Statewide Standards of Payment (SSOP) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. General Questions:

1.1 **Q. What are the minimum technical requirements?**
A. You most likely already meet the minimum requirements. They are: Windows 2000 or higher, Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Broadband Internet access.

1.2 **Q. Do I need to download anything to use SSOP?**
A. No.

1.3 **Q. Can I use SSOP from any computer?**
A. Yes. You will be able to use SSOP from any PC, which meets the technical requirements.

1.4 **Q. Will I be able to print reports of the SOP forms using SSOP?**
A. Yes.

1.5 **Q. What size will the reports be? Will there be a report for each SOP Form?**
A. The reports will be 8.5 by 11. A report will be provided for each form. The reports will contain information from the chosen form for each of your programs.

1.6 **Q. How will I receive my rates and rate revisions?**
A. Summary charts of all rates will continue to be published on the Rate Setting Unit Website. You will also be able to access your Detailed Rate Reports via SSOP.

1.7 **Q. Can specific forms, such as the Ancillary Benefits form, be locked from a specific user?**
A. No. Anyone who has an SSOP Login can view all the forms.

1.8 **Q. Can we view the whole submission on one screen?**
A. No. You can only view the submission one form at a time.

1.9 **Q. Can I file for an extension in the SSOP system?**
A. Yes. To receive an extension, you must submit a Submission Extension Request to the Rate Setting Unit via SSOP.

1.10 **Q. Can I fill out some of the forms and return to them another day to finish my submission?**
A. Yes. You will be able to save your work without submitting it to the Rate Setting Unit for processing.

1.11 **Q. What constitutes a complete submission?**
A. A complete submission is:
- The applicable SOP forms for your agency
- A signed Executive Director SOP Certification form
- The annual financial statement prepared by your CPA
- If applicable, a signed DOH cover letter for your Medicaid Rate

  o Responses to the Rate Setting Unit's inquiries regarding your submission

1.12 Q. Do I need to mail an *Executive Director's Certification of SSOP Submission* for every version of my SOP Submission that I submit?
A. Yes.

1.13 Q. Where can I get a copy of the *Executive Director's Certification of SSOP Submission* form?
A. You can download a copy from the Rate Setting Unit's website:
http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/rates/

1.14 Q. Will penalties for Late Submission and Over-utilization of Licensed Capacity be automatically calculated by SSOP?
A. If you fail to submit a complete submission before the due date or approved extension date, you will be subject to a Late Penalty. If your programs are over-utilized, you will be subject to an Over-utilization Penalty.

1.15 Q. Can I modify my submission after I have submitted it?
A. You must submit a *Submission Modification* request to the Rate Setting Unit. Upon approval, you will be able to modify your submission.

1.16 Q. Will I be able to view my submission online, after I have submitted it?
A. Yes. You will be able to view your current submission. You will also be able to view any prior year SOP submission that you have submitted through SSOP.

Please note, each time you submit a submission, your submission will be assigned a new version number. Only the latest submission version will be viewable.

1.17 Q. Will I be able to print reports of the SOP forms after I have submitted my submission?
A. Yes. SSOP reports will continue to be available.

Please note, each time you submit a submission, your submission will be assigned a new version number. Only the reports for the latest submission version can be viewed or printed.

1.18 Q. Will I be able to print reports of the SOP forms from prior years?
A. Yes. You will be able to view and print reports from any SOP submission that you have submitted through SSOP. The reports will continue to remain available from year to year.

Please note, each time you submit a submission, your submission will be assigned a new version number. For each Reporting Period, only the reports for the latest submission version will be printable.

1.19 Q. Will there be a delay between the time I submit my Submission and the time the Rate Setting Unit receives it?
A. No. There is no delay. The moment you see the message on your screen that you have successfully submitted your submission, the Rate Setting Unit has received it.

1.20 Q. Will I be able to know when my request has been processed?
A. Yes. You can view the status of your request in SSOP.

1.21 Q. What if I forget my password?
A. You will be able to request a new password. Contact the New York State Enterprise Help Desk at: (800) NYS-1323.

1.22 Q. Will I be able to use an Alternative Reporting Period for my submission?
A. To use an Alternative Period, you must send an Alternative Period Request to the Rate Setting Unit. Upon approval, you will be able to use the period.

1.23 Q. Will Domestic Violence Rates, rates for programs such as safe dwellings, be included in SSOP?
A. Not at this time.

