive Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan** can be found at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/emergency-preparedness-0
- **Resource Guide: Emergency Preparedness and Response Resources for Child Care Programs** by CCSSSN at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/1408_rg_epr_providers.pdf

2 Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education

Parents are their children's most important teacher and advocate. Child care programs can serve as convenient and trusted sources of information for parents on child development and community supports and services. State and local child care assistance systems should be designed to promote seamless linkages to other child- and family-services.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 includes key purposes that address the role of parents as child care consumers who need information to make informed choices regarding the services that best suit their needs. New language states that States should be encouraged to provide consumer information to "promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings." States and Territories have the opportunity to consider how information can be provided to parents through the child care assistance system, partner agencies, and child care sites that will support their role as their children's teacher and advocate. Key new provisions include:

1. Information related to the health and safety of children in child care settings. The plan must certify that the State will make public certain information about the results of such monitoring (described in section 5) using a website that is consumer-friendly and in an easily accessible format, including:
   - Provider-specific information: 1) results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints; 2) last date of inspection; and 3) information on corrective actions taken (if applicable).
   - Aggregate annual information about: 1) the annual number of deaths; 2) the annual number of serious injuries; and 3) annual number of incidences of child abuse.
   - State processes for: 1) licensing child care providers; 2) conducting background checks and the offenses that would keep a provider from being allowed to care for children; and 3) conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers.

2. The plan must also certify that States will collect and disseminate consumer and provider education information to CCDF parents, providers, and the general public, including information about:
    - the availability of child care assistance,
    - the quality of child care providers (if available),
    - other programs (specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start and Early Head Start, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program(SCHIP) for which families may also qualify.
    - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs and services,
    - Research and best practices in child development, and
    - State policies regarding social emotional development (pre-k expulsion policies).

2.1 Information about Child Care Financial Assistance Program Availability and Application Process

Lead Agencies must inform parents of eligible children and the general public of the process by which they can apply for and potentially receive child care services. (658D(b)(1)(A)), 658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(1))

2.1.1 Describe how the State/Territory informs families of availability of services, for example, reviewing available needs assessments produced by the State Advisory Council or Head Start State Collaboration Office, Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting grantee, or other state planning agency; by conducting outreach in communities with low-income populations; partnering with state or local agencies and organizations serving vulnerable or low-income populations; public service announcements; state website; or other electronic outreach. _____

2.1.2 How can parents apply for services? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Online application
- ☐ In-person interview or orientation, Describe agencies where these may occur:
- ☐ Mail or email
- ☐ At the child care site
- ☐ Other strategies. Describe _____

2.2 Consumer Education Website

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States have a website describing processes for licensing and monitoring child care providers, processes for conducting criminal background checks, and offenses that prevent individuals from being child care providers. The State must make public certain information about the results of such monitoring on a website in a way that is consumer-friendly and in an easily accessible format. (658E(c)(2)(D)). States must post the results of the monitoring on the website no later than November 19, 2017. All other components of the website must be completed no later than September 30, 2016.

2.2.1 Describe the status of State's consumer education website.

- ☐ Yes. The State certifies that the website is fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. Provide the link to the website: _____
- ☐ No. If no, the State must provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016 for all components except posting monitoring and inspection reports which is no later than November 19, 2017) and skip to 2.3.
  - Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
  - Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
  - Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
  - Timeline – Projected start date _____and project end date for each activity _____
  - Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016 for all components except posting monitoring and inspection reports which is no later than November 19, 2017) _____
  - Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

2.2.2 Describe how the consumer education website meets the requirements to:

a) Share provider-specific information about health and safety, licensing or regulatory requirements met by the provider (including the last date of inspection, and any history of violations)._____

b) Include a description of health and safety requirements and licensing or regulatory requirements for child care providers. _____

c) Include a description of the processes for licensing, background checks, monitoring, and offenses that prevent individuals from being providers. _____

d) Provide annual aggregate information about the number of deaths, number of serious injuries and the number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings _____

2.3 Consumer and Provider Education Information

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a purpose of the child care program "to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings" (658A(b)(3)) Lead agencies must certify that they will collect and disseminate the following information through resource and referral agencies or other means. (658E(c)(2)(E))

2.3.1 The State certifies that it collects and disseminates the following information to parents, providers and the general public no later than September 30, 2016:

- Availability of child care assistance,
- Quality of child care providers (if available),
- Other programs (specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start and Early Head Start, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program(SCHIP) for which families may also qualify.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs and services,
- Research and best practices in child development, and
- State policies regarding social emotional development (pre-k expulsion policies).

☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency policy citation(s): _____

☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 2.3.9.

2.3.2 Describe how the State makes information about the availability of child care services available to the public _____

2.3.3 Describe how the State makes information about the quality (such as through a quality rating and improvement system, if available, or other means) of child care services available to the public _____

2.3.4 Describe how the State shares information with **eligible parents** about other available human service programs. For example, does the State share information about these other programs through linkages from the online application, universal applications, through intake process/front line workers, through providers, etc.

a) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) _____

b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs _____

c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) _____

d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP- formerly known as Food Stamps) _____

e) Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) _____

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP)_____

g) Medicaid_____

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP _____

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) _____

j) Other State/Federally Funded Child Care Programs (e.g., state pre-kindergarten) _____

2.3.5 Describe how the State shares information with **providers** (where applicable) to link families to these other available human service programs. For example, does the State provide information to providers through CCR&R outreach, as a condition of their contract or voucher agreement, through community-based hub agencies that partner with subsidy providers, county/local collaboration, etc.?

a) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) _____

b) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs _____

c) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP _____

d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP- formerly known as Food Stamps) _____

e) Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) _____

f) Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP) _____

g) Medicaid _____

h) Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) _____

i) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) _____

j) Other State/Federally Funded Child Care Programs (example-State Pre-K) _____

2.3.6 Coordination with Other Partners to Increase Access to Developmental Screenings

The State must develop and describe procedures for providing information on and referring families to existing developmental screening services (658E(c)(2)E(ii)). At a minimum, the State must establish procedures to provide information to families and child care providers on: 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.). Describe the status of the State's procedures for providing information on and referring families to existing developmental screening services.

☐ Yes. The State certifies that no later than September 30, 2016 it will provide information to families and providers on developmental screening services and referral to such existing services for children who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, including social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays. Describe the procedures _____

☐ No. Provide your implementation plan in 2.3.9.

Technical Assistance Resources to Support Access to Developmental Screenings

- **Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns.** From Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This free, one hour online training course for early care and education providers in response to an expressed need from child care providers around the country, stating that this information is needed and relevant. This course is part of the "Learn the

Signs. Act Early" program, www.cdc.gov/ActEarly a suite of free, evidence based and customizable resources and materials for early care and education providers that promote awareness of: healthy developmental milestones in early childhood, the importance of tracking each child's development, the importance of acting early if there are concerns.

- Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! is a coordinated federal effort to encourage healthy child development, universal developmental and behavioral screening for children, and support for the families and providers who care for them. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/child-health-development/watch-me-thrive

2.3.7 Describe how the State makes available information to parents of eligible children _____, the general public _____, and where applicable, providers (see also section 6) _____about research and best practices in child development, including social and emotional development, early childhood development, and meaningful parent and family engagement, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity) (658E(c)(2)(E)(VI)).

2.3.8 Describe the State's policy regarding social emotional development including Pre-K expulsion policies (see https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/expulsion_suspension_final.pdf for more information) and how the State makes information about such policies available to child care providers _____and the general public (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(VII). _____

2.3.9 If the State responded no to any requirement in 2.3.2 through 2.3.8, provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activates, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016).

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start date _____and project end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

2.3.10 Describe how the State meets the requirement to maintain a record of substantiated parental complaints. (658E(c)(2)(C))

a) Maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints about providers (how long records are maintained and in what format) _____

b) How it makes substantiated parental complaints available to the public on request. _____

2.3.11 How will the Lead Agency provide outreach and services to eligible families with limited English proficiency?

Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

- ☐ Application in other languages (application document, brochures, provider notices)
- ☐ Informational materials in non-English languages
- ☐ Training and technical assistance in non-English languages
- ☐ Website in non-English languages
- ☐ Lead Agency accepts applications at local community-based locations
- ☐ Bilingual caseworkers or translators available
- ☐ Bilingual Outreach Workers
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ None

2.3.12 If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please list the languages offered _____

Technical Assistance Resource to Support Consumer Education

- "Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness from Prenatal to Age 8" is a tool for early childhood education and care providers seeking to build effective engagement strategies. While the framework is intended for Head Start and Early Head Start programs, its lessons are useful and applicable to a much broader audience of early childhood programs. file:///C:/Users/19671/Downloads/pfce-framework.pdf
- **QRIS Resource Guide: Chapter 9 on Consumer Education** https://occqrisguide.icfwebservices.com/index.cfm?do=section&sid=8

3 Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families

The expanded purposes of CCDBG highlight the opportunities States have to "deliver high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance; and "to improve child care and development of participating children" (658A(b)). Young children learn in the context of their relationships with adults, including their child care teacher or provider. The unintentional consequence of child care assistance that is linked to adult work and school obligation is that child care arrangements – and the opportunity for children to form trusting relationships with teachers - are often interrupted and instable. Child care financial assistance policies that make it easier to get and keep assistance support continuity of care and relationships between the child and child care provider and enable parents to stay employed or complete training/education. Child care support that extends until families are able to pay the full cost of care themselves promotes longer lasting economic stability for families.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 included requirements such as establishing a 12-month eligibility re-determination period, requiring that States have 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 job search of not less than three (3) months, and to describe policies for graduated phase out of assistance. The definition of an eligible child includes that a family's assets may not exceed $1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family). Procedures for enrollment of homeless children pending completion of documentation are also now required.

