



Division of Early Learning Services
Early Care and Education

Participant HANDBOOK

For Child Care and Development Programs

- California State Preschool Program
- General Child Care and Development: Center-Based Program
- Alternative Payment Program
- CalWORKs Stages 2 and 3



Revised December 2021

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WELCOME TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Welcome to the Division of Early Learning Services, Early Care and Education (ECE) – where the success of all children is our focus!

This handbook was created to assist parents/guardians and child development professionals in working effectively with ECE's child care and development programs. [Title 5, §18221]

Effective July 1, 2021, all direct service and voucher based child care and development contracts, except for the California State Preschool Program contracts, have been transferred from the California Department of Education (CDE) to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) pursuant to the Early Childhood Development Act of 2020.

As a participant on our program, you have access to many services. This is a partial list of items that may be of interest to you. Please let us know how we can best assist you.

Parents/Guardians

- Education-based child care and development programs
- Referrals to licensed child care centers and family child care homes
- Information on choosing quality child care settings
- Parenting resource information on selected topics
- Referrals to other agencies
- Parenting workshops and trainings
- Your home as a learning environment



Child Care Providers

- Resource information on child care and development
- Age-appropriate activities
- Discipline and child guidance
- Nutrition and health, CPR, and first aid
- Children with special needs
- Child abuse and neglect prevention
- Make-it/take-it activities and projects
- Site visits by ECE staff
- Quality improvement supports

In addition, licensed child care providers have access to:

- Provider trainings and conferences
- Training and technical assistance
- Resource & Referral services

Your assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person serves as your contact with the program and can provide assistance as needed. Your assigned ECE staff person is:

If you have any questions or need assistance, please see the CCTR/CSPP staff at your site or call your assigned ECE staff person at the following numbers:

RIVERSIDE-MAIN ECE OFFICE

4101 Almond Street | Riverside, CA 92501
(951) 826-6655 | [951] 826-4479 FAX

INDIO

47-110 Calhoun Street | Indio, CA 92201
(760) 863-3345 | [951] 826-4479 FAX

MURRIETA

24990 Las Brisas Road | Murrieta, CA 92562
(951) 600-5620 | [951] 826-4479 FAX

COUNTYWIDE TOLL-FREE NUMBER:

800-442-4927 for Resource & Referral

E-MAIL FOR RESOURCE & REFERRAL:

randr@rcoe.us

E-MAIL FOR PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT INQUIRIES:

providerpayments@rcoe.us

In addition, ECE program information and commonly requested forms are available through Riverside County Office of Education's website at: www.rcoe.us/ece-forms.

OVERVIEW OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) PROGRAMS

ECE provides federal and state child care subsidies to families throughout Riverside County. The programs are funded through the California Department of Social Services or the California Department of Education and must comply with the regulations that govern these programs: California Code of Regulations, Title 5. All families and child care providers participate in the programs without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability. Information pertaining to families served through ECE is considered confidential and will be used for program administration purposes only. [Title 5, §18117]

In order to access the majority of ECE's programs, families must be part of the ECE Eligibility List (EL). The EL provides a comprehensive list of families requesting subsidized child care and development services. The EL ranks the families according to the enrollment priorities set by state regulations.

The child care and development programs offered by ECE serve children ages 0 through 12 years old. Once a child reaches his/her 13th birthday, services will be discontinued for the child as part of the subsequent recertification unless the child has an exceptional need requiring ongoing adult supervision documented through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Families enrolled in any of these programs must meet their program's need and/or eligibility criteria as outlined in this handbook in order to receive services.

General Child Care and Development: Center-Based Program and Infant Toddler Program (CCTR)

ECE directly operates/subcontracts with and monitors several state and federally funded child care and development center-based programs. These programs are available throughout Riverside County, and the child care and development services are provided at specific sites. The sites must meet quality program standards set by the California Department of Social Services and utilize developmentally-appropriate curriculum for instruction. Families access CCTR services through the site waitlist or ECE's EL. As CCTR funding becomes available, the most eligible families from the site waitlist/ECE EL receive services first. Families may remain on the CCTR program as long as they continue to meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program, follow the program rules and regulations, and funding is available.

California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

ECE directly operates/subcontracts with and monitors sites providing a quality curriculum-based preschool program. These programs are available throughout Riverside County, and the services are provided at specific sites. The sites must follow preschool curriculum standards set by the California Department of Education. Families access CSPP services through the site waitlist/ECE EL. As CSPP funding becomes available, the most eligible families from the site waitlist/ECE EL receive services first. Families with children enrolled in part-day CSPP must meet the eligibility criteria of the program; families with children enrolled in full-day CSPP must meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program.

ECE's Subsidized Child Care Programs

The following subsidized child care and development programs are offered by ECE to assist Riverside County families with the cost of child care. The programs provide families with a benefit with which to "shop" for a child care provider that will provide the most nurturing and educational setting for their child(ren).

California Alternative Payment Program (CAPP)

Families access this program through the ECE Eligibility List (EL). As CAPP funding becomes available, the most eligible families from the EL receive services first. Families may remain on the CAPP program as long as they continue to meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program, follow the program rules and regulations, and funding is available.

CalWORKs Stage 2 Child Care (C2AP)

Families have access to this program if they have previously received public cash assistance (welfare) or a diversion payment through the Department of Public Social Services. Families may be eligible for this program for up to 24 months after discontinuing cash assistance as long as they continue to meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program, follow the program rules and regulations, and funding is available.

CalWORKs Stage 3 Child Care (C3AP)

This program is available to families who continue to need child care services after their 24 months of eligibility expires in C2AP. Families may only access this program if they transfer directly from a C2AP program with no break in services. Families may remain on the C3AP program as long as they continue to meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program, follow the program rules and regulations, and funding is available.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Selecting a Child Care Provider

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

As the funding is provided through the California Department of Social Services, the preferred placement for all children served through an ECE program is a quality, education-based program. Parents/guardians should take time to select a child care provider who will meet their needs and the needs of their child(ren). Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research a child care provider before placing children at the location. Parents may contact Resource & Referral for assistance in locating licensed child care and to obtain information on choosing quality child care.

When a family enrolls in subsidized child care through ECE, or plans to change child care providers, the parent/guardian will have two weeks to select a new provider. If additional time is needed, the parent/guardian must request additional time (not to exceed two weeks) from their assigned ECE staff person. Parents/guardians must inform ECE of their selected provider choice **prior** to beginning services with the provider.

- Families may select from the following types of child development and care settings which are required to meet minimum quality standards set forth by ECE: [Title 5, §18245, 18411 and 18426]
 - Title 5 regulated programs (CCTR and CSPP programs) or Head Start Program
 - **Licensed child care centers** – licensed by Community Care Licensing and following Title 22 regulations
 - **Licensed family child care homes** – licensed by Community Care Licensing and following Title 22 regulations
 - **License-exempt child care centers** – following Title 22 regulations
 - **License-exempt homes** – care provided in the home of a family relative, friend, or neighbor (not residing with the family) - care may not be provided by an adult counted in the family size or a parent of the child(ren).



Parents/guardians must notify ECE two weeks prior to changing child care providers. Parents/guardians are encouraged to give their child care provider a two-week notice before discontinuing services with the provider. If the parent fails to give this notice to the provider, or discontinues services earlier than the two-week timeframe, any financial obligation for the notice is the parent/guardian's sole responsibility.

Parents/guardians, who change providers more than three times within a 12-month period may be called in for a conference with ECE staff to discuss the circumstances of the changes and the needs of the family.

Please Note: If the parent/guardian selects a provider who provides religious instruction or worship as a portion of the curriculum, these services are reimbursed with federal funds.

FAMILY REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Certification

[Title 5, §18082, CAPP 18106, C2AP 18409 & 18409.5, C3AP 18424]

Parents/guardians are required to complete a certification appointment with ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff to establish and document eligibility and need for the program, complete the program application and all necessary forms, and review program requirements and regulations. Families enrolled in part-day CSPP are required to complete certification each program year.