1.24 Q. Are the Time Study and Self Survey Classification part of SSOP?
A. No.

1.25 Q. Will Close-down Rates be handled in SSOP?
A. Not at this time. Contact the Rate Setting Unit at: ocfs.sm.ssop@ocfs.state.ny.us or call (518) 474-1384 regarding Close-down Rates.

1.26 Q. Will we still need to print copies of our SOP for Chapter 853 residential schools and special act school districts to give to SED?
A. Yes.

1.27 Q. Can two people work on the SOP at the same time?
A. Yes. As long as you do not work on the same form at the same time.

1.28 Q. If someone else in my agency enters information into a form, will I see it?
A. Yes. You will be able to view each others work as you save it.

1.29 Q. If two people work in the same agency, do they have to work off one User Name and Password?
A. No. Each person must login with their own User Name and Password.

1.30 Q. Is saving in SSOP an automatic save or a manual save?
A. It is a manual save. We recommend saving every ten minutes.

1.31 Q. If I resubmit my SOP, will the new version override the previous version? Will there be a document control number for each submitted version?
A. Yes, your new SOP will override your previous version. A new version number will be assigned to your SOP when you submit it.

1.32 Q. If, in previous years, I have used actual unit sizes for the calculation of my MSAR, will actual units sizes be used in the future?
A. Yes. You will need to complete the Operating Unit Specs Form (2651B) and receive approval from the Rate Setting Unit.

1.33 Q. If the Rate Setting Unit rejects my Submission Modification Request what can I do?
A. You can request a rate consultation.

1.34 Q. If some of the SOP forms have been completed, but the SOP Submission has not been submitted, can the Rate Setting Unit begin to audit my submission?
A. No. The Rate Setting Unit will not be able to audit your submission until you have submitted it.

Questions about Specific Standards of Payments (SOP) Forms:

2. Program Information Form

2.1 Q. Can I update my MSAR Program information?
A. No. Please contact the Rate Setting Unit if you need to have your MSAR Program (Group Care, Foster Boarding Home) information updated.

2.2 Q. Is there a limit to the number of Non-MSAR programs I can report on?
A. You are not limited to a maximum number. See the question 11.2 for more information.

2.3 Q. Where should Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILP) be reported?
A. If you have a SILP, it should be listed with your Group Care Programs. If it is not listed, please contact the Rate Setting Unit.

3. Program Statistics Form (2651) for Group Care

3.1 **Q. What do the Care Day categories mean?**
A. LDSS Care Days are the care days for children in the custody of local social services districts in New York State. **OCFS Care Days** are the care days for children in the custody of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (formerly DFY Custody). **Other Care Days** can include private placements and out-of-state placements. 8 D Baby Care Days are care days for children whose mothers are in foster care (includes both designated Mother/Baby programs and non-designated Mother/Baby programs). You should report all care days, even those coming from a state other than New York.

3.2 **Q. Where should I report my NYC Care Days?**
A. You should report them under LDSS Care Days.

3.3 **Q. Will 8 D Baby Care Days be counted in the Utilization Percentage?**
A. Yes. You will be considered out of compliance if on any given day the number of children, including 8 D Babies, is greater than the licensed capacity. Please consult your Regional Office regarding licensing issues.

3.4 **Q. Will Utilization numbers be pulled from Connections?**
A. No. Not at this time.

3.5 **Q. Can we report monthly data and summarize it in the Program Statistic Forms?**
A. No. You must report your annual figures.

3.6 **Q. Would a day care program run by the agency be included in the Other (Non-MSAR) category?**
A. Yes.

4. Program Statistics Form (2651) for FBH

4.1 **Q. Would a day care program run by the agency be included in the Other (Non-MSAR) category?**
A. Yes.

4.2 **Q. Can we report monthly data and summarize it in the Program Statistic Forms?**
A. No. You should report your annual figures.

4.3 **Q. I don't see any green cells. How do I enter care days for my FBH Programs?**
A. Click on the *Plus Sign*, next to the Child Category and Child Type to expand the rows and view the care day amounts for each program.

5. Operating Specifications Form 2651A

5.1 **Q. What if my licensing or facility data is incorrect?**
A. If your licensing or facility data is incorrect in SSOP, it is imperative that you contact the Rate Setting Unit to correct it. Incorrect licensing or facility data may negatively impact your rate.

5.2 **Q. If Capacity changes mid-reporting period, will that be taken into account?**
A. Yes. The capacities and their applicable periods will be displayed in SSOP. A prorated capacity will be determined from them.