3.1 Eligible Children and Families

In order to be eligible for services, children must (1) be under the age of 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 such family); and who (3)(a) resides with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program; or (b) is receiving, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in (3a.). (658P(4))

3.1.1 Eligibility Criteria Based upon Child's Age

a) The CCDF program serves children from _____ weeks to _____ years (may not equal or exceed age 13).

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))

☐ Yes, and the upper age is _____(may not equal or exceed age 19) . Provide the Lead Agency definition of physical or mental incapacity – _____

☐ No.

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))

☐ Yes, and the upper age is _____(may not equal or exceed age 19)

☐ No.

3.1.2 How does the Lead Agency define the following eligibility terms?

- residing with – _____
- in loco parentis – _____

3.1.3 Eligibility Criteria Based on Reason for Care

a) How does the Lead Agency define "working" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a brief description below, including allowable activities and if a minimum number of hours is required.

- working –

b) Does the Lead Agency provide CCDF child care assistance to parents who are attending job training or an educational program?

☐ Yes. If yes, how does the Lead Agency define "attending job training or educational program" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a brief description below.

- attending job training or educational program – _____

☐ No.

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

☐ Yes.

☐ No. If no, skip to e.

Note – If the Lead Agency elects to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities for CCDF purposes these children are considered to be in protective services and should be included in this definition.

d) How does the Lead Agency define "protective services" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide a brief description below.

1) Definition of protective services – _____

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

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

3.1.4 Eligibility Criteria Based on Family Income

a) How does the Lead Agency define "income" for the purposes of eligibility? Provide the Lead Agency's definition of "income" for purposes of eligibility determination.

- Definition of income – _____

b) Provide the CCDF income eligibility limits in the table below. **Complete** columns (a) and (b) based upon maximum eligibility initial entry into the CCDF program. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the current SMI. Complete columns (e) and (f) with the maximum "exit" eligibility level if applicable and below the federal limit of 85% of current SMI.

Family Size	**(a)** **100% of State Median Income (SMI) ($/month)**	**(b)** **85% of State Median Income (SMI) ($/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]**	**(c)** **(IF APPLICABLE)** $/month **Maximum "Entry" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI**	**(d)** **(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI** [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100] **Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI**	**(e)** **(IF APPLICABLE)** $/month **Maximum "Exit" Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI**	**(f)** **(IF APPLICABLE) % of SMI** [Divide (f) by (a), multiply by 100] **Income Level if lower than 85% Current SMI**
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

Reminder - Income limits must be provided in terms of current State Median Income (SMI) (or Territory Median Income) even if federal poverty level is used in implementing the program. FY 2016 poverty guidelines are available at hhs.gov.

c) SMI Source _____

d) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on: _____

3.1.5 Describe how the Lead Agency documents, verifies and maintains applicant information. Check the strategies that will be implemented by your State/Territory.

- ☐ Applicant identity. Describe _____
- ☐ Residency. Describe _____
- ☐ Household composition. Describe _____
- ☐ Applicant's relationship to the child. Describe _____
- ☐ Child's information for determining eligibility (e.g., identity, age, etc.). Describe _____
- ☐ Work, Job Training or Educational Program. Describe _____
- ☐ Family Income. Describe _____
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

Reminder – Lead Agencies are reminded that, for purposes of implementing the citizenship verification requirements mandated by title IV of Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, only the citizenship and immigration status of the child, who is the primary beneficiary of the child care benefit, is relevant for eligibility

purposes. (ACYF-PI-CC-98-08) States may not deny child care benefits to an eligible child because the parent(s), legal guardians, persons standing in loco parentis, or other household members have not provided information regarding their immigration status.

3.1.6 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 _____

☐ Track and monitor the eligibility determination process

☐ Other. Describe _____

☐ None

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

Per CCDF regulations, 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 under 6 years of age (98.16(9) and 98.33(b)). This requirement did not change under the reauthorization. Lead Agencies must coordinate with TANF programs to ensure, pursuant 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 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:

State/Territory TANF Agency _____

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

- "appropriate child care": _____
- "reasonable distance": _____
- "unsuitability of informal child care": _____
- "affordable child care arrangements": _____

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

☐ In writing

☐ Verbally

☐ Other: _____

3.1.8 The Lead Agency certifies that no later than September 30, 2016 it will require a family member to certify that the family assets do not exceed $1,000,000.

☐ Yes. The Lead Agency certifies that it requires families to certify that the family assets do not exceed $1,000,000.

☐ No. Provide your implementations plan in 3.3.7.

3.2 Increasing Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

At a minimum, CCDF requires Lead Agencies to give priority for child care assistance to children with special needs, or in families with very low incomes. This did not change under reauthorization. Prioritization of CCDF assistance services is not limited to eligibility determination (i.e., establishment of a waiting list or ranking of eligible families in priority order to be served). Lead Agencies may fulfill priority requirements in other ways such as higher payment rates for providers caring for children with special needs or waiving co-payments for families with very low incomes (at or below the federal poverty level). (658E(c)(3)(B))

3.2.1 Describe how the Lead Agency will prioritize or target child care services for the following children and families (658E(c)(3)(B)), including definitions, any time limits, grace periods or priority rules in the description:

a. Provide definition of "Children with special needs" _____ and describe how services are prioritized _____

b. Provide definition of "Families with very low incomes" _____ and describe how services are prioritized _____

c. Describe how services for families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF are prioritized (Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act) _____

3.2.2 Expedited Enrollment: Describe the status of the State's establishment procedures to enroll and provide outreach to homeless families and children in foster care.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires procedures for enrollment in the subsidy program of homeless children and children in foster care pending completion of documentation as described in 3.1.5, and training and outreach to homeless families (658E(c)(3)(B)(i)). For example, the State can establish a grace period for which children can receive services while families are taking the necessary actions to comply with requirements. Training and outreach to child care providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families are addressed in Section 6.

☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s): _____

☐ No. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

a) If yes, describe the procedures to expedite enrollment and provide outreach to homeless children and families to improve access to child care services _____

b) If yes, describe the procedures to expedite enrollment for children who are in foster care to improve access to child care services_____

3.3 Protection for Working Parents

3.3.1 **Twelve Month Eligibility:** Describe the status of the State's establishment of a 12-month eligibility re-determination period for CCDF families.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 establishes a 12-month eligibility period for CCDF families. States are required to demonstrate in the Plan that no later than September 30, 2016 each child who receives assistance will be considered to meet all eligibility requirements for such assistance and will receive such assistance, for not less than 12 months before the State redetermines the eligibility of the child, regardless of changes in income (as long as income does not exceed the federal threshold of 85% of State median income) or temporary changes in participation in work, training, or education activities. (658E(c)(2)(N)(i) & (ii))

Note that this change means a State 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% SMI.

In addition, this change means the State may not terminate assistance prior to the end of the 12 month period if family experiences a temporary job loss or temporary change in participation in a training or education activity. For example, if a working parent is temporarily absent from employment due to extended medical leave, changes in seasonal work schedule, or a parent enrolled in training or educational program is temporarily not attending class between semesters, the state should not terminate assistance.

☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s): _____

☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

3.3.2 Describe when and what information, if any, is required from families during the 12-month eligibility period and how it is used. States are encouraged to minimize reporting requirements and changes to terms of assistance through the end of the eligibility period. Given the dual purposes of the CCDF program, even if a parent's work status changes, the value of continuity within a quality child care setting for a child's development is sufficient justification for continuing assistance. _____

3.3.3 Does the State terminate assistance prior to 12 months due to a parent's loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or education program?

The CCDBG Act of 2014 provides States the option to terminate assistance prior to re-determination if a parent loses employment or if he or she stops attending a job training or education program (i.e., if the parent experiences a non-temporary change in their status as working, or participating in a training or education program). However, the State must provide a period of continued child care assistance of at least 3 months to allow parents to engage in job search, resume work, or to attend an education or training program as soon as possible. (658E(c)(2)(N)(iii))

Note that unless the State chooses to exercise this option – allows a minimum 3-month job search period – the State may not terminate assistance based on a parent's loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program prior to the end of the 12 month re-determination period.

- ☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and provide the period of time allowed: _____
- ☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

3.3.4 **Fluctuation in Earnings:** Describe the status of the State's policy related to the fluctuation in earnings requirement.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the Plan shall demonstrate how the State's (or designated local entity) processes for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings. (658E(c)(2)(N)(i)(II))

Note – this change requires that States have policies to account for the fact that some parents with seasonal or other types of work schedules may have irregular earnings over the course of a year. States should have procedures for taking such circumstances into account when determining income eligibility for the CCDF program. For example, averaging family income over a period of time to broaden the scope of income verification to be more reflective of annual income rather than tied to a limited time frame that may have seasonal irregularities.

- ☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and provide the State's definition of a "temporary" change pursuant to this requirement: _____
- ☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

3.3.5 **Prevent Disruption of Work:** Describe the status of the State's procedures and policies to ensure that working parents (especially parents receiving TANF) do not have employment unduly disrupted in order to comply with the State's or designated local entity's requirements for redetermination of eligibility.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that States must describe in the Plan the procedures and policies in place to ensure that working parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under TANF) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment in order to comply with the State's or designated local entity's requirements for redetermination of eligibility for assistance. (658E(c)(2)(N)(ii)) For example, implementing re-determination strategies to verify income and employment electronically as opposed to more onerous practices such as asking parents and families to come to the subsidy office for an in-person visit, or aligning eligibility with other early care and education programs.

- ☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the policies and procedures for not unduly disrupting employment:_____
- ☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

3.3.6 **Graduated Phase-Out of Assistance:** Describe the status of the State's policy regarding graduated phase-out of assistance.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that requires States to provide for a graduated phase-out of assistance for families whose income has increased at the time of re-determination, but remains below the federal threshold of 85% of State median income. This could be achieved through policies such as establishing a second income eligibility threshold at re-determination (e.g., establishing an entry and exit level income eligibility threshold) or through similar policies such as granting a period of continued assistance to the family before termination. Providing a graduated phase-out promotes continuity by allowing for wage growth, a tapered transition out of the child care subsidy program, and supports long-term self-sufficiency for families.

States must describe in the Plan policies and procedures in place to allow for continued assistance at the beginning of a new eligibility period for children of parents who are working or attending a training or educational program and whose family income exceeds the State's income limit to initially qualify for assistance, if family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size. (658E (c)(2)(N)(iv))

This provision could include establishing an initial entry level income threshold and a second higher exit level income threshold (sometimes called tiered eligibility) that does not exceed 85% SMI. Other options may include granting a period of continued assistance to the family before termination.

- ☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s) and describe the policies and procedures for graduated phase-out: _____
- ☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 3.3.7.

3.3.7 If the Lead Agency responded no to any question in section 3, the State must provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with these requirements and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30. 2016).

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

3.4 Family Contribution to Payment

The statute requires Lead Agencies to establish a sliding fee scale that varies based on income and the size of the family to be used in determining each family's contribution (i.e., co-payment) to the cost of child care that is not a barrier to families receiving CCDF (658E(c)(5). In addition to income and size of the family, the Lead Agency may use other factors when determining family contributions/co-payments. However, the Lead Agency may not use cost or price of care when setting family contributions/co-payments because that could violate the statutory requirements to preserve equal access and parental choice. The sliding fee scale is subject to review by ACF as part of ongoing monitoring efforts to CCDBG compliance.

3.4.1 Provide the CCDF copayments in the chart below according to family size.

Family Size	(a) **What is the monthly copayment for a family of this size with one child in care upon initial entry into CCDF?** Note – If the sliding fee scale varies across the State, please provide the copayment for a family of three from the most populous geographic region.	(b) **What is the percent of income for (a)?**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

a. What is the effective date of the sliding fee scale(s)?_____

3.4.2 How will the family's contribution be calculated and to whom will it be applied? Check all that the Lead Agency has chosen to use.

- ☐ Fee is a dollar amount and
  - ☐ Fee is per child with the same fee for each child
  - ☐ Fee is per child and discounted fee for two or more children
  - ☐ Fee is per child up to a maximum per family
  - ☐ No additional fee charged after certain number of children
  - ☐ Fee is per family
- ☐ Fee is a percent of income and
  - ☐ Fee is per child with the same percentage applied for each child
  - ☐ Fee is per child and discounted percentage applied for two or more children
  - ☐ Fee is per child up to a maximum per family
  - ☐ No additional percentage applied charged after certain number of children
  - ☐ Fee is per family
- ☐ Contribution schedule varies by geographic area. Describe: _____
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

3.4.3 Will the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's copayment? (658E(c)(3)(B))

- ☐ Yes, and describe those additional factors using the checkboxes below.
  - ☐ Number of hours the child is in care
  - ☐ Lower copayments for higher quality of care

☐ Length of time that is family has received subsidy

☐ Other. Describe other factors. _____

☐ No.

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. Will the Lead Agency waive family contributions/co-payments?

☐ Yes, the Lead Agency waives family contributions/co-payments for families with income at or below the poverty level for families of the same size. The poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family size of 3 is: $_____.

☐ No, the Lead Agency does not waive family contributions/co-payments.

3.4.5 How will the Lead Agency ensure the family contribution/co-payment, based on a sliding fee scale, is affordable?

Check all that apply:

☐ Limit the maximum co-payment per family. Describe: _____

☐ Limit to 10% or less of family income (recommended federal benchmark). Describe:_____

☐ Policy minimizes the abrupt termination of assistance before a family can afford the full cost of care ("the cliff effect"). Describe: _____

☐ Policy does not allow providers to charge families the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate. Describe _____

☐ Covers all fees (such as registration, supplies, field trips) to minimize the additional fees charged to the families by the provider. Describe: _____

☐ Other. Describe:_____

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

The 2014 reauthorization of the CCDBG Act has given States the support needed to move improvements to the quality of child care forward in order to improve the development of participating children. Ensuring that low-income and vulnerable children can access high-quality care (and remain enrolled to school entry) is an equally important purpose of CCDBG.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 revises the requirement for a market rate survey (MRS) so that: (1) it must be statistically valid and reliable; and (2) it must reflect variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child. Further instead of a market rate survey, a State may develop and conduct an alternative methodology for setting payment rates, such as a cost estimation model.

To provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to participate in the subsidy program, the State's payment practices for CCDF child care providers must reflect generally accepted

payment practices of non-CCDF child care providers in the State. In addition, to the extent practicable, the State must implement enrollment and eligibility policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absence due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness.

The State must also develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for: (1) children in underserved areas; (2) infants and toddlers; (3) children with disabilities; and (4) children who receive care during non-traditional hours. With respect to investments to increase access to programs providing high-quality child care and development services, the State must give priority to children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such programs.

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 enrolling such child with a provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of service or receiving a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)). This did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014.

4.1.1 Describe how is the parent of each eligible child advised that the Lead Agency offers the option of selecting a provider that has a grant or contract or receiving a child care certificate (658E(c)(2)(A)(i), 658P(2)) _____

4.1.2 Describe how the parents is informed of the option to choose from a variety of child care categories – such as private, not-for-profit, faith-based providers (if using a certificate), centers, family child care homes, or in-home providers (658E(c)(2)(A)(i), 658P(2), 658Q) _____

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 in order to be paid in the certificate program.

☐ Yes. If yes, **describe** the type(s) of child care services available through grants or contracts, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: _____

☐ No. If no, skip to 4.1.4.

b) Will the Lead Agency use grants or contracts for child care services to achieve any of the following (check all that apply):

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that the State will develop and implement strategies (which may include such examples as offering tiered payment rates to child care providers, the provision of direct contracts or grants to community-based organizations, offering child care certificates to parents, or giving children priorities for services) to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for

children in underserved areas (such as areas with high concentrations of poverty or unemployment), infants and toddlers, children with disabilities (the CCDBG Act of 2014 added a new definition of child with disability (658(P)(3)), and children who receive care during non-traditional hours. (658 E(c)(2)(M)) (see also section 4.6)

- ☐ Increase the supply of specific types of care with grants or contracts for:
  - ☐ 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 specific geographic areas
    - ☐ Urban
    - ☐ Rural
  - ☐ Other. Describe _____
- ☐ Improve the quality of child care programs with grants or contracts for:
  - ☐ Programs providing comprehensive services, such as integrated child care in Head Start, Early Head Start, pre-k, summer or other programs
  - ☐ Programs with higher quality services
  - ☐ Programs to serve children with disabilities or special needs
  - ☐ 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 specific geographic areas
    - ☐ Urban
    - ☐ Rural
  - ☐ Other. Describe _____

Technical Assistance Resource to Support Using Grants and Contracts

- **Using Grants and Contracts to serve vulnerable children and families** https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/using-grants-and-contracts-build-and-stabilize-supply

4.1.4 The Lead Agency certifies policies and procedures are in place for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B)) This requirement did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014. ☐ Describe _____

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.

