

Rural Area Flexibility Analysis

1. Types and estimated numbers of rural areas:

The regulations will affect the 44 social services districts (districts) located in rural areas of the State and the child care providers located in those districts.

2. Reporting, recordkeeping, and other compliance requirements and professional services:

All social services districts must not consider the one-time federal AARA payment when considering whether a family is eligible for services. In addition, a social services district that chooses to provide child care services to dislocated workers and/or to pay an enhanced market rate for legally-exempt providers of family child care or in-home child care above 70 percent of the registered family child care rate will have to amend the child care portion of its Child and Family Services Plan. The Office has developed a template that a district may use if it chooses to amend its Plan. If a district does not choose to continue to pay 75 percent of the registered family child care rate for legally-exempt providers that are currently receiving the enhanced market rate, the district must send a notice of the change in the payment rate to the families receiving services from such providers.

Neither social services districts nor legally-exempt family or in-home child care providers should have to hire additional professional staff in order to implement these regulations.

3. Costs:

It is not anticipated that these regulations will result in any additional costs to the State or social services districts. All the social services districts received their allocations for federal and State funds under the New York State Child Care Block Grant for State fiscal year 2009-10. These funds are available to each district and the district may choose to serve optional categories of eligible individuals with the funds allocated to them. Social services districts are required to provide child care services to the optional categories of low-income families only to the extent that they have funds available to provide such services. Some social services districts also received preliminary estimates of their allocations of the additional federal child care subsidy funds made available under AARA.

4. Minimizing adverse impact:

The regulations recognize that there may be differences in the needs among social services districts. To the extent allowed by statute, the regulations provide districts with flexibility in designing their child care subsidy programs in a manner that will best meet the needs of their communities.

5. Rural area participation:

The regulatory changes were discussed with a workgroup of local social services districts, including rural districts, for advice on potential impact.