5.3 **Q. Where could I report where the kids were moved to while a facility was closed?**
A. You should enter it in the Comments field.

5.4 **Q. Will the maximum Number of Operating Days be reflected as 366 for the leap year?**
A. Yes. But 365 days will be used in the calculation of your MSAR

5.5 **Q. What if I need to report on a facility that did operate continuously from its opening day throughout the reporting period?**
A. You can report the actual # (Number) of Operating Days and can enter a comment.

6. Operating Unit Specifications Form 2651B

6.1 **Q. What is this form and is it required?**
A. This new form is not required for submission. It is a form for reporting actual sizes for each facility unit. Pending Rate Setting Unit approval, the reported Actual Unit Sizes would be used in the calculation of your MSAR.

6.2 **Q. What does Unit Size mean?**
A. A Unit Size is the number of beds in a specific facility unit or the way in which staff supervise groups of children within a facility.

7. Actual Income Form (2654)

7.1 **Q. How do you report fundraising income that has been allocated to a particular program to cover the shortfall in funding the program?**
A. This should be reported as Private Income.

7.2 **Q. Will I receive an error message if I put something incorrect into the Description?**
A. No. The system will not give you an error message. The Rate Setting Unit will audit your SOP submission for correctness.

7.3   Q. What is an example of applied income?
A. A Federal or State Breakfast and Lunch Program is an example of applied income. See The Standards of Payment Program Manual: Chapter 4, Section C-9 for other examples (accessible under *Help* in SSOP).

7.4   Q. Do I need to report income broken out by each county?
A. No. These kinds of income can be grouped under Local Income from MSAR.

8.   Job Title/Category Form

8.1   Q. Can I create new Job Titles?
A. No. The list of selections is predetermined.

8.2   Q. When I select a Job Title, will it be available for all my programs?
A. Yes. Job Titles are selected for the Agency as a whole and will be available for reporting on in all your programs.

8.3   Q. Where can I get help on descriptions of what the Job Titles/Categories mean?
A. You can find explanations of the Job Titles/Categories in Appendix B of the SOP Program Manual (accessible under *Help* in SSOP).

8.4   Q. How can I report on a job title not specifically included in the available titles?
A. Please select the Job Title/Category that best fits the job titles in use in your agency.

8.5   Q. Do I need to select job titles for all agency staff or just for staff for the MSAR programs?
A. You need to select job titles for all your staff. You will report on the Non-MSAR staff under your Non-MSAR programs.

8.6   Q. How should psychologists be reported?
A. Only the psychologists who are not licensed should be reported under Social Services salary line. Licensed psychologists should be reported under the Medical/Clinical salary line.

8.7   Q. Will IT staff be considered administrative or program staff?
A. IT specialists are considered Admin PS, because of their title and function.

9.   Employee Distribution Form 2668

9.1   Q. Where are the Highest Gross Annual Salary and Lowest Gross Annual Salary columns?
A. They have been removed. You are no longer required to report them.

9.2 **Q. Where would you report medical salaries on the Employee Distribution report?**
A. You would report them under the Medical Costs, line 01D.

9.3 **Q. If a position is allocated to different Job Categories, for example an executive director who works in Administration and is a social worker who carries a caseload, how would I report it?**
A. You will need prior written approval from the Rate Setting Unit to split your positions across Job Categories. If you have prior written approval, you would report the appropriate percentage (.00) under the Administration and the Social Services categories.

9.4 **Q. Why doesn't the Employee Distribution form pre-populate from the ancillary benefit form?**
A. Not all employees receive ancillary benefits.

9.5 **Q. Will there be a warning message if I enter too many FTE's?**
A. No. You should review your FTE's prior to submitting your SOP.

9.6 **Q. When I'm looking at my Employee Distribution information, how do I know which programs it's for?**
A. Expand a row with a Job Title, to view the program information for it.

10. Allocation Method Form 3308

10.1 **Q. Do I need to report an allocation method in 3308 for all my Indirect costs?**
A. Yes. For each Indirect Amount reported in the Actual Expenditures form (2652), you will need to report an allocation method.

10.2 **Q. If I allocate a cost between multiple programs, but none of the cost is an indirect expense, do I have to report an allocation method for it?**
A. No. If the cost is a direct cost to multiple programs, then you do not have to report an allocation method for it.

10.3 **Q. How can I report the Direct and Indirect Expense Amounts?**
A. You can report the Direct and Indirect Amounts for Expense Titles 01A – 38E in the Actual Expenditures Form (2652).