Re-certification

[Title 5, §18082.1] (Not applicable to part-day CSPP)

The application for services must be renewed annually. Parents/guardians are required to meet with ECE/CCTR/full-day CSPP staff for a re-certification appointment to document continued eligibility and need for services, update the program application and forms, and review program requirements and regulations. Recertification must be completed within fifty (50) calendar days of the expiration of the prior certification period.

Please Note: Parents/guardians will be asked to reschedule a certification/re-certification appointment if he/she is unable to document eligibility and need for the program. Parents/ guardians may reschedule one time, if time permits, before action to terminate services is taken.

12-Month Eligibility

The need and eligibility information provided by the family during the certification/recertification process is used to authorize services for a certification period of no less than 12 months. If the authorized services no longer meet the family needs, the parents/guardians may report changes to ECE and must submit supporting documentation to change the authorized services. The requested changes must be submitted through a written and signed statement or through email.

Photographic Consent

Your assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person may ask you to sign a release of photographic consent. As part of the program activities, pictures/video of your child(ren) may be taken and shared. By granting permission, the pictures and videos may be used by the Riverside County Office of Education, Early Care and Education and/or your CCTR/CSPP site for publications to include, but not limited to, program handbooks, websites, recruitment efforts, newsletters, and/or displays.

Documentation and Determination of Family Size

[Title 5, §18083.1]

Parents/guardians receiving services through an ECE program are required to document the reported family size. The parents and the biological/adopted children for whom the parents are responsible in the household are considered part of the family size. Children who reside with adults who are not their biological/adoptive parents are considered their own family (foster or guardian placements). To document the number of children in the family, parents/guardians must provide *at least* one of the following:

- Birth certificates or other live birth records;
- Court orders regarding child custody;
- Adoption documents;
- Records of Foster Care placements;
- School or medical records; or
- County welfare department records.

If the parents/guardians are unable to provide any of these forms of documentation, please ask the assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person about other acceptable forms of documentation.

Any adult residing in the family home who is the biological parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, or parent to the sibling(s) of a child included in the family size is also included in the family size. Other adults who may be included in the family size are the domestic partner of the parent/guardian or caretaker relatives, as designated by the parent/guardian. ECE requires a copy of current government-issued photo ID for all adults included in the family size. All included adults must meet the eligibility and need criteria of the ECE programs.

When only one parent has signed the application for child care and development services, and the documentation for the child(ren) included in the family size indicates the child(ren) have another parent not included as part of the family on the application, then the parent who has signed the application must indicate this information on the application and shall self-certify the presence or absence of the second parent under penalty of perjury.

FAMILY REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Family Needs Assessment

[Title 5, §18276]

At certification and re-certification, parents/guardians will complete a *Family Needs Assessment* to indicate family need for additional information and services. Support services and referrals will be provided, when requested, to meet a family's individual needs. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact ECE for referrals and assistance.

Notification of Changes

[Title 5, §18102]

During the certification period, parents/guardians are required to report to ECE if the gross monthly family income exceeds the 85th percentile of the state median income, within thirty (30) calendar days.

To ensure continued and accurate services, parents/guardians are encouraged to report changes in phone number, home/ mailing address, email address, change in child care provider, income changes resulting in a decreased family fee, work/school hours changes resulting in the need for more child care hours or a decreased family fee, or if services need to be temporarily discontinued. The requested changes must be reported through a written and signed statement or through email.

Please Note: If, during your certification/recertification appointment, it is determined that your child will be starting elementary school or will have a school schedule change during the certification period, you will be asked to estimate the change in schedule and effective date.

Verification of Documentation

[Title 5, §18078(b) and 18086(d)]

Any documentation submitted to ECE for the purposes of establishing eligibility and need for the program is subject to verification. Parents/guardians are required to complete a *Release of Information* form for this reason.

The information that may be verified includes, but is not limited to: employment status, income, work hours, school attendance, school status, address, telephone numbers, family size, marital status, medical information, provider information, etc. ECE/CCTR staff may contact the Department of Public Social Services, Department of Child Support Services, Housing Authority, First 5 Riverside, Riverside County Child Care Consortium, training sites/schools, social service agencies, referring physicians, emergency shelters, and employers/clients, or other agencies, as required, to verify eligibility, need, and/or location of services. ECE may also conduct a review of information via other resources to include, but not limited to: online employment verification sites, social networking sites, searches through online search engines, address verifications through online mapping, and review of court or law enforcement databases.

Child Health Histories and Immunization Records

[Title 5, §18081]

Parents/guardians are required to complete a *Preadmission Health History* for all children receiving services through an ECE program. In addition, documentation of a completed child care readiness physical (*Physician's Report*) and immunization records are required for the children not yet enrolled in an elementary school program. If, due to a medical reason, the child(ren) are exempt from immunization, the parent/guardian must submit a written statement of exemption from a licensed physician (M.D. or M.O.) as part of their file with ECE.

Adding Children to an ECE Program

[Title 5, §18106(b)]

Since ECE serves families, additional eligible children who are part of the family size may receive services if funding, in the same program, is available. If funding is not available to enroll additional children, the child/children should be placed on the ECE Eligibility List and may receive services as funding becomes available.

Documentation of a Child's Exceptional Needs

[Title 5, §18089]

ECE programs serve children ages 0 through 12 years old; children 13 through 21 years old may receive services if they have a documented exceptional need requiring on-going adult supervision. The parent/guardian must provide documentation of the child's exceptional need if child care services are requested for a child 13 years of age or older. The documentation required is the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the child and a statement from a legally qualified professional indicating that the services are needed. This documentation must be updated annually.

CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

Families enrolled through ECE programs must meet eligibility criteria in order to receive subsidized child care services. Families may receive services if they meet one or more of the following eligibility criteria:
[Title 5, §18081 and 18082]

- **Child Protective Services:** Families identified as eligible for child care and development services due to a current case through Child Protective Services or deemed “At-Risk” are referred through a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency, local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, a Head Start program, or an emergency or transitional shelter. The referring agency must indicate the anticipated duration of the services. A new referral must be provided at each recertification. If the referral indicates the family is exempt from paying State Family Fees, the family is not required to submit proof of income.
- **Current Aid Recipient:** In Riverside County, families that are currently receiving public cash assistance generally receive child care services through the Department of Public Social Services in order to receive the other supportive services offered by these programs. If families, based upon this eligibility, are served through an ECE program, they are required to meet the income eligibility requirements, have an ongoing need for services, and report all changes in their public cash assistance within required reporting timelines.
- **Homeless:** Families who are eligible for services through an ECE program due to homelessness are referred by an emergency shelter or other legal, medical, or social service agency. Families may also document this eligibility through a written declaration indicating that the family is homeless and describing their current living situation.
- **Income Eligible:** The majority of families who are eligible for child care services through an ECE program fall into this eligibility category. Families are income eligible for services when their gross monthly income is at or below 85 percent of the state median income at certification. After certification, families remain eligible for services as long as their income does not exceed 85 percent of the state median income. Income eligibility is based upon **all** sources of countable, gross income adjusted for the family size.

Documentation of Income Eligibility [Title 5, §18084]

Total Countable Income

[Title 5, §18078(q)]

Families who receive services based upon income eligibility must document **all** sources of countable income, including:

- Gross wages from employment, including commissions, overtime, tips, bonuses, housing and automobile allowances, gambling/lottery winnings, and wages for migrant, agricultural, or seasonal work;
- Public cash assistance (including Safety-Net received for children) or diversion payments received from the Department of Public Social Services;
- Gross income from self-employment less business expenses with the exception of wage draws;
- Disability, unemployment, or workers compensation;
- Spousal support or child support received from a former spouse or absent parent; this includes financial assistance for housing costs, living expenses, and/or car payments paid as part of this support;
- Foster care grants or financial assistance received for caring for a child who is not the biological/adopted child of the adults in the family receiving child care services;
- Survivor or retirement benefits, pensions or annuities, inheritance, dividends, interest on bonds, income from trusts, or royalties;
- Rental income received from rent for room within the family’s residence or rental property;
- Insurance or court settlements for lost wages or punitive damages; or
- Other enterprises for gain (i.e. – reimbursement for services provided, donation of blood, etc.).

CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

Documentation of Income from Employment

[Title 5, §18084(a)]

When a parent/guardian is employed, the following is required to document income from employment:

- An *Employment Verification* form or a letter from the employer indicating the employer's name, address, telephone number, business hours, and employment information (hire date, rate of pay, work hours) of the parent/guardian.
- Payroll check stubs or a letter from the employer indicating the gross wages for the most recent month. If the parent/guardian is paid monthly, documentation of gross income for the most recent two months is required.
 - If a parent/guardian's income fluctuates due to migrant, agricultural, or seasonal employment, or the parent/guardian has received a lump sum earning due to bonuses, commissions, back child support, etc., the parent will need to document this income for the previous 12 months, and the income will be averaged for this period.
 - If the parent/guardian's income is unpredictable due to unpredictable work hours, the parent/guardian will be required to provide documentation of income from at least the previous three months (up to 12 months), and the income will be averaged for this period.

Documentation of Income from Self Employment

[Title 5, §18084(a)(3)]

When a parent/guardian is self-employed, ECE must be able to independently verify the employment of the parent/guardian. In addition to completing the applicable *Self-Employment Declaration* form, parents/guardians must submit the following to document income from employment:

- A letter from the source of income. If working as a private contractor for a company/agency, a letter from that source, or a copy of the contract, in addition to any payroll check stubs received.
- A copy of the most recently signed and completed tax returns with a statement of current estimated income.
- Other business records: service contracts, invoices, ledgers, receipts, work schedules/logs, client lists (including contact information), bank statements, advertisements for services, website for services, etc.

Documentation of Income from Child Support

[Title 5, §18078(q)(7)]

Parents/guardians are encouraged to open a child support case through the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) in order to receive child support payments. If a parent/guardian does not already have a case with DCSS, ECE staff can provide information to assist with this process. Parents/guardians, with open child support cases through DCSS, must submit documentation of **all** child support payments received for the previous 12 months. This information can be accessed through a DCSS office or with a PIN number through the DCSS website: www.childsup.ca.gov.

If parents/guardians choose not to open a case through DCSS, child support income may be documented by providing one of the following:

- Court order for child support being received;
- Self-declaration of the child support received;
- Documentation indicating that the absent parent is incarcerated, deceased, or has relinquished parental rights;
- Domestic violence documentation (court documentation, restraining order, etc.); or
- Child's birth certificate indicating that the father is unknown, or documentation that the person believed to be the father has been excluded based upon paternity testing.

Please Note: Documented outgoing child support paid by a parent/guardian included in the family size will be deducted from the parent/guardian's gross income.

State Family Fees

[Title 5, §18109]

Once a family's gross monthly income is determined, State Family Fees (fees) will be assessed. Fees are assessed based upon the State Family Fee Schedule and determined by family size and income. If it is determined that the parent/guardian has a fee, the fees are based on the child who is enrolled in services for the greatest number of hours. Fees are paid directly to the child care provider/program site as part of the parent/guardian's share of cost for services.

CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY NEED

Families enrolled through ECE programs must have a documented need for subsidized child care services (not applicable to part-day CSPP). Families may receive services if all adults included in the family size meet one or more of the following need criteria: [Title 5, §18085.5(a)]

- Employment
- Seeking Employment
- Vocational Training
- Seeking Permanent Housing
- Incapacitation

The hours of authorized child care are approved based upon the hours of documented need. Services are not authorized during the hours in which an adult included in the family size is available to supervise the children, the children are in an elementary/middle school program, an elementary/middle school program is available to the children, the children are enrolled in another subsidized program (Head Start/ State Preschool), and/or the children are in the custody of a parent that is not part of the family size. [Title 5, §18085(b)]

Please Note: For children who are enrolled in a private school or voluntarily held back from kindergarten, although they are kindergarten age, child care services are not available during any hours that the child could be enrolled in public school.

Documentation of Employment

[Title 5, §18086(a)(b)]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services for their hours of employment must be able to document their days and hours of employment, and ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff must be able to independently verify this employment. The following is required to document the days and hours of employment:

- An *Employment Verification* form or a letter from the employer indicating the employer's name, address, telephone number, business hours, and employment information (hire date, rate of pay, work hours) of the parent/guardian.

ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff will contact the parent's/guardian's employer to verify the information provided. [Title 5, §18076.2(d)]

Please Note: A parent/guardian who works as an assistant in a large family child care home must be able to provide additional documentation to prove that he/she is the assistant and an employee of the family child care home.

Please Note: Parents/guardians who work over night shifts may request additional hours of child care services to allow for sleep time. This time is approved on a case-by-case basis, as requested by the parent, and the amount of time that may be authorized is limited.

Documentation of Self-Employment

[Title 5, §18086(c)]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services for their hours of self-employment must be able to document their days and hours of self-employment, and ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff must be able to independently verify this employment. The following is required to document the days and hours of self-employment:

- A *Self-Employment Declaration* form, to be completed at each recertification;
- A copy of one or more of the following: service contracts, invoices, quarterly taxes, appointment logs, client receipts, job logs, mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, or similar records; and
- If applicable, a copy of a business license, and/or workspace lease/rental agreement.

Please Note: The parent/guardian must provide ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff with a contact or means of independently verifying self-employment information provided.

Please Note: Child care service hours will be approved to the extent to which the employment prevents a parent/guardian from providing care and supervision of the child(ren).

Unpredictable Work Schedules

When a parent/guardian works an unpredictable schedule (not consistently part time nor full time), during certification/recertification, the maximum hours of services are determined by reviewing the paystubs/work schedule for the preceding four weeks and authorizing services based upon the week with the most work hours. Services will be reimbursed based upon the actual hours of care provided, not to exceed the maximum authorized services.

CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY NEED

Documentation of In-Home Employment

[Title 5, §18086.1]

Parents/guardians who are employed in the family home must provide the same required documentation as other employed/self-employed parents/guardians. In addition to this documentation, parents/guardians who are employed in the family home, and are requesting services for this employment, must also provide:

- Justification for requesting services (type of work being performed, days/hours requested, and the reason that care is needed). Child care service hours will be approved to the extent to which the employment prevents the parent/guardian from providing care and supervision of the child(ren).

Please Note: Parents/guardians who work as child care providers (licensed or license-exempt) in the family home are not eligible for child care services during their business hours or the hours they are working as a child care provider.

Documentation of Seeking Employment

[Title 5, §18086.5]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services for seeking employment hours in order to secure, change, or increase employment must complete a *Declaration of Seeking Employment* form and are subject to the following requirements and limitations on services:

- Limited to no less than 12 months
- Limited to no more than five (5) days per week and for less than 30 hours per week
- Unless a parent/guardian is authorized to seek employment during nontraditional hours/days, services may not be authorized for this need when children are in attendance at a full-day elementary/middle school program.

Please Note: Upon securing employment, parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to report the change in need in order to update authorized services. The request for the changes must be submitted through a written and signed statement or through email.



Documentation of Vocational Training

[Title 5, §18087]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services for the hours during which they are attending school/vocational training must complete/submit the following:

- An enrollment confirmation letter from the training institution or a *Training Verification* form, completed and signed by the parent, along with one of the following:
 - A current class schedule that is an electronic printout from the training institution, or
 - The registrar's office of the training institution must complete and sign/stamp the bottom half of the *Training Verification* form.

Please Note: If a parent/guardian needs to adjust their child care schedule when their school schedule changes, an updated class schedule will be required to document the change in hours, along with a written and signed statement or email requesting the change.