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 number of children in the care of the provider to meet minimum wage law or Fair Labor Standards Act

☐ Restricted based on provider meeting a minimum age requirement

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

☐ Restricted to care by relatives

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

☐ Restricted to in-home providers that meet some basic health and safety requirements

☐ Other. Describe _____

4.2 Assessing Market Rates and Child Care Costs

The new law revises the requirement for a market rate survey (MRS) so that: (1) it must be statistically valid and reliable; and (2) it must reflect variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child (658E(c)(4)(B)). A State has the option to develop and use a statistically valid and reliable alternative methodology for setting payment rates, such as a cost estimation model. ACF will issue additional guidance on alternative methodologies.

The MRS or alternative methodology must be developed and conducted no earlier than two years before the date of submission of the Plan (instead of two years before the effective date of the Plan, as previously required for the MRS).

The State must consult with the State Advisory Council, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology.

The State must prepare a detailed report containing the results of the MRS or alternative methodology. The State must make the report with these results widely available no later than 30 days after completion of the MRS or alternative methodology, including by posting the results on the Internet.

The State must set CCDF subsidy payment rates in accordance with the results of the current MRS or alternative methodology. When setting payment rates, the State must take into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided prior to November 2014 (e.g., tiered reimbursement or other methods) and without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families receiving CCDF relative to the number served as of November 2014.

4.2.1 Developing and Conducting a Market Rate Survey (MRS) and/or an Alternative Methodology. Will the State conduct a statistically and valid and reliable MRS, alternative methodology or both?

- ☐ MRS
- ☐ Alternative Methodology. Describe _____
- ☐ Both. Describe _____
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

4.2.2 Describe how the State consulted with the State Advisory Council, local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities prior to developing and conducting the MRS or alternative methodology. _____

4.2.3 Describe how the market rate survey or alternative methodology is statistically valid and reliable. To be considered valid and reliable, the MRS or alternative methodology must represent the child care market, provide complete and current data, use rigorous data collection procedures, reflect geographic variation, and analyze data in a manner that captures other relevant differences. _____

Technical Assistance Resource to Support Validity of Market Rate Surveys

- **Study of Market Prices: Validating Child Care Market Rate Surveys** (ACF-funded report) http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/14724

4.2.4 Describe how the market rate survey reflects variations in the price of child care services by:

a) Geographic area _____

b) Type of provider _____

c) Age of child _____

4.2.5 Describe the process used by the State to make the results of the market rate survey widely available to the public. Include the date of completion of the market rate survey or alternative methodology (must be no earlier than July 1, 2013) _____, the date results of the report were made widely available no less than 30 days after the completion of the survey or

alternative methodology _____, and how the results of the report were made widely available including the internet address where the report is posted. _____.

4.3 Setting Payment Rates

4.3.1 Describe how the State set payment rates for child care services in accordance with the results of the current market rate survey or alternative methodology, taking into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided prior to November 2014 (e.g., tiered payment or other methods) and without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families receiving CCDF relative to the number of families served as of November 2014. For example, providing tiered payment with a sufficient differential to support higher quality, considering the cost of quality using a cost estimation model or other method, or examining the participation rate of high-quality providers in the subsidy system (e.g., using indicators from a quality rating system) and adjusting payment rates if necessary. _____

4.3.2 Provide the payment rates and percentiles (based on current MRS) for the following categories:

a) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
b) Infant (6 months), full-time licensed FCC care in most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
c) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed center care in most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
d) Toddler (18 months), full-time licensed FCC care in most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
e) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
f) Preschooler (4 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
g) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed center care in the most populous geographic region
    a. Rate _____
    b. Percentile _____
h) School-age child (6 years), full-time licensed FCC care in the most populous geographic region

a. Rate _____
b. Percentile _____

4.3.3 States may choose to differentiate payment rates taking into consideration such factors as 1) geographic location, 2) age of child, 3) needs of children (special needs, protective services, etc.), 4) non-traditional hours of care, or 5) quality of care. In addition to these differential rates tied to market variations in prices (i.e., infant prices higher than school-age prices), States can choose to established tiered rates or add-ons on top of base rates as a way to increase payment rates for targeted needs (i.e., higher rate for special needs children). Check which types of tiered payment or rate add-on, if any, the Lead Agency has chosen to implement. In the description of any tiered rates or add-ons, indicate the process and basis used for determining the tiered rates and amount and also indicate if the rates were set based on the MRS or another process.

- ☐ Tiered rate/rate add-on for nontraditional hours. Describe _____
- ☐ Tiered rate/rate add-on for children with special needs as defined by the State/Territory. Describe_____
- ☐ Tiered rate/rate add-on for infants and toddlers (do not check if you have a different base rate for infants/toddlers with no separate bonus or add-on). Describe _____
- ☐ Tiered rate/rate add-on for school-age programs (do not check if you have a different base rate for school-age programs). Describe_____
- ☐ Tiered rate/rate add-on for higher quality as defined by the State/Territory. Describe _____
- ☐ Other tiered rate/rate add-on. Describe _____
- ☐ None.

4.4 Summary of Facts Used to Determine that Payments Rates Are Sufficient to Ensure Equal Access

The State plan shall provide a summary of facts relied on by the State/Territory to determine that such rates are sufficient to ensure equal access. The State/Territory must certify that payment rates are sufficient to ensure access. (658E (c)(4)(A))

4.4.1 What facts did the State use to determine equal access (i.e., what is the metric or benchmark of equal access – percentile that rates cover or proportion of costs covered)? Check all that apply and describe.

- ☐ Payment rates are set at the 75th percentile or higher of the most recent survey (federal benchmark). Describe _____
- ☐ Tiered rates/differential rates described in 4.3.3.
- ☐ Rates based on data on the cost to the provider of providing care. Describe _____
- ☐ Data on the size of the difference (in terms of dollars) between payment rates and the 75th percentile, if rates are below the 75th percentile. Describe _____

- ☐ Data on the proportion of children being served over time. Describe _____
- ☐ Data on where children are being served. Describe _____
- ☐ Feedback from parents, including parent survey or parent complaints. Describe

- ☐ Other. Describe_____

4.4.2 Does the State certify that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access either based on the current MRS or alternative methodology?

- ☐ Yes. The State certifies that payment rates are sufficient to ensure equal access.
- ☐ No. The State must provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date no later than September 30, 2016. _____
  - Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started)_____
  - Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
  - Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
  - Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____
  - Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
  - Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

4.5 Payment Practices and Timeliness of Payments

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that requires States to describe in the Plan how the State's payment practices for CCDF child care providers reflect generally accepted payment practices of non-CCDF child care providers in the State—so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to participate in the subsidy program. To the extent practicable, the State must implement enrollment and eligibility policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider payments from a child's occasional absences due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness. (658E(c)(2)(S)) Examples may include, but are not limited to, paying based on enrollment instead of attendance, paying in advance of service, paying on the same schedule as private pay families (e.g., weekly basis), or paying when the program is closed such as holidays.

4.5.1 Describe how the payment practices to child care providers who serve CCDF-assisted children reflect generally accepted payment practices of other child care providers in the State to ensure stability of funding to encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive CCDF assistance. For example, provider-friendly payment policies such as paying for absence days, giving providers prompt notice of changes in family's eligibility status, paying providers for customary fees such as registration charged to private-paying families, paying providers prospectively rather than only on a reimbursement basis, or using automated billing and payment mechanisms to ensure timely payment. _____

4.5.2 To the extent practicable, does the State implement policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider reimbursement rates from an eligible child's occasional absences due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness?

☐ Yes, the State pays for absence days. If yes, how many? _____

☐ Other. Describe any other policies to support the fixed costs of providing care. _____

Technical Assistance Resources for Setting Payments to Support the Costs of Providing Services

- **Attendance Policies and Systems** https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/attendance-policies-and-systems
- **Cost Estimation Tool** https://cemocc.icfwebservices.com/index.cfm?do=viewLogin

4.5.3 Check and describe the strategies the State/Territory will use to ensure the timeliness of payments.

☐ Policy on length of time for making payments. Describe length of time _____

☐ Track and monitor the payment process _____

☐ Use of electronic tools (e.g., automated billing, direct deposit, etc.) Describe _____

☐ Other. Describe_____

4.6 Supply Building Strategies to Meet the Needs of Certain Populations

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a provision that the State will develop and implement strategies (which may include such examples as offering tiered payment rates to child care providers, the provision of direct contracts or grants to community-based organizations, offering child care certificates to parents, or giving children priorities for services) to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for children in underserved areas, infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children who receive care during non-traditional hours. (658 E(c)(2)(M))

4.6.1 Describe how the State will develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for the following children and families. At a minimum, include in your description how the State determines most critical supply needs (e.g., what data are used), and what method is used to increase supply and improve quality (e.g.,

grants/contracts as discussed in 4.1.3, family child care networks, start-up funding and technical assistance support, recruitment of providers, etc.).

a) For infants and toddlers _____

b) For children with disabilities _____

c) For children who receive care during non-traditional hours _____

d) For homeless children _____

e) How does the State ensure that families from areas with high concentrations of poverty and unemployment that do not have high-quality programs will have priority access to CCDF investments in quality? (658E(c)(2)(Q)) _____

4.6.2 Describe how the state will recruit providers with limited English proficiency, or who will serve and be available for families with limited English proficiency. _____

4.6.3 How will the Lead Agency overcome language barriers to serve providers with limited English proficiency? Check the strategies, if any, that your State/Territory has chosen to implement.