10.4 **Q. Where can I find explanations of what the different allocations methods mean?**
A. Please refer to the Standards of Payment Program Manual: Chapter 4, Section C-13 (accessible under *Help* in SSOP).

10.5 **Q. How can I report multiple Allocation Methods for a single expense?**
A. You can select "Other" and report the actual method names in the Description column.

11. Actual Expenditures Form 2652

11.1 **Q. I can see the Expense Titles. How can I tell which programs they are reported in?**
A. Click on the *Plus Sign*, next to the Expense Title to expand the row and view the Program amounts for the expense.

11.2 **Q. Should I continue to report separate cost centers for all non-MSAR programs, or can some non-MSAR programs be "rolled up" into my non-allowable cost center?**
A. You must separately report the non-MSAR programs that are relevant to either the operation of your foster care programs or to OCFS as a funding source for those programs. Examples of non-MSAR programs that must continue to be reported separately are:

- o Start-up costs for a new foster care program
- o The private residential school or special acts school district programs associated with your foster care institution or group residence
- o The medical per diem associated with your foster care programs
- o Any other programs licensed by OCFS (e.g., domestic violence and non-secure detention)
- o Any contracted programs with OCFS (e.g., TANF-substance abuse and other preventive services, care coordination, home visiting)

For the rest of your Non-MSAR programs, it is preferred that you continue to report separate cost centers for non-MSAR programs. However, those of you that prefer to collapse the programs into a non-allowable cost center may continue to do so.

The Rate Setting Unit staff can provide assistance where you have questions regarding this issue.

11.3 **Q. How can I report the Amounts for Expense Titles (01A) - (01F)?**
A. Based on your detailed reporting of these expenses in the Employee Distribution Form (2668), the totals will be automatically pre-filled in Expense Titles 01A – 01F on Form 2652.

11.4 **Q. How can I report the Amount for Expense Title Purchase of Services (11)?**
A. Based on your detailed reporting of these expenses in the Purchases of Services Form (3307), the totals will be automatically pre-filled in Expense Title 11 on Form 2652.

11.5 **Q. How can I report the Amount for Expense Title Parent Organization (39)?**
A. Based on your detailed reporting of these expenses in the Parent Organization Charges Form (2856), the totals will be automatically pre-filled in Expense Title 39 on Form 2652.

11.6 Q. Can I report negative amounts for Vacation Accruals?
A. Yes. If you need to report negative amounts for other expenses, please contact the Rate Setting Unit.

12. Parent Organization Charges (2856)

12.1 Q. How do I know if I have a parent organization?
A. Consult with your Certified Public Accountant for questions regarding the determination of your status.

13. Purchase of Services Form (3307)

13.1 Q. If I use an outside agency for child care services, for example a One to One Aide, should it be reported on the Purchase of Services (3307) form?
A. Yes.

14. Ancillary Benefits Form 2652A

14.1 Q. Can multiple ancillary benefits be combined together and reported as one total value?
A. Yes. You can report the total amount, as long as you list the individual items in the Comments field.

14.2 Q. If I am reporting a salary, but the employee does not have any ancillary benefits, is it ok to leave the Ancillary Benefit Amount blank?
A. Yes. If the employee is not receiving any ancillary benefits, you can leave the field blank.

14.3 Q. Should I enter "40" or ".40" for forty percent?
A. You should enter "40."

14.4 Q. If a subgroup of employees is eligible for a different, better retirement package, is it considered an ancillary benefit?
A. Yes.

14.5 Q. Is severance pay an ancillary benefit?
A. Yes.

14.6 Q. Does the salary threshold for annual salary apply to the salary that was paid to the employee during the Reporting Period or the amount of the annual salary of the employee?
A. The salary threshold applies to the annual salary of the individual, not the actual amount paid to the individual during the reporting period.

14.7 Q. What does the Rate Setting Unit staff use the Ancillary Benefit Form for?
A. The information gathered on the Ancillary Benefit Form is used for informational purposes only.

14.8 Q. Do I need to report an employee with greater than the salary threshold, if they work for Non-MSAR Programs only, for example a program director of OMRDD programs only?
A. No. You do not need to report on this employee.

14.9 Q. Do I need to report the value for housing that is provided at no cost to the individual, in which an employee is required to live as a condition of employment?
A. No. You do not have to report this.

14.10 Q. I clicked *Add Employee* by mistake. How do I get rid of the position?
A. Select the row and click the Delete button.