- Grades/progress/reports/unofficial transcripts must be submitted to ECE during the annual recertification (official, sealed transcripts may be required). Parents/guardians must demonstrate adequate progress to continue to receive services for this need. This means that parents/guardians must:
 - Earn a 2.0 grade point average in a graded program;
 - Pass at least 50 percent of their classes in a non-graded program (this includes credit/no-credit classes taken as part of a graded program); and/or
 - Meet the training institution's standard for making adequate progress.

CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY NEED

Please Note: Parents/guardians who do not make adequate progress are provided with one additional certification period to demonstrate that they have met one of the above requirements. At the conclusion of this additional certification period, if the parent has not made adequate progress and cannot establish another basis of need for services, the family shall be:

- (1) Disenrolled from services; and
- (2) Once disenrolled, the parent shall be ineligible to be certified for services based on enrollment in vocational training for six months from the date of disenrollment.

- Parents/guardians may be required to provide additional information, such as an education plan, to document the courses required to complete the parent/guardian's educational goal.
- Parents/guardians who are enrolled in online courses or telecourses must submit a copy of the course syllabus and the web address for online courses.

Authorized Hours, Study Time, and Limitations for Vocational Training

[Title 5, §18087 (k) (2) & (l)]

- Parents/guardians may receive child care services during the days and hours of their scheduled classes. For online courses or telecourses, parents/guardians may receive services for one (1) hour per unit, per week for class time.
- Parents/guardians may receive study time for academic courses, as needed. Services are limited to two (2) hours per unit per week for each academic course. If a course requires additional study time, this can be reviewed by the assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person and may need to be confirmed with the course instructor.
- Study time hours will be authorized and scheduled to provide consistent child care hours. Parents/guardians should work with their assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person to determine the best schedule for this purpose.
- Child care services for vocational training are limited to one of the following, whichever occurs first:
 - Six (6) years from the initiation of services for vocational training – from the start date of child care services for vocational training: this six-year (6) time limit does not change if a parent/guardian starts and stops services for this need; or
 - 24 units following the attainment of a bachelor's degree.

Travel Time

[Title 5, §18086(e)(1) and 18087(k)(1)]

Parents/guardians whose need for child care services is employment and/or vocational training are eligible to receive child care services for the time needed to travel to and from the location of services (child care provider location) and work or school. Parents/guardians may request a reasonable amount of time needed for this purpose. Travel time is limited to half of the hours authorized for employment/training, not to exceed four (4) hours per day.

Child Protective Services/"At Risk"

[Title 5, S 18092]

Families identified as needing child care and development services due to a current case through Child Protective Services or deemed "At-Risk" are referred through a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency, local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, a Head Start program, or an emergency or transitional shelter. The referring agency must indicate the needed days/hours of services and the anticipated duration of the services. A new referral must be provided at each recertification. If the referral indicates the family is exempt from paying State Family Fees, the family is not required to submit proof of income.



CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY NEED



Documentation of Parental Incapacity

[Title 5, §18088]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services for parental incapacity must be able to document that the incapacity prevents the parent/guardian from providing the care and supervision of the child(ren). The parent/guardian must provide a *Statement of Incapacity* form that has been completed and signed by a legally-qualified health professional. ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff may contact the health professional to verify this information and/or request additional information. Child care services for this need are limited to no more than 50 hours per week.

Documentation of Seeking Permanent Housing

[Title 5, §18091]

Parents/guardians who are requesting child care services to seek permanent housing are limited to no less than 12 months, and no more than five days and less than 30 hours per week for this purpose. Parents/guardians must complete a *Declaration of Seeking Housing* form and may be required to submit additional documentation of the activities completed for the purposes of securing housing.

Please Note: Upon securing housing, parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to report the change in need in order to update authorized services. The request for the changes must be submitted through a written and signed statement or through email.

Extended Leaves of Absence

If the family temporarily does not have a need for child care services, an extended absence may be granted for a period not to exceed 16 consecutive weeks. This provides the family with a limited period of time to hold their space on the child care program without being terminated from services. No child care services may be used during the extended absence, and providers are not required to hold space for children on extended absence. Parents must complete a *Declaration of Extended Absence* form to request extended absence in advance, if possible, and receive approval for the leave from the assigned ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to provide their child care provider with advance notice when an extended absence will be taken. Parents/guardians in CCTR/CSPP may choose to use any remaining balance of their ten (10) best interest days to cover any costs associated with the extended absence period. Any additional costs to hold space with the provider would be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Please Note: For the CCTR/CSPP programs, extended leaves are granted on a case-by-case basis.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Notifications Sent to Parents/Guardians and Child Care Providers

Notices of Action

[Title 5, §18094, 18095, 18118, and 18119]

A Notice of Action (NOA) is issued to the parent/guardian upon approval, denial, termination, or change of services (family fee changes, hour changes, etc.). The NOA provides a summary of the family's application information and an explanation of the action being taken with regard to the child care services.

Child Care Certificates

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP) [Title 5, §18074.2]

A Child Care Certificate (certificate) is issued to the parent/guardian and child care provider for each child approved for services. The certificate is the summary of the authorized child care hours, benefit amount for provider reimbursement, and State Family Fees (if applicable). A new certificate is issued whenever there is a change in child care provider, hours, benefit, and/or fees. Parents/guardians and providers are encouraged to carefully review all certificates and contact the assigned ECE staff person if there are any questions regarding the information.

Other Notifications

Parents/guardians and child care providers receive several notices from ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff throughout the year. The notifications contain important information regarding documentation required and changes in services and/or regulations. It is crucial that the parents/guardians and child care providers review all notifications sent from ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff, as the majority are time sensitive and require a response.

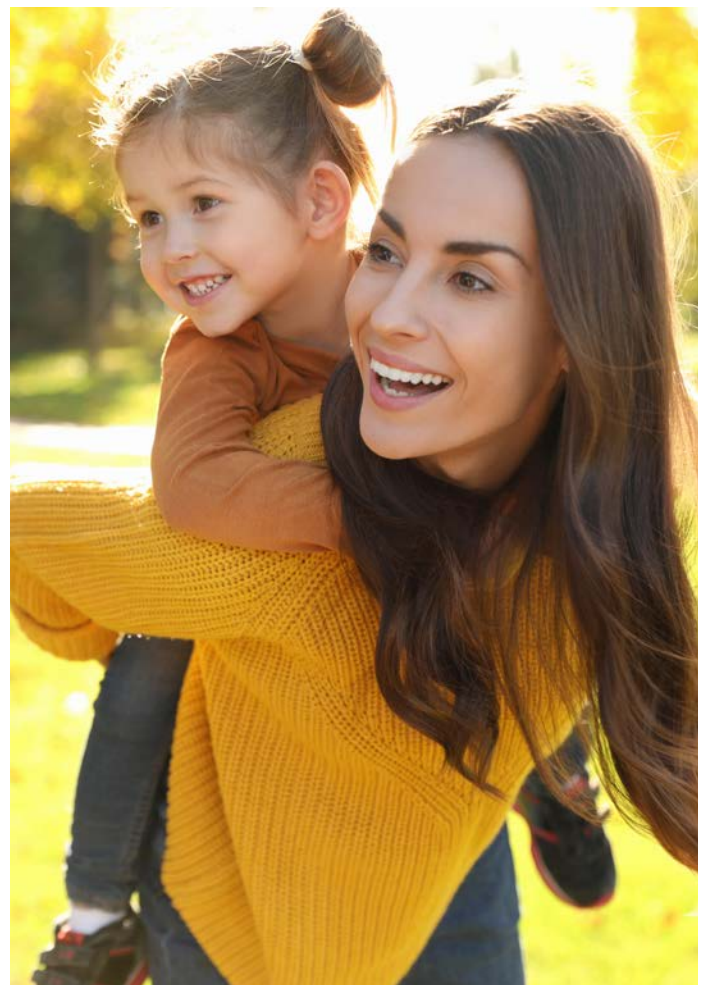
Please Note: ECE provides notifications to parents/guardians and providers through regular U.S. Mail, text messaging, email, phone calls, and/or posts to portal databases. Parents/guardians and providers are encouraged to regularly check all means of communication on a regular basis for notifications from ECE.