☐ Informational materials in non-English languages

☐ Training and technical assistance in non-English languages

☐ CCDF health and safety requirements in non-English languages

☐ Provider contracts or agreements in non-English languages

☐ Website in non-English languages

☐ Bilingual caseworkers or translators available

☐ Collect information to evaluate on-going need, recruit, or train a culturally or linguistically diverse workforce

☐ Other: _____

☐ None

If the Lead Agency checked any option above related to providing information or services in other non-English languages, please list the languages offered _____

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

The CCDBG Act of 2014 makes child care safer by defining minimum health and safety requirements for child care providers. This includes both the standards that must be established and the pre-service/orientation and ongoing minimum training required. It also requires States to conduct criminal background checks for all child care staff members, including staff members who don't

care directly for children but have unsupervised access to children and it specifies disqualifying crimes. Pre-licensure and annual unannounced inspections of licensed CCDF providers and annual inspections of license-exempt CCDF providers are now required. States must also explain why exemptions to any of the licensing standards did not endanger the health and safety of CCDF children in license-exempt care.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 also requires States to establish qualifications and training for licensing inspectors and appropriate inspector-to-provider ratios. States are also required to have standards for CCDF providers regarding group size limits and appropriate child-to-provider ratios based on the age of children in child care.

5.1 Standards and Licensing Requirements

Each State is required to certify it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to all child care services provided within the State (not restricted to providers receiving CCDF), and to provide a detailed description of such requirements and how such requirements are effectively enforced. (658E(c)(2)(I)(i))

5.1.1 The State certifies that it has licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the State. (658(c)(2)(F)) This requirement did not change under the CCDBG Act of 2014. ☐

5.1.2 Does your State/Territory exempt any child care providers from its licensing requirements?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes. If the State exempts any child care providers from State/Territory licensing requirements, the CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States to describe why such licensing exemptions do not endanger the health, safety, and development of children who receive services from license exempt providers (658E(c)(2)(F)(ii)). _____

Technical Assistance Resource for Revising Licensing Requirements

- **Revising State Licensing Requirements: Readiness for Change**, by NCCCQI, poses questions for States and Territories to consider as they begin the process of revising licensing requirements. Available at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/revising-state-licensing-requirements-readiness-change

5.1.3 Describe how the State child care standards for providers receiving CCDF address appropriate ratios between the number of children and the number of providers and group size, in terms of the age of the children for each type of setting 658E(c)(2)(H).

a) Center Based Care:

1. Infant (6 months) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____
2. Toddler (18 months) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____
3. Preschool (4 years) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____
4. School-Age (6 years) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____

b) Group Child Care Homes:

1. Infant (6 months) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____
2. Toddler (18 months) Ratio: _____ Group size:_____
3. Preschool (4 years) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____
4. School-Age (6 years) Ratio: _____ Group size: _____

Describe the maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time, if the State requires the provider's own children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day _____

c) Family child care:

Describe the ratios_____, group size_____, the threshold for when licensing is required_____, maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time _____, if the State requires the provider's own children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size _____, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day _____

d) Other eligible providers:

Describe the ratios _____, group size _____, the threshold for when licensing is required _____, maximum number of children that are allowed in the home at any one time _____, if the State requires the provider's own children to be included in the Child-to-Provider ratio or group size _____, or the limits on infants and toddlers or additional school-age children that are allowed for part of the day _____

5.1.4 Describe how the State child care standards address required qualifications for providers appropriate to each type of setting, including the minimum age allowed, minimum education level, any specific content required related to the age of children. (658E(c)(2)(H))

a) Center Based Care:

5. Infant (6 months) teacher qualifications: _____
6. Toddler (18 months) teacher qualifications: _____
7. Preschool (4 years) teacher qualifications: _____
8. School-Age (6 years) teacher qualifications: _____

b) Group Child Care Homes:

5. Infant (6 months) teacher qualifications: _____
6. Toddler (18 months) teacher qualifications: _____
7. Preschool (4 years) teacher qualifications: _____
8. School-Age (6 years) teacher qualifications: _____

c) Family child care provider qualifications: _____

d) Other eligible provider qualifications: _____

5.1.5 The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a new provision specifying that States must establish health and safety requirements for providers serving children receiving CCDF assistance relating to matters included in the topics listed below, and have pre-service or orientation training requirements, appropriate to the provider setting, that addresses these health and safety topic requirements. (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)). This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving CCDF regardless of licensing status (licensed or exempt).

a) The State certifies that it has health and safety requirements for individuals (providers) receiving CCDF in the following areas:

- Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization)
- Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices
- Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent
- Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
- Building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic
- Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma
- Emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a) (1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1))
- Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants
- Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)
- First aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation

☐ Yes. The State certifies that it has health and safety requirements for CCDF providers in these areas.

☐ No. If no, provide your implementation plan in 5.1.6.

b) The State certifies that it has pre-service or orientation (up to 6 months) training requirements, appropriate to the provider setting that addresses each of the requirements relating to the topic areas listed above.

☐ Yes. The State certifies that it has pre-service or orientation training requirements.

☐ No. If no, provide your implementation plan in 5.1.6.

5.1.6 If no to 5.1.5, the State must provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). _____

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

5.1.7 Does the State have health and safety requirements for any of the following optional areas?

☐ Nutrition. Describe: _____
☐ Access to physical activity. Describe: _____
☐ Other subject areas determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety. Describe: _____

Technical Assistance Resources for Health and Safety Requirements

- **Caring for Our Children** http://cfoc.nrckids.org/ provides information on standards and benchmarks for meeting these requirements.
- **Caring for Our Children Basics** https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/12/18/2014-29649/caring-for-our-children-basics-comment-request provides proposed minimum standards for health and safety requirements.

5.1.8 States have the option to exempt relatives (as defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from these CCDF health and safety requirements. Does the State exempt relatives from the requirement to receive pre-service or orientation health and safety training on any or all of the listed topics?

☐ No

☐ Yes. If the State exempts relatives from health and safety training requirements, describe, including how the State ensures the health and safety of children in relative care. _____

5.2 Monitoring and Enforcement Policies and Practices

5.2.1 The State certifies that the State shall have in effect policies and practices applicable to licensing or regulating child care providers that provide services to children receiving assistance and the facilities of those providers. (658E(c)(2)(J))

☐ Yes. The State certifies that it has policies and practices to ensure compliance with all applicable health and safety requirements. List the policy citation within the Lead Agency's rules:_____

☐ No. Provide your implementation plan in 5.2.4.

5.2.2 The CCDBG Act of 2014 added the following provisions for enforcement of licensing which must be in effect no later than November 19, 2016 for all providers who serve children receiving CCDF (with the option to exempt relatives).

The State certifies:

a) **Licensing Inspectors** - It will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State's licensure requirements. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(I)) For example, inspectors are trained in the type and age grouping of care that they inspect.

b) **Inspections for Licensed CCDF Providers** - It will require licensing inspectors to perform inspections, with not less than one prelicensure inspection, for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, of each such child care provider and facility in the State. It will require licensing to perform not less than annually, an unannounced inspection of licensed CCDF providers for compliance with all child care licensing standards, which shall include an inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards (inspectors may inspect for compliance with all 3 standards at the same time. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(II))

c) **Inspections for License-Exempt CCDF Providers** – It will have policies and practices that require licensing inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the lead agency) of child care providers and facilities to perform an annual inspection of each license-exempt CCDF provider (unless the provider is described in section (658P(6)(B)) (658E(c)(2)(K)(ii)(IV))

d) **Ratio of Licensing Inspectors** – It will have policies and practices that require the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal, State, and local law. (658E(c)(2)(K)(i)(III)) The recommended workload standard from the National Association of Regulatory Agencies is 50-60 facilities per inspector, (http://www.naralicensing.drivehq.com/publications/Strong_CC_Licensing_2011.pdf)

e) **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting –** That child abuse reporting requirements are in place and comply with section of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)) (658E(c)(2)(L))

☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation(s):_____

☐ No. Provide your implementation plan in 5.2.4.

