



Office of Children and Family Services

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Local Commissioners Memorandum

Transmittal:	21-OCFS-LCM-31
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Care Services
Date:	November 18, 2021
Subject:	Update to Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program
Contact Person(s):	Please contact the following persons for questions regarding this LCM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Questions Merideth Infantino, Division of Child Care Services 518-402-3001, Merideth.Infantino@ocfs.ny.gov ocfs.sm.ccs.expansion@ocfs.ny.gov
Attachments:	None

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to inform local social services districts (districts) of a change to the required use of funds for the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program. This LCM modifies the stipulation that a minimum of 25% of a district's allocation be accounted for in year 1, which was first established in 19-OCFS-LCM-26, *Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program*, but does not replace any other part of that ADM.

II. Background

On October 17, 2019, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) issued 19-OCFS-LCM-26, *Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program*, advising districts of the availability of \$20 million of funding for the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program for services provided during the period of October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2021. Districts were given the opportunity to apply for this funding, and the funding was awarded to districts in December 2019. In order to accommodate local needs, districts had discretion for deciding how they used the additional funding over the two-year period. Some might front-load it, others might split it evenly across the two years, etc. OCFS only stipulated that

- o district plans must account for a minimum of 25% of their allocation in year 1, and

- o districts must use these funds to create new slots in year 1 or year 2 (or both) and to maintain the year 1 newly created slots in year 2.

III. Program Implications

Due to the pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), some districts may have had lower than anticipated expenditures for year 1 and year 2. As such, the expansion funding has been extended through September 30, 2022.

- o Districts are not obligated to account for a minimum of 25% of their allocation in year 1.
- o A failure to account for 25% of the allocation in year 1 will not affect program allocations.

These funds must be used to create new slots or maintain the slots newly created in year 1 and year 2.

IV. Allowable Uses of Funds

The purpose of the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program is to expand the availability of subsidized child care. Any district that accepts this funding must certify that it will **NOT** use the funds to supplant other state, federal, or local funds for child care subsidies. As with the NYSCCBG subsidy program, there are three broad categories of families eligible for child care services under the NYSCCBG when such care is not otherwise available from the caretaker(s) of the child in need of services. Eligible families are defined in 18 NYCRR Section 415.2. Districts are required to include this information in the district's Child and Family Services Plans, including a description of the types of families that the district has chosen to serve and prioritize under the second and third categories listed below. The following categories are eligible for NYSCCBG services:

The first category is families that are eligible for a child care guarantee.

The second category is families that are eligible if funds are available. This category includes such families as low-income working families and teen parents who are completing high school.

The third category is families that are eligible if funds are available and if the district includes them as eligible families in the child care section of the Child and Family Services Plan.

Districts must inform parents or caretakers requesting services under this program that they may either

- choose to have care provided by one of the child day care providers with whom the district has contracted for the provision of child care services; or
- request a child care certificate, which enables parents or caretakers to select from a full range of child care arrangements, including care by regulated child care providers and providers of legally exempt child care.

The child's parent or caretaker must be given discretion in selecting or arranging for the purchase of child care services from any eligible provider. The case record should document that the parent or caretaker has been apprised of the full range of providers eligible for payment and of their right to elect to use a child care certificate. Districts must allow parents or caretakers to select child care services and must have a method to also pay for any and all legally operating providers, regardless of whether

the parents or caretakers have a contract with the provider. A contract may not be made a condition of receiving payment from funds under this program.

Funding under this program will be available for services provided from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2022.

V. Claiming and Reporting Instructions

Expenditures for Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program must be separately identified and claimed through the RF-17 claim package for special project claiming. The costs must be identified as F17 functional costs and reported in the RF-2A claim package on the Schedule D, *DSS Administrative Expenses Allocation and Distribution by Function and Program* (LDSS-2347), in the F17 column. The individual project costs must also be reported under the project label Expansion of CC Assistance on the LDSS-4975A, *RF-17 Worksheet, Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs*. Special project program costs should be reported as object of expense 37 - Special Project Program Expense on the RF2A Schedule 923, *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs* (LDSS-923), under the F17 function. Any remaining special project costs should be reported in their appropriate object of expense. Total project costs, including all costs regardless of state reimbursement, must be reported on the LDSS-4975, *Monthly Statement of Special Project Claims Federal and State Aid (RF-17)*. The expenditures reported for Expansion of CC Assistance will be reimbursed by the state up to the amount of the district's grant. The expenditures over the district's allocation must be reported as local share. Non-salary administrative costs are reported with the appropriate object of expense on the LDSS-923B, Summary-Administrative (page 1), *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs*. Administrative costs may be claimed for up to 5% of the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program funds. Program costs should be reported with the appropriate object of expense on the LDSS-923B Summary-Program (page 2), *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs*.

To receive reimbursement, claims for expenditures of the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program funds for the period October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020, must be final accepted in the Automated Claiming System (ACS) by December 31, 2020.

To receive reimbursement, claims for expenditures of the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program funds for the period October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021, must be final accepted in the ACS by December 31, 2021.

To receive reimbursement, claims for expenditures of the Expansion of the Child Care Assistance Program funds for the period October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022, must be final accepted in the ACS by December 31, 2022.

Further instructions for completing the Schedule D and RF-17 claim package can be found in Chapters 7 and 18, respectively, of the *Fiscal Reference Manual* (FRM) Volume 3. The FRMs are available online at <http://otda.state.nyenet/bfdm/finance/>.

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Issued by:

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