Information for CCTR/CSPP Parents/Guardians

[Title 5, §18272, 18274, and 18275]

Additional meetings and activities are required for the participants in CCTR/CSPP. All children who are part of the CCTR/CSPP programs will have a developmental profile completed by ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff to track the child's developmental progress. The profile outcomes will be reviewed with parents/guardians during parent/teacher conferences to be conducted twice per year.

Parents/guardians are also encouraged to participate in the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for their program. The PAC meetings are held to discuss the needs of the program.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Attendance Policy

[Title 5, §18066]

Absences

When a child does not attend child care on authorized days, the parent/guardian is required to indicate the specific reason for the absence and sign for each day of absence on the child's attendance record/DSSR.

Absence Reasons and Limitations:

(not applicable to CAPP, C2AP, or C3AP)

Excused Absence: (A)

- Illness of enrolled child or parent/guardian (ailment, communicable disease, injury, hospitalization, or quarantine)
- Appointment of enrolled child or parent/guardian (doctor, dentist, mental health, social service, welfare, education, special education services, counseling, or therapy)
- Court-ordered visitation with a parent or relative, as required by law (court order must be on file) – custody arrangements are not the same as visitation
- Family emergency or unplanned situations of a temporary nature (court appearance, death, accident, no transportation, dangerous weather conditions, hospitalization of a family member, or illness of a sibling)

Best Interest/ Excused: (B)

[Maximum of ten (10) days per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30)]

- Vacation
- Visiting relative or friend
- Attending a party, school program/sibling field trip
- Religious observance, holiday, or ceremony
- Any absence parent/guardian determines to be in the best interest of child/family.

Unexcused: (U)

- Child did not feel like coming to school/care
- Parent or child overslept
- Abandoned services (no show or contact)
- After the ten (10) best interest days are used, additional absences in the best interest category are considered unexcused
- Any absence parent does not identify a reason for or as a best interest day

Non-contracted days: (N)

- Day that the parent/guardian does not have a need for service
- Center/Provider closed
- Child custody agreements (days that the child is not in the custody of the parent/guardian served by the program)

Causes for termination:

- Failure to abide by Participant Contract and Program Rules
- Absence of at least seven (7) consecutive days without parent/guardian making contact with staff
- Five (5) consecutive unexcused absences
- More than ten (10) unexcused absences in a fiscal year (July – June)

Attendance Notification Requirements

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

Parents and providers must notify ECE whenever:

- A child is absent seven (7) consecutive days with or without notice to the provider.
- Parents and providers are strongly encouraged to notify ECE whenever:
 - There is irregular use of approved hours (change in hours, change in days, and/or excessive absences).
 - When a parent withdraws from care, the provider is required to contact ECE. ECE is not responsible for provider reimbursement after the seventh consecutive day of absence, if the family does not return.

Please Note: Actual attendance is to be consistent with the authorized services. Excessive absences can be considered abandonment of services and may result in termination from the ECE program. Excessive absences are absences totaling 30 consecutive days.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Attendance Documentation and Reimbursement System

Daily Sign-In/Sign-Out Records

[Title 5, §18065]

Parents/guardians are required to document the attendance of each child receiving child care services through an ECE program on a Daily Sign-In/Sign-Out Record (DSSR). The parent/guardian receives an original DSSR for each child and must submit it to the child care provider as record of approved services (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*). The DSSR must be kept at the location at which child care services are provided (provider's home/site). ECE issues one original DSSR for each child; therefore, copies must be made to ensure that the parent has DSSRs for each child, for each month of services (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*).

The DSSRs must be completed on a daily basis as the services are provided. Parents/guardians and child care providers are responsible for the following:

- **Parent/Guardian:** Indicating the **exact clock time(s)** of drop-off and/or pick-up for each day of utilized services. For example, an exact clock time is 7:03 a.m. – parents must not round-off times.

Please Note: Parent/guardian may authorize another adult (aged 18, or older) to drop-off and/or pick-up the child(ren). This person is then responsible for indicating the drop-off and/or pick-up time(s) for the utilized services.

- **Parent/Guardian:** Indicating the **specific** reason for absences on days of authorized services.
- **Parent/Guardian:** Reviewing the DSSR for completion before signing the bottom of the DSSR indicating, under penalty of perjury, that the information on the DSSR is true and accurate and that services were utilized for the certified need.
- **Provider:** Indicating the times in and/or out, with the **exact clock time(s)**, for children who leave the provider's care to attend another program or activity (elementary/middle school, another subsidized program, Head Start, State Preschool, or another activity) (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*).
- **Provider:** Completing the Family Fee Receipt indicating the amounts paid by fee-paying families, if applicable (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*).
- **Provider:** Reviewing the DSSR for completion before signing the bottom of the DSSR indicating, under penalty of perjury, that the information on the DSSR is true and accurate (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*).

Submitting and Processing DSSRs for Reimbursement

(*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*) [Title 5, §18086]

After services for the month have concluded, the provider shall be responsible for submitting complete DSSRs to ECE. The DSSR shall serve as the invoice for services provided. Completed DSSRs shall be processed and dispersed within 21 calendar days of receipt in ECE. If a child care provider has not received reimbursement within this timeframe, the provider may contact ECE to verify the DSSR has been received and reimbursement has been processed. Providers may email inquiries to providerpayments@rcoe.us. Inquiries received prior to the 22nd of the month may not receive a response from ECE until after this date.

If DSSRs are received incomplete or incorrect, processing will be delayed, and reimbursement may be affected. It is important that DSSRs be thoroughly reviewed by the parent/guardian and provider before they are submitted to ECE. Corrections or changes in the recorded attendance may not be made to DSSRs once they have been received in ECE. Missing or incomplete information on the DSSR may reduce reimbursement to the provider, and the parent may be responsible to reimburse the provider for the reductions. Following are some common errors that may affect the reimbursement:

- Missing signatures or times;
- White-Out on the DSSR – DSSRs are legal documents;
- Highlighter on a day of services;
- Signatures or times in pencil – these items must be completed in ink (blue or black);
- Missing specific reason for absence; and/or
- DSSRs that are obviously completed all at once, or the provider completed the DSSR on the parent's behalf.

Please Note: Falsification of DSSRs is grounds for termination from the program.

Reimbursement Calculation

Reimbursement for child care services is based upon the provider requested/published rates on file with ECE, not to exceed the family benefit amount and authorized days/hours of service indicated on the Child Care Certificate. Any State Family Fees, paid by the family, are considered part of the family share of cost for services and are deducted from the reimbursement issued through ECE.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

1099 (not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

A 1099 IRS form will be sent to all providers for the reimbursement amounts paid through the family's benefit through the ECE program. No taxes are deducted from these reimbursements. It is the provider's sole responsibility to report earnings to the IRS and the California Franchise Tax Board and to pay any applicable income taxes.

Child Care Provider Rates

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP) [Title 5, §18231]

License-Exempt Home Providers

Each license-exempt home provider must submit a completed *Rate Sheet: License-Exempt Home* form indicating the rates requested for providing child care for the children served by ECE.

Licensed Family Child Care Home Providers, Licensed Centers, and License-Exempt Centers

Each child care provider must submit a provider generated rate sheet and a copy of the provider's written policies for families. The provider agrees that the rates charged to all families are the same regardless of the family's subsidized or unsubsidized status. [Title 5, §18413 and 18428]

ECE is unable to honor any rates, fees, paid days for holidays, absences, closures that are not supported in writing by the provider on either the provider's rate sheet or provided policies documented on file with ECE. The following information should be included in the provider rate sheet and/or policies:

- All rates charged to families;
- All provider fees (registration, materials, food, activity, etc.) charged to families;
- Any discount policies (sibling, employee, pre payment, etc.); and
- Policies with regard to child absence/vacation days and provider holidays, vacation days, and closure days.

Provider Rate Changes

Providers may change their rates with ECE once per year. Subsequent rate changes will not be honored. Rate changes must be received in writing and at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the change.