Technical Assistance Resources for Health and Safety Requirements

- **Caring for Our Children** http://cfoc.nrckids.org/ provides information on standards and benchmarks for meeting these requirements.
- **Caring for Our Children Basics** https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/12/18/2014-29649/caring-for-our-children-basics-comment-request provides proposed minimum standards for health and safety requirements.

5.2.3 States have the option to exempt relatives (as defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from CCDF health and safety requirements, including inspections. Note this exception only applies if the individual cares ONLY for relative children. Does the State exempt relatives from these inspection requirements?

☐ Yes.

☐ No. If no, describe the State's policy for inspecting relatives _____

5.2.4 If the State responded no to any requirements in Section 5.2, provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific timeline for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than November 19, 2016).

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than November 19, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

Technical Assistance Resources for Licensing Inspection and Enforcement Policies

- **Child Care Licensing Inspection Policies** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/contemporary-issues-licensing-child-care-licensing-inspection-policies
- **Enforcement Strategies with Licensed Child Care Providers** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/contemporary-issues-licensing-enforcement-strategies-licensed-child-care-providers
- **Monitoring Strategies for Determining Compliance - Differential Monitoring, Risk Assessment, and Key Indicators** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/contemporary-issues-licensing-monitoring-strategies-determining-compliance-differential

- **Enforcement and Approaches to Illegally-Operating Providers** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/contemporary-issues-licensing-enforcement-and-approaches-illegally-operating-providers
- **Quality Assurance in Child Care Licensing** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/contemporary-issues-licensing-quality-assurance-child-care-licensing

5.3 Criminal Background Checks

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added new requirements for States receiving CCDF funds for conducting criminal background checks on all child care providers and child care staff members and prospective staff members(not just limited to CCDF providers). States are required to have requirements, policies, and procedures in place to conduct criminal background checks for child care providers (including center-based providers, family child care providers, or another unrelated provider that is licensed, regulated or registered under State law or receives CCDF funds) and child care staff members (non-relative individuals employed by the provider) who either supervise children or who have unsupervised access to children. For family child care homes, this includes the caregiver requesting a check him/herself, as well as any other individuals in the household that may have unsupervised access to children. These provisions must be in place no later than September 30, 2017.

States must also have licensing and regulatory requirements, not limited to CCDF, that prohibit the employment of child care staff members who refuse or do not pass the criminal background check. A child care provider is ineligible for CCDF funds if the provider employs an ineligible child care staff member.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 specifies what a comprehensive criminal background check includes and a child care provider must submit a request to the appropriate State agency for a criminal background check for each child care staff member, including prospective child care staff members at least once every 5 years. A criminal background check must include a search of: State criminal and sex offender registry in the State where the staff member resides and each State where the staff member has resided over the past 5 years; State child abuse and neglect registry in the State where the staff member resides and each State where the staff member has resided over the past 5 years, National Crime Information Center (run by the FBI); FBI fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and National Sex Offender Registry (operated by the Department of Justice).

Child care staff members cannot be employed by a provider receiving CCDF if they refuse a background check; make materially false Statements in connection with the background check; are registered or required to be registered on the State or National Sex Offender Registry; have been convicted of a felony consisting of: murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crime involving rape or sexual assault, kidnapping, arson, physical assault, or subject to an individual review, at the State's option, a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or have been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult

against a child. The State may conduct an individualized review of staff members who have received felony criminal convictions for drug-use to be determined eligible for employment.

Timeliness of background checks - The State 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 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 will provide information about each disqualifying crime to the staff member.

Fees for background checks – Fees that a State may charge for the costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check may not exceed actual costs to the State for processing and administration.

Transparency – The State must ensure that policies and procedures for conducting criminal background checks are published on the State's consumer education website (also see section 2.2) or other publicly available venue.

Appeals process – The State shall have a process for a child care staff member to appeal the results of their background check to challenge for accuracy and completeness and fees charged by a State or Territory for completing the background checks may not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration. The State must publish the background check policies and procedures on the State and local lead agency websites. If there is no website, then the information must be made publicly available in another venue.

Privacy considerations - Lead Agency may not publicly release the results of individual background checks. They may release aggregated data by crime as long as the data does not include personally identifiable information.

5.3.1 Describe the status of the State's requirements, policies, and procedures for criminal background checks for child care staff members and child care providers.

- ☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the policy citation within the Lead Agency's rules: _____
- ☐ No. If no, provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2017). _____
    - Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
    - Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____

- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____
- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2017) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

5.3.2 Does the State have a review process for individuals disqualified due to a felony drug offense to determine if that individual is still eligible for employment?

☐ Yes. Describe._____

☐ No

5.3.3 Does the Lead Agency disqualify child care staff members based on their conviction for other crimes not specifically listed above?

☐ Yes. Describe._____

☐ No

5.3.4 Does your State exempt relatives (defined in CCDF regulations as grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings if living in a separate residence, aunts, and uncles, 98.41(A)(ii)(A)) from background checks?

☐ Yes, relatives are exempt from all of the background check requirements.

☐ Yes, relatives are exempt from some of the background check requirements. Describe._____

☐ No, relatives are not exempt from background checks.

5.3.5 Describe the status of your State's requirements for submitting requests for background checks. Describe progress on conducting background checks in a timely manner, protecting the privacy of child care staff members, and appealing the results of background checks. _____

5.3.6 Describe how fees charged for completing the background checks do not exceed the actual cost of processing and administration. Lead Agencies can report that no fees are charged if applicable. _____

5.3.7 Describe how background check policies and procedures are published on the State or Territory website or is the information made publicly available on another venue _____

5.3.8 Does the Lead Agency release aggregated data by crime?

☐ Yes. List types of crime included in the aggregated data _____

☐ No

6 Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

Teacher-child interactions and relationships, intentional strategies to engage children and their parents, and use of curriculum and assessment to inform practices with children are key components of high quality child care. These require a competent, skilled, and stable workforce. Research has shown that specialized training and education, positive and well-organized work environments and adequate compensation promote teacher stability and effectiveness with young children in child care. In addition, professional development strategies that emphasize on-site mentoring and coaching of teachers have emerged as promising to change practices with children and families.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires States to establish professional development and training requirements in key areas like health and safety, early learning guidelines, responding to challenging behavior and engaging families. States are required to offer ongoing annual training and to establish a progression of professional development opportunities to improve knowledge and skills of CCDF providers. (658E(c)(2)(G)) Training and supporting professional development is also one of the options States have for investing their CCDF quality funds (658G(b)(1))

Questions related to requirements for recruiting and retaining a qualified and effective child care workforce have been consolidated into Section 6.

6.1 Training and Professional Development Requirements

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the State develop training and professional development requirements 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. (658E(c)(2)(G))

The State also must develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply and improve the quality of child care services. (658E(c)(2)(V))

6.1.1 Describe the status of the State's training and professional development requirements 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.

The Lead Agency assures that the State's training and professional development requirements:

a) Provide ongoing training and professional development, provide for a progression of professional development reflecting research and best practice to meet the developmental needs of participating children and improve the quality and stability of the child care workforce

b) Are developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (if applicable)

c) Incorporates knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), the State's health and safety standards (as described in

section 5), and incorporates social-emotional behavior intervention models, which may include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in Section 2)

d) Are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF

e) Appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers caring for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups, English learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians.

☐ Yes. Fully implemented and meeting all Federal requirements outlined above. List the Lead Agency's policy citation: _____

☐ Not implemented. Skip to 6.3.5 to provide your implementation plan.

6.1.2 Describe how the State provides ongoing training and professional development, provide for a progression of professional development (such as allows an individual to build on entry- and mid-level training and education both in terms of the skills and knowledge they attain but also in terms of credit that leads toward a higher level credential or certification, including articulation agreements) reflecting research and best practice to meet the developmental needs of participating children and improve the quality and stability of the child care workforce _____

6.1.3 Describe how the State incorporates knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), the State's health and safety standards (as described in section 5), and incorporates social-emotional behavior intervention models, which may include positive behavior intervention and support models (as described in Section 2) into its training and professional development requirements _____

6.1.4 Describe how the State's training and professional development requirements are accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations receiving CCDF _____

6.1.5 Describe how the State's training and professional development requirements are appropriate, to the extent practicable, for child care providers caring for children receiving child care subsidies, including children of different age groups, English learners, children with disabilities, and Native Americans, including Indians and Native Hawaiians._____

6.1.6 The State must use CCDF for activities to improve the quality of availability of child care, including training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and families (658E(c)(3)(B)(i). Describe the status of the State's training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and their families (connects to Section 3.2.2).

☐ Yes. The State certifies that no later than September 30, 2016 it will provide training and technical assistance to providers on identifying and serving homeless children and their families. Describe _____

☐ No. Provide your implementation plan in 6.3.5.