All licensed providers (homes and centers) and license exempt centers must provide ECE with a copy of their family policies whenever they are updated.

Reimbursement Limitations

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

The child care hours authorized through the ECE program are based upon the family's documented need for services. Title 5 Regulations place limits on the hours of family need; therefore, the reimbursable hours of service through the family's benefit are limited in the following ways:

- **License-Exempt Home Providers:** License-exempt providers may not be reimbursed for any services beyond those authorized. Part-time care is reimbursed based upon the actual days and hours of care provided. License-exempt home providers do not receive any reimbursement for absences, vacations, holidays, etc. when no child care is provided. [Title 5, §18413 and 18428]
- **Unpredictable Schedules:** When a parent/guardian has an unpredictable schedule, the maximum allowable services are authorized, based upon need documentation provided by the parent during certification/recertification. Services will be reimbursed based upon the actual hours of care provided, not to exceed the maximum authorized services. In these cases, providers do not receive reimbursement for absences, vacations, holidays, etc., when no child care is provided.
- **Care for School-Age Children:** Child care services are limited to those hours of need during which the child is not enrolled in an elementary/middle school or subsidized preschool program (Head Start/State Preschool). Care is authorized for the documented need that occurs during the hours before and after school, and when school is not in session. This also applies to children who are enrolled in a private school, home schooled, or voluntarily held back from kindergarten although they are kindergarten age; child care services are not available during any hours that the child could be enrolled in public school. [Title 5, §18076.2(d)(1)(2)]
- **Transportation Time:** Children may not be transported in a motor vehicle during the hours they are enrolled in an ECE program. Should a child care provider choose to transport children, the provider cannot claim the transportation time for reimbursement through the family's benefit through ECE, and the provider assumes all liability. [Title 5, §18413 and 18428]

Please Note: Community Care Licensing and California state law require the use of appropriate car seats and seat belts.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

- **Shared Custody:** Services are not authorized during the hours in which children are in the custody of a parent that is not part of the family size. A court order must be on file. [Title 5, §18085(b), 18083.1 (a)]
- **Extended Absence:** If a family temporarily does not have a need for child care services, they may request an extended absence. During the extended absence, a family may not utilize child care services, and ECE does not reimburse to hold a child's space with a provider for this purpose.
- **Two-Week Notice:** ECE encourages parents/guardians to provide their child care provider with a two-week notice prior to ending services or changing providers. If the parent fails to give this notice to the provider, or discontinues services earlier than the two-week time frame, any financial obligation for the notice is the parent/guardian's sole responsibility. [Title 5, §18413 and 18428]
- **Provider Closures, Holidays, and Vacations:** If a licensed provider (home, center, or license-exempt center) indicates in their written policies that they charge for their own closures, holidays, and vacations, up to ten (10) days may be reimbursed for this purpose. These dates of closure must be on file with ECE for reimbursement to occur. Any additional closures are not reimbursed through the family's benefit through ECE, and reimbursement for those days would be the parent/ guardian's sole responsibility. [Title 5, §18076.2(b)(2)]

Parent/Guardian Share of Cost for Services [Title 5, §18109, 18220.6, 18414, and 18429]

- **Co-payments (not applicable to CCTR/CSPP):** The California Department of Social Services sets the State Regional Market Rate (RMR) ceiling for subsidized child care programs. This RMR is the maximum benefit amount allowable based upon the family's need for services, the child's age, and the provider type. ECE must adhere to these limits when determining the family benefit amount for services. The family benefit amount is listed on the Child Care Certificate for each child. If the provider requested rate exceeds the family benefit amount, the difference results in a co-payment. The co-payment is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to the provider.



- **State Family Fees:** If, based upon family income and size, it is determined that the parent/guardian has a State Family Fee (fee), the fees are based on the child who is enrolled in services for the greatest number of hours and are paid directly to the child care provider by the parent/guardian.
 - **For CAPP, C2AP, and C3AP:** The fees will appear on the Child Care Certificate and Notice of Action. Full-time monthly fees are based upon authorized services of 130 hours or more per month/part time monthly fees are based upon authorized services of less than 130 hours per month.
 - **For CCTR and CSPP:** The fees will appear on the Notice of Action. Full-time monthly fees are based upon authorized services of 130 hours or more per month/part-time monthly fees are based upon authorized services of less than 130 hours per month.
 - Family fees may be waived if the family is currently receiving cash-aid through the Department of Public Social Services or has been referred through written referral indicating the family eligibility is based upon Child Protective Services or "At-Risk".

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Payment of State Family Fees

[Title 5, §18109]

- For CCTR/CSPP, fees are collected at the site.
- For all other ECE programs:
 - Fees are calculated based upon the hours of service authorized on the Child Care Certificate/Notice of Action for the month - not the actual hours of service utilized. If the provider has a day of closure, those hours are not included in the calculation to assess the monthly fees owed.
 - Fees are paid directly to the child care provider as part of the parent's/guardian's share of cost for services, and this amount is deducted from the reimbursement issued to the provider through ECE.
 - The provider indicates the fee amount paid by the parent/guardian on the Family Fee Receipt on the monthly DSSR.
 - Fees are paid in advance and in accordance with the provider's policies for the family.
 - Payment of fees is a requirement of the ECE programs. Parent/guardian will be terminated for nonpayment of fees. For families having difficulty paying fees, a repayment plan may be established through ECE.
 - Parents/guardians may not change child care providers until all outstanding fees are paid to the current child care provider.

- **Delinquent Fees (applies to all ECE programs):**

- Fee payment is considered late if not paid within seven (7) calendar days of the due date, and the family has not made arrangements for a repayment plan.
- A Notice of Action to terminate services will be issued for delinquent fees. The family must pay the fees or enter a repayment plan before the expiration date of the notice.
- If a family has a second instance of delinquent fees, a Notice of Action will be issued, and the family will be required to attend a meeting to review the fee policy and pay the delinquent fees prior to the expiration of the notice.
- If the family has a third instance of delinquent fees, a Notice of Action will be issued, and the family is subject to the termination process.

Other Parent/Guardian Share of Cost (not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

Parents/guardians are responsible to reimburse child care providers for any other fees or costs not covered by their benefit through the ECE program. These may include, but are not limited to: late fees, transportation fees, tuition and materials fees for private elementary school programs, amounts not reimbursed due to incomplete/incorrect DSSRs, two-week notice when no notice is given, and/or registration, materials, food, activity, etc. fees that could not be covered by the family benefit amount. [Title 5, §18076.1]



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

General Provider Information

[Title 5, §18221, 18223, and 18224]

It is the expectation that providers will provide child care services without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

Licensed Child Care Providers

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

Licensed family child care centers and family child care homes are required to maintain an active child care license through Community Care Licensing and follow Title 22 Regulations. ECE must have a copy of the provider's current child care license(s) on file.

License-Exempt Centers

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

License-exempt centers must be in compliance with Title 22 Regulations with regard to staffing requirements, ratios, and attendance recording requirements. ECE must have a signed document on file from the center indicating that they are aware of and follow Title 22 Regulations. The family benefit for the ECE program may not be used for child care services through unregulated summer camps or recreational programs.

License-Exempt Home Providers

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

If a parent/guardian is authorized to utilize services in this provider setting, ECE expects that license-exempt home providers meet the intent of Title 22 licensing regulations, and, therefore, ensure the health and safety of all children in their care. Legally license-exempt home providers are those who are not required to be licensed through Community Care Licensing because the provider is related to all children in care by blood or marriage (grandparent, aunt, or uncle), or the provider is caring for the children of only one family in addition to his/her own children. The provider must be age 18 years of age or older. The parent/guardian and provider must complete additional steps and provide specific documentation before services can be approved in this setting:

- Complete an ECE License-Exempt Orientation to review program policies, regulations, and the reimbursement system;
- The parent/guardian and provider must complete a health and safety certification;

- The provider must disclose the names of **all** adults residing in the home in which child care will be provided; and
- The provider must complete a criminal record statement;
 - ECE completes a preliminary quality assurance check on all license-exempt home providers and any adults residing in the home with the provider.
 - ECE reserves the right to deny services with a provider who has a disqualifying criminal history or resides with someone having a disqualifying criminal history based on TrustLine guidelines.
- The provider must complete the TrustLine Registry and LiveScan/fingerprinting process in order to have a background check completed through the California Criminal History System, the California Child Abuse Central Index, and the FBI Criminal History System;
 - ECE will not utilize the family's child care benefit to reimburse a provider who fails to receive TrustLine clearance.
- The provider must be the only provider in the home – ECE will not authorize care with more than one provider in the same residence. In addition, ECE will not utilize the family's child care benefit to reimburse the license-exempt provider for care provided by a "substitute caregiver" in the provider's absence.

Please Note: ECE strongly encourages license-exempt providers to learn more about becoming licensed through Community Care Licensing. There are resources available to assist individuals with this process and to provide training opportunities. Providers may contact Resource & Referral for more information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Provider Status

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

The parent/guardian is the client of the ECE program, receiving a benefit for child care services. Since the parent selects the child care provider, the status of the provider shall be that of an independent contractor. At no time is the provider considered an officer, agent, or employee of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools, Riverside County Office of Education, Division of Early Learning Services, Early Care and Education.

Changes in Provider Information

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP)

Child care providers are required to notify ECE of any changes in name, address, phone number, and/or licensing status within five (5) calendar days of the change. All changes must be completed either in person or on the phone with an ECE staff person. The provider must provide his/her state-issued photo ID in order to complete the change(s). Licensed providers must take appropriate steps to report changes to Community Care Licensing.

Please Note: All child care providers are required to have a working phone number at all times. If the provider is found to have a phone number that is no longer in service, the parent/guardian will need to select a new child care provider.

Site Visits and Program Monitoring/Assessment

ECE staff will visit child care provider homes and sites in which children served through an ECE program are receiving child care services. These can include both announced and unannounced home/site visits. The purpose of these visits is to provide technical assistance to the child care provider, review attendance records, and address any questions or concerns that the provider may have.

If an ECE staff person observes a licensing violation during a visit, they are required to report the incident to Community Care Licensing. ECE is not a licensing agency; our staff members offer services and resources to help maintain quality programs.

In addition, CCTR/CSPP classrooms are monitored/assessed by ECE staff during the hours that children are in attendance. These classrooms are also subject to monitoring/assessment from representatives from the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division.

Any programs participating in Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC) are subject to monitoring/assessment/coaching visits by ECE staff, First 5 Riverside County staff, and ECE and First 5 Riverside contract agency representatives. The purpose of these visits is to observe and assess program quality standards as a condition of QSRC participation.

Please Note: ECE staff members are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected child abuse. ECE will not utilize the family's benefit to reimburse for services provided in an environment where corporal punishment is used.

Complaints About Child Care Providers

If at any time a parent/guardian feels that the child care provider is not meeting licensing requirements and/or health and safety standards, he/she is encouraged to contact:

- Community Care Licensing (951) 782-4200
- Resource & Referral (800) 442-4927
- Their assigned ECE staff person

Termination of Provider Participation

(not applicable to CCTR/CSPP) [Title 5, §18223]

ECE may require a parent to end services with a child care provider, thereby terminating the provider's participation with the ECE program. The reasons for this may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to maintain minimum standards established by Community Care Licensing;
- Failure to abide by ECE program regulations and/or policies;
- If a licensed provider has their license pulled or has a temporary suspension order of their license by Community Care Licensing;
- Failure to keep a working phone number at all times;
- Failure to inform ECE of a change in address/location of child care services within five (5) calendar days of the change;

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

- Falsifying DSSRs to inaccurately document family need or increase provider reimbursement; and/or
- Insulting, berating, threatening, or physically harming ECE staff person, parent/guardian, or child. ECE reserves the right to terminate meetings/phone calls with providers displaying any of these behaviors.

Child care providers, who have had their participation with the ECE program terminated, will remain in a terminated status for a minimum of six months. ECE will not allow providers who have committed fraud, have a history of licensing violations, or have been closed by Community Care Licensing to participate in an ECE program.

Reporting Process for Provider Concerns

Reporting Concerns: Level I – Informal Process

When concerns about the program related to reimbursement, direct deposit, or customer service occur, the provider shall contact ECE at (951) 826-6655 and request to speak with the ECE supervisor in charge of the program. The supervisor and provider will work together to resolve the issue at this level.

Reporting Concerns: Level II – Formal Process

When the issue cannot be resolved between the supervisor and provider, the provider shall have the right to submit a written report of the concern to the designated coordinator for ECE:

Executive Director, Early Care and Education
Riverside County Office of Education
P.O. Box 868
Riverside, CA 92502-0868
951-826-6608 | eceappeals@rcoe.us

The coordinator shall be responsible for reviewing concerns within the ECE program. The coordinator may assign the review to a designee provided such designee does not have a bias or conflict of interest that would prohibit an objective review.

The coordinator shall provide written notification of the final decision to the provider within 30 days from receipt of the written report in ECE. If the issue is not resolved at the Level II – Formal Process, the provider shall have the right to exercise his/her rights as outlined in the Uniform Complaint Procedure on pages 23 and 24 of this Participant Handbook.

Please Note: The grievance procedure does not apply to those instances in which a parent/guardian chooses to transfer services to another child care provider.

Fraud Policy

Intentionally providing false or inaccurate information in order to access services, or submitting false claims for services for which the family or provider is not entitled, is considered fraud. Fraud is grounds for termination from the program and legal actions will result. Some examples of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to report the actual number of family members living in the household;
- Failure to report the actual gross monthly income for the family;
- Submitting falsified documentation of income;
- Submitting falsified documentation of employment;
- Submitting falsified documentation of vocational training days, hours, progress, etc.;
- Inaccurately representing family eligibility or need in any way;
- Falsifying DSSRs to inaccurately document family need or increase provider reimbursement; and/or
- Submitting DSSRs for reimbursement when the child care provider is no longer providing services.

ECE reserves the right to verify the accuracy of any information/documentation submitted by the parent/guardian for the purposes of accessing child care services through an ECE program. If it is found that the parent/guardian and/or provider provided inaccurate or false information, the family and/or provider will be terminated from the program and will be responsible for repayment to ECE of the reimbursement made to the provider through the family's benefit to which the family was not entitled. The authorities will be contacted for investigative services and to assist ECE in collecting the repayment of unauthorized services by the parent/guardian and/or provider.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Termination of Family Participation

[Title 5, §18119]

When a family no longer meets the eligibility criteria for services, does not have a documented need for services, or fails to adhere to program policies and requirements, ECE issues a Notice of Action (NOA) to terminate the family's child care services. Any services used beyond the discontinuance date on the NOA become the parent/guardian's sole financial responsibility.

The reasons that ECE may terminate services to a family include, but are not limited to:

- Parent/guardian request;
- Family income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income;
- When a child reaches his/her thirteenth birthday (this termination would be effective at the end of the family's current certification period);
- Failure to recertify with all necessary documentation within the required time frame;
- Parent/guardian does not have a documented need for services;
- Extended absence expires and the parent/guardian has not returned to services and cannot be reached;
- Failure to demonstrate adequate progress as required for student parents;
- Failure to pay State Family Fees;
- Failure to maintain accurate DSSRs;
- Abandonment of services; absences totaling 30 consecutive calendar days when there has been no communication with the provider or an ECE staff person;
- Intentionally providing false or inaccurate information to access services;
- Falsifying DSSRs, eligibility documentation, or need documentation;
- Insulting, berating, threatening, or physically harming an ECE/CCTR/CSPP staff person or child care provider. ECE reserves the right to terminate meetings/phone calls with parents displaying any of these behaviors;
- Consistent inability to abide by program policies and requirements.



Families who are terminated with cause will remain ineligible for services through ECE for a minimum of six months. After this period, the family may only re-enter the program through the ECE Eligibility List or the Stage 2 transfer process through the Department of Public Social Services.