6.2 Supporting Training and Professional Development of the Child Care Workforce with CCDF Quality Funds

6.2.1 If checked yes to 7.1 in the next section, check which content is included in training and professional development activities. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those related to nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically-based, developmentally-appropriate and age-appropriate strategies as required in 6.1.1c.
- ☐ Caring for children of families in geographic areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment
- ☐ Caring for children with disabilities
- ☐ Implementing behavior management strategies, including positive behavior interventions and support models, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors, including reducing expulsions of preschool-aged children for such behaviors (see also Section 2)
- ☐ 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
- ☐ Meeting the nutritional and physical activity needs of children to promote healthy development
- ☐ Understanding the early neurological development of children
- ☐ Using data to guide program improvement
- ☐ Supporting positive development of school-age children
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

6.2.2 If checked yes to 7.1 in the next section, check how the State/Territory connects child care individuals with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources for pursuing postsecondary training relevant for the early childhood and school-age workforce. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Coaches, mentors, consultants, or other specialists available to support access to postsecondary training including financial aid
- ☐ State/Territory-wide, coordinated, and easily accessible clearinghouse (i.e. online calendar or listing of opportunities) of relevant postsecondary training opportunities
- ☐ Financial awards (such as scholarships, grants, loans, reimbursement for expenses) from State/Territory for completion of postsecondary training
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

6.2.3 Does the State require a specific number of annual training hours for child care providers caring for children receiving CCDF subsidies? The benchmark based on *Caring for Our Children* is 30 hours of preservice training and between 24 and 30 hours ongoing training.

- ☐ Yes. If yes, describe _____
- ☐ No

6.2.4 Describe how the State will develop and implement strategies to strengthen provider's business practices. This may include, but is not limited to, such practices related to fiscal management, budgeting, record-keeping, hiring and retaining qualified staff, and parent-provider communications. _____

Technical Assistance Resources for Recruiting and Retaining a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce

- **Aligned Professional Development Systems Planning and Implementation Guide.** Aligned professional development systems consist of interrelated supports and services that address a continuum of professional development. The common goal is to support the workforce through coordinated efforts that include training, technical assistance and education. Key elements of an aligned professional development system include core knowledge and competencies, career pathways, professional development capacity, access to professional development and compensation and workforce conditions. https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdwcenter_alignedpds_considerations.pdf
- **Professional Development for the Infant/Toddler Early Care and Education Workforce** - This paper offers a framework and approaches to strengthen professional development opportunities for the infant/toddler workforce. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/state-community-policy/nitcci/professional-development-for-the-infant-toddler-workforce.pdf
- **Distance Learning Planning and Implementation Guide** at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/distance-learning-planning-and-implementation-guide-0
- **Caring for Our Children** http://cfoc.nrckids.org/ provides information on standards and benchmarks for meeting these requirements.
- **Caring for Our Children Basics** https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/12/18/2014-29649/caring-for-our-children-basics-comment-request provides proposed minimum standards for health and safety requirements.

6.3 Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a requirement that the State will develop, maintain, or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children from birth to kindergarten entry (i.e., birth-to-three, three-to-five, or birth-to-five), describing what such children should know and be able to do, and covering the essential domains of early childhood development for use Statewide by child care providers.(658E(c)(2)(T))

6.3.1 Describe the status of the State's early learning and development guidelines appropriate for children from birth to kindergarten entry.

☐ The State assures that the early learning and development guidelines are:

- Research-based, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with entry to kindergarten
- Implemented in consultation with the State educational agency and the State Advisory Council
- Aligned with entry into kindergarten
- Updated as determined by the State. List the date or frequency _____

☐ Not implemented. Provide your implementation plan in 6.3.5.

6.3.2 Check for which age group(s) the State has established early learning and development guidelines:

☐ Birth-to-three

☐ Three-to-Five

☐ Birth-to-Five

☐ Other. Describe _____

6.3.3 Does the State/Territory use CCDF quality funds to improve on the development or implementation of early learning and development guidelines by providing technical assistance to child care providers to enhance children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and support children's overall well-being?

☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a system of technical assistance operating State/Territory-wide

☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a system of technical assistance operating as a pilot or in a few localities but not State/Territory-wide

☐ No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase

☐ No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

If yes, check all that apply to the technical assistance and describe.

☐ Child care providers are supported in developing and implementing curriculum/learning activities based on the State's/Territory's early learning and development guidelines. Describe _____

☐ The technical assistance is linked to the State's/Territory's quality rating and improvement system . Describe _____

- ☐ Child care providers working with infants and/or toddlers have access to the technical assistance for developing and implementing early learning and development guidelines. Describe _____
- ☐ Child care providers working with preschool-age children have access to the technical assistance for developing and implementing early learning and development guidelines. Describe _____
- ☐ Child care providers working with school-age children have access to the technical assistance for developing and implementing early learning and development guidelines. Describe _____

6.3.4 ☐ The State assures that CCDF funds will not be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that: (658E(c)(2)(T)(ii)(I)):

- Will be the sole basis for a child care provider determined ineligible to participate in the CCDF program
- 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 effectiveness of child care programs
- Will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the CCDF program

Technical Assistance Resource for Implementing Early Learning Guidelines

- **Infant/Toddler Early Learning Guidelines Implementation Tool Kit** - This tool kit provides resources, tools, and process suggestions to assist states and territories in engaging in strategic planning to support the implementation of Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/webinars-conference-calls/it-elg-implementation-toolkit-introduction-508-compliant.pdf

6.3.5 If the State responded no to any requirements in Section 6, provide a justification for why it cannot certify compliance with this requirement and submit a State-specific implementation plan for achieving compliance with this requirement, including planned activities, necessary legislative or regulatory steps to complete, and target completion date (no later than September 30, 2016). _____

- Status – Provide a description (justification) of the State's status toward completion (such as in progress, partially completed, not yet started) _____
- Goals/Objectives – Provide a broad Statement of what you plan to accomplish _____
- Tasks/Activities – What steps will you take to achieve your goal (e.g., legislative or rule changes, modify agreements with coordinating agencies, etc.) _____
- Timeline – Projected start and end date for each activity _____

- Overall Target Completion Date (no later than September 30, 2016) _____
- Lead Agency – Who is responsible for completion of this goal/objective _____

7 Support Continuous Quality Improvement

Lead Agencies are required to reserve and use a portion of their Child Care and Development Block Grant funds for activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care. States/Territories may provide these quality improvement activities directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities. The activities should be in alignment with a State/Territory-wide assessment of the State's/Territory's needs to carry out such services and care. The CCDBG Act of 2014 increased the minimum quality spending requirement from 4 to 9 percent phased-in over a 5-year period and requires States to spend quality funds on at least 1 of 10 specified quality activities. In addition, starting in FY 2017, States are required to spend 3% of funds for quality activities that relate to improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers. (658G(a)(1))

Note: States are asked about child care resources and referral requirements in section 1 and professional development system requirements in Section 6. In this section, States are asked to describe the current status and their goals and plans for implementation of the remaining child care quality improvement activities.

7.1 Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care Services

7.1.1 Check which of the following specified quality improvement activities the State is investing in:

- ☐ Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce. If checked, respond to additional questions in section 6 and describe the measures relevant to this use of funds that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State. _____
- ☐ Improving development or implementation of the early learning and developmental guidelines by providing TA to providers. If checked, respond to 6.3 and describe the measures relevant to this use of funds that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State. _____
- ☐ Developing, implementing or enhancing a tiered quality rating system. If checked, respond to 7.2. _____
- ☐ Improving the supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers. If checked, respond to 7.3.
- ☐ Establishing or expanding a Statewide system of CCR&R services. If checked, respond to 1.7 and 7.4.

- ☐ Facilitating compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety standards (as described in Section 5). If checked, respond to 7.5.
- ☐ Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care services within the State. If checked, respond to 7.6.
- ☐ Supporting accreditation. If checked, respond to 7.7.
- ☐ Supporting State or local efforts to develop high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development. If checked, respond to 7.8.
- ☐ Other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of child care services, and for which measurement of outcomes related to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or entry into kindergarten is possible. If checked, respond to 7.9.

7.2 Quality Rating and Improvement System

7.2.1 Does your State/Territory have a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)?

- ☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS operating State/Territory-wide.
- ☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a QRIS operating as a pilot, in a few localities, or only a few levels but not fully operating State/Territory-wide.
- ☐ No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase
- ☐ No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

7.2.2 If your State does have a QRIS, check all that apply to your QRIS.

- ☐ Supports and assesses the quality of child care providers in the State
- ☐ Builds on State licensing standards and other State regulatory standards for such providers
- ☐ Designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers and services
- ☐ Describes the safety of child care facilities
- ☐ Builds the capacity of State early childhood programs and communities to promote parents' and families' understanding of the State's early childhood system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled
- ☐ Provides, to the maximum extent practicable, 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. If checked, please describe how these financial options link to responses in Section 4.3 related to higher payment rates tied to quality _____

7.2.3 If your State does have a QRIS, which types of settings or distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care participate in the State's/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 pre-kindergarten or preschool program
- ☐ Programs serving infants and toddlers
- ☐ Programs serving school-age children
- ☐ Faith-based settings
- ☐ Other. Describe. _____

7.2.4 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State. _____

7.3 Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers

7.3.1 What activities are being implemented by the State/Territory to improve the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers? Check all that apply and describe.

- ☐ Establishing or expanding high-quality community or neighborhood-based family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order to improve the quality of early childhood services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to infants and toddlers from low-income families. Describe. _____
- ☐ Establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks. Describe. _____
- ☐ Providing training and professional development to promoting and expanding child care providers' ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers. Describe. _____
- ☐ Providing coaching and/or technical assistance on this age group's unique needs from Statewide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists. Describe. _____
- ☐ 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. _____

- ☐ Developing infant and toddler components within the State's/Territory's QRIS. Describe. _____
- ☐ Developing infant and toddler components within the State's child care licensing regulations. Describe. _____
- ☐ Developing infant and toddler components within the early learning and development guidelines. Describe. _____
- ☐ Improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy to understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care. Describe. _____
- ☐ Carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler cognitive and physical development, or infant and toddler well-being. Describe _____
- ☐ Other. Describe _____

7.3.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

Technical Assistance Resource for Improving the Supply and Quality of Infant-Toddler Programs

- **Strategic Planning Process Tool Kit** - This tool kit provides resources, tools, and process suggestions to assist states and territories with strategic planning to support quality child care for infants and toddlers. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/strategic-planning-process-tool-kit.pdf
- **Developing a Statewide Network of Infant and Toddler Specialists: Technical Assistance Manual for States and Territories** - This manual describes the process of developing and implementing an Infant Toddler Specialist Network using six state examples. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/state-community-policy/nitcci/developing-a-statewide-network-of-infant-and-toddler-specialists.pdf
- **Early Care and Education Systems that Support Quality Care for Babies and Toddlers: Key Elements** - This paper presents an overview of key early care and education system elements and the characteristics that reflect how such a system can offer quality child care to infants, toddlers, and their families. http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/state-community-policy/nitcci/ece-key-elements-for-infants-and-toddlers.pdf

7.4 Child Care Resource & Referral

7.4.1 Are child care resource and referral activities described in 1.7 funded by CCDF quality funds?

- ☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a CCR&R system operating State/Territory-wide.
- ☐ Yes, the State/Territory has a CCR&R system operating in a few localities but not fully operating State/Territory-wide.
- ☐ No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase
- ☐ No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

7.4.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

7.5 Facilitating Compliance with State Standards

7.5.1 What strategies does your State/Territory fund with CCDF quality funds to facilitate child care providers compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State licensing standards? Describe: _____

7.5.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

7.6 Quality Assessment

7.6.1 Describe how the State/Territory measures the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State, including any tools used to measure child, family, teacher, classroom, or provider improvements, and how the State/Territory evaluates how such programs positively impact children _____

7.6.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

7.7 Accreditation Support

7.7.1 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 State/Territory-wide
- ☐ Yes, the State/Territory has supports operating as a pilot or in a few localities but not State/Territory-wide
- ☐ No, but the State/Territory is in the development phase
- ☐ No, the State/Territory has no plans for development

7.7.2 If yes, identify all types of accreditation the State/Territory supports child care providers in achieving. _____

7.7.3 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

7.8 Program Standards

7.8.1 What other State or local efforts, if any, is the State/Territory supporting to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development? Please describe: _____

7.8.2 Describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State _____

7.9 Other Quality Improvement Activities

7.9.1 List and describe any other activities the State/Territory provides to improve the quality of child care services and describe the measures relevant to this activity that the State will use to evaluate the State's progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State. _____

8 Ensure Grantee Accountability

Program integrity includes efforts that ensure effective internal controls over the administration of CCDF funds. The Lead Agency is responsible for monitoring programs and services, ensuring compliance with the rules of the program, promulgating rules and regulations to govern the overall administration of the plan and overseeing the expenditure of funds, including sub-grantees (sub-recipients) and contractors. Lead Agencies are required to have accountability measures in place to ensure integrity and to identify fraud or other program violations.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 has made sweeping changes to the way in which the CCDF program is administered. The new eligibility policies will have widespread implications for the workers and local agencies determining eligibility. These program integrity activities remain the same per CCDF regulations – but the definitions underlying them may change (e.g. some things will no longer be violations).

8.1 Program Integrity

8.1.1 Describe how the State ensures that their definitions for violations have been modified, staff trained, and program integrity procedures revised to reflect new requirements. _____

8.1.2 Describe the processes the Lead Agency will use to monitor all sub-recipients, including those described in Section 1 such as licensing agencies, child care resource and referral agencies, and others with a role in administering CCDF. Lead Agencies that use other governmental or non-governmental sub-recipients to administer the program must have written agreements in place outlining roles and responsibilities for meeting CCDF requirements.

> **Definition**: "Subrecipient means a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a Federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency (2 CFR 200.93).Two CFR Part 200, Subpart A provides additional information on contractors (which may be referred to as "vendors").The description of monitoring must include, but is not limited to, a description of the written agreements used, a schedule for completing the tasks, a budget which itemizes categorical expenditures consistent with CCDF requirements and indicators or measures to assess performance. Additional items for discussion may include: fiscal management, review of policies and procedures to ensure compliance

with CCDF regulations, and monitoring/auditing contractors or grantees to ensure that eligible children are served and eligibility documentation is verified." _____

8.1.3 Describe the activities the Lead Agency has in place to identify program violations and administrative error to ensure program integrity using the series of questions below. Program violations may include intentional and unintentional client and/or provider violations as defined by the Lead Agency. Administrative error refers to areas identified through the Error Rate Review process). Lead Agencies are required to have processes in place to identify fraud or other program violations.

a) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify program violations.

- ☐ Share/match data from other programs (e.g., TANF, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), 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)
- ☐ Run system reports that flag errors (include types)
- ☐ Review of enrollment documents, attendance or billing records
- ☐ Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews
- ☐ Audit provider records
- ☐ Train staff on policy and/or audits
- ☐ Other. Identify the activity: _____
- ☐ None. Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address program integrity along with action steps and completion timelines _____

b) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency has chosen to conduct to identify administrative error.

- ☐ Share/match data from other programs (e.g. TANF, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), 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)
- ☐ Run system reports that flag errors (include types)
- ☐ Review of enrollment documents, attendance or billing records
- ☐ Conduct supervisory staff reviews or quality assurance reviews
- ☐ Audit provider records
- ☐ Train staff on policy and/or audits
- ☐ Other. Identify the activity:_____
- ☐ None. Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address program integrity along with action steps and completion timelines _____

8.1.4 Which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use to investigate and collect improper payments due to program violations or administrative error as defined in your State/Territory? The Lead Agency has the flexibility to recover misspent funds as a result of errors. The Lead Agency is required to recover misspent funds as a result of fraud.

a) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use for Unintentional program violations (UPV)?

- ☐ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment. Identify the minimum dollar amount _____
- ☐ Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g., State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)
- ☐ Recover through repayment plans
- ☐ Reduce payments in subsequent months
- ☐ Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts
- ☐ Recover through other means
- ☐ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments. Describe composition of unit below
- ☐ Other. Identify the strategy._____
- ☐ None. Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to fraud, include action steps and completion timelines _____

b) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use for intentional program violations (IPV) or fraud?

- ☐ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment. Identify the minimum dollar amount _____
- ☐ Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g. State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)
- ☐ Recover through repayment plans
- ☐ Reduce payments in subsequent months
- ☐ Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts
- ☐ Recover through other means
- ☐ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments. Describe composition of unit below
- ☐ Other. Identify the strategy._____
- ☐ None. Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to fraud, include action steps and completion timelines _____

c) Check which activities (or describe under "Other") the Lead Agency will use for administrative error?

- ☐ Require recovery after a minimum dollar amount in improper payment. Identify the minimum dollar amount _____

- ☐ Coordinate with and refer to other State/Territory agency (e.g. State/Territory collection agency, law enforcement)
- ☐ Recover through repayment plans
- ☐ Reduce payments in subsequent months
- ☐ Recover through State/Territory tax intercepts
- ☐ Recover through other means
- ☐ Establish a unit to investigate and collect improper payments. Describe composition of unit below
- ☐ Other. Identify the strategy._____
- ☐ None. Describe what measures the Lead Agency plans to put in place to address the investigation and recovery of misspent funds due to fraud, include action steps and completion timelines _____

8.1.5 What type of sanction will the Lead Agency place on clients and providers to help reduce improper payments due to program violations? The Lead Agency is required to impose sanctions on clients and providers in response to fraud.

- ☐ Disqualify client. If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for clients who are disqualified. _____
- ☐ Disqualify provider. If checked, please describe, including a description of the appeal process for providers who are disqualified. _____
- ☐ Prosecute criminally
- ☐ Other. Describe._____