Families who have committed fraud and/or have intentionally misrepresented their eligibility and/or need for the program will no longer be permitted to access services through ECE at any time.

Please Note: If a parent/guardian receives a notice terminating services, the provider will be notified in writing that the services through ECE will be discontinued. If services are to resume, the provider will be notified by an ECE staff person (*not applicable to CCTR/CSPP*).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Parent/Guardian Appeal Process

[Title 5, §18120, 18121, and 18122]

When a parent/guardian receives a Notice of Action (NOA), the parent/guardian has the right to appeal the action if he/she feels it is unwarranted.

Appeal requests must be received in ECE on or before the appeal date indicated on the NOA. Failure to follow the process and meet the deadlines will result in an invalid appeal. The appeal request must be submitted in one of the following ways:

- **In writing** (via personal drop-off, mail, fax, or email at eceappeals@rcoe.us):
 - The parent/guardian completes the appeal request on the back of the NOA and submits it to ECE on or before the appeal date indicated on the NOA.
 - The parent guardian prepares any written statement to request an appeal of the intended action indicated on the NOA.
- **In person or by phone:**
 - The parent/guardian must speak with a member of the ECE management team to request an appeal.

Once the appeal request has been received, the following steps will then be taken:

- The parent/guardian will be contacted to set up an appointment for a hearing. If the parent/guardian cannot attend a hearing appointment, he/she may choose to have an authorized representative attend the hearing on his/her behalf. The name of the authorized representative must be provided to ECE when the appeal hearing is scheduled, and an authorization form must be submitted to ECE on or before the date of the hearing appointment.
 - If ECE is unable to reach the parent/guardian within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the appeal request, an appointment will be scheduled on the parent/guardian's behalf.
 - If the parent/guardian is unable to attend a face to-face appeal hearing appointment, alternative arrangements can be made for hearing by telephone or online meeting platform. This must be requested in advance, and an additional release form will be required.

- Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the appeal request, the parent/guardian will be sent a letter confirming the date, time, and location of the hearing.
 - If the parent/guardian/authorized representative, fails to appear at the hearing, the parent's/guardian's appeal will be deemed abandoned.
- The appeal will be heard by a hearing officer; additional ECE staff person(s) may attend at the hearing officer's request.
- The parent/guardian may request an interpreter, if needed, or may bring his/her own.
- During the hearing, the appeal process, the reason for the action, and any written response from the parent/guardian will be reviewed with the parent/guardian/authorized representative.
- The parent/guardian/authorized representative will be given the opportunity to present his/her side of the case and present any information/documentation specific to the action.
 - Only the documentation provided by the parent/guardian/authorized representative at the hearing appointment and that which is already on file with ECE will be considered in the appeal decision. No additional time will be given to submit supporting documentation after the hearing appointment has concluded.
- Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the hearing officer will send a written response regarding the outcome of the hearing.
- If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the outcome of the hearing, a written appeal may then be filed within 14 calendar days to the California Department of Social Services as indicated on the back of the NOA.

Please Note: Child care services continue during the appeal process, and the parent/guardian is subject to all rules and policies of ECE during this time.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

AR 1312.3
Attachment 2
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Notice to Students, Parents/Guardians, Employees, School and County Office of Education Advisory Committees, Private School Officials/Representatives and other Interested Parties:

Uniform Complaint Procedure

The Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) is primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. This procedure is designed to provide a single and consistent process for filing of complaints alleging a violation of federal or state statutes. The procedure applies to complaints of harassment, intimidation, bullying and unlawful discrimination based on actual or perceived characteristics such as age, ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, or sexual orientation, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity conducted by our office. Uniform Complaint Procedures also cover the following programs and/or services:

Adult Education	Accommodations for Lactating Students	Career Technical Education
After School Education	Child Care and Development Programs	Foster and Homeless Students
LCFF and LCAP	Physical Education: Instructional Minutes	Special Education
Migrant Education	Pupil Instruction: Previously Completed Courses	Child Nutrition
Unlawful Pupil Fees	Pupil Instruction: Courses without Educational Content	

In accordance with our procedure, any individual, public agency, or organization may file a written complaint if it is felt there has been a violation of federal or state law or regulation by one of the covered programs. Discrimination complaints must be filed within six months of the alleged discrimination, or six months from the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged unlawful discrimination. The time for filing may be extended for up to 90 days by the County Superintendent or designee for good cause upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension.

The first step in all complaints will be to try to resolve the concern among the parties involved. If that is not possible, then the formal steps of the official procedure are available. Generally, the procedure must be completed within 60 days from receipt of the complaint. Complaints are confidential, and retaliation against a complainant is prohibited. A complaint regarding unlawful pupil fees may be filed directly with the site administrator of a school as well as anonymously. Pupil fee complaints shall be filed no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

A complainant not satisfied with the decision of RCOE may appeal the decision to the CDE and shall receive a written appeal decision within 60 days of the department's receipt of the appeal. The appeal must include a copy of the complaint filed with RCOE and a copy of the County Superintendent's decision. Further appeal of CDE decision may be made to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. If RCOE finds merit in a complaint, or the department finds merit in an appeal, RCOE shall provide a remedy to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians that, where applicable, includes reasonable efforts by RCOE to ensure full reimbursement to all affected pupils, parents and guardians, subject to procedures established through regulations adopted by the state board of education.

Nothing in this policy precludes a complainant from pursuing available civil law remedies outside of RCOE's complaint procedures. Such remedies may include mediation centers, public/private-interest attorneys, injunctions, restraining orders, etc. The complainant's right to take a complaint directly to the California Department of Education (CDE) or to pursue remedies before civil courts or other public agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in cases involving unlawful discrimination. For discrimination

Adopted: 11-5-12
Revised: 6-10-16

Revised: 6-28-17

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

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complaints, however, a complainant must wait until 60 days has elapsed from the filing of any appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. This moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief, and it is applicable only if RCOE has appropriately and timely apprised the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint. For assistance, complainants may contact:

- California Rural Legal Assistance
- Office of Civil Rights
- Department of Fair Employment and Housing
- Riverside County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service
- Inland County Legal Services

Complaints must be filed with the Director II, Division of Personnel Services, 3939 Thirteenth Street, P.O. Box 868, Riverside, CA 92502-0868, or by calling (951) 826-6673.

The complete Uniform Complaint Procedures, forms, and notices are available through the following website: <https://www.rcoe.us/title-ix/>

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Revised: 6-10-16

Revised: 6-28-17

TITLE IX: PROHIBITING SEX-BASED DISCRIMINATION

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in all educational programs and activities, including athletic programs. No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity operated by RCOE. Title IX protects all participants in RCOE’s educational programs and activities, including students, parents, employees, and job applicants. RCOE does not discriminate on the basis of sex. Discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment and sexual violence.

In addition to Title IX, the California Education Code prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in schools. (California Education Code §§ 220-221.1.) Other state and federal laws also prohibit discrimination and ensure equality in education. Please refer to an overview of all RCOE’s nondiscrimination policies and the following specific policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment:

- Non-Discrimination in Employment – Board Policy 4030
- Non-Discrimination in Employment – Administrative Regulation 4030
- Non-Discrimination in Programs and Activities – Board Policy 0410.3
- Sexual Harassment (Employees) – Administrative Regulation 4119.11.01/4129.01/4319.01
- Non-Discrimination/Harassment (Students) – Board Policy 5145.3
- Sexual Harassment (Students) – Board Policy 5145.7
- Sexual Harassment (Students) – Administrative Regulation 5145.7
- Uniform Complaint Procedures – Board Policy 1312.3
 - Uniform Complaint Procedures – Administrative Regulation 1312.3
 - Uniform Complaint Form – AR 1312.3, Attachment 1
 - Uniform Complaint Notice – AR 1312.3, Attachment 2

Information provided here applies to every RCOE school site and all RCOE programs